

The Writings of
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Fielding

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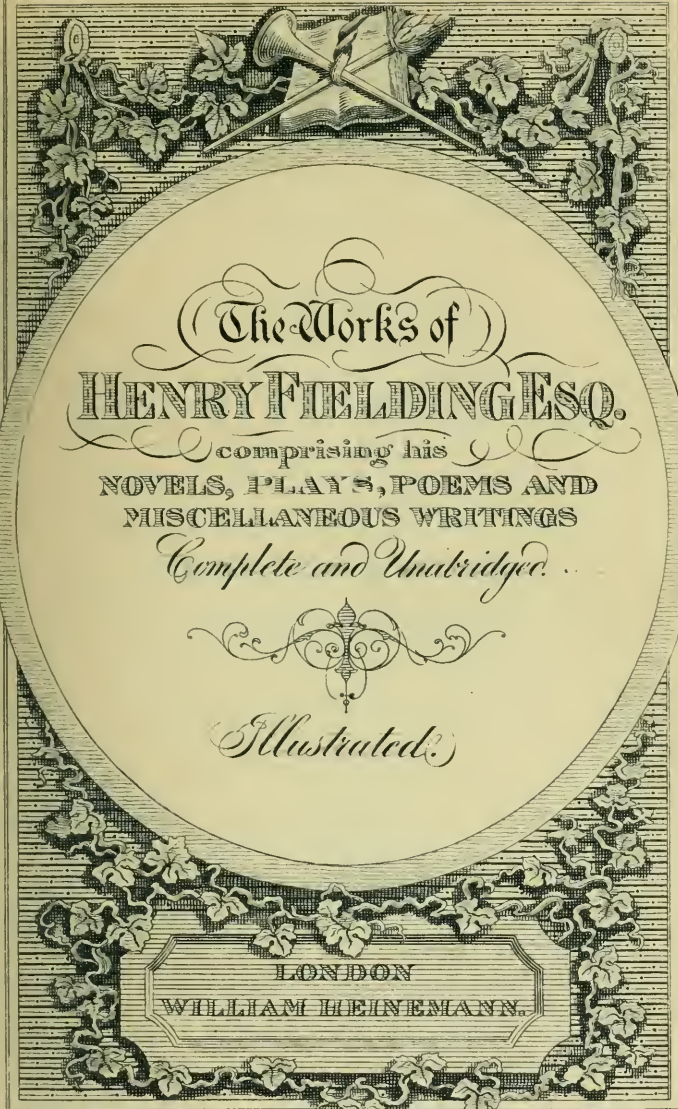
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(The Works of)
HENRY FIELDING ESQ.

comprising his
**NOVELS, PLAYS, POEMS AND
MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS**

Complete and Unabridged.



Illustrated.

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN.

PRINTED BY CROSCUP AND STERLING, NEW YORK, U.S.A.

2392

The Complete Works of
HENRY FIELDING, ESQ.

With an Essay on the Life, Genius and Achievement of the Author,
by

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY, LL.D.

PLAYS AND POEMS

IN FIVE VOLUMES

VOL. ONE

Illustrated with
Reproductions of Rare Contemporary Drawings
and Original Designs by
E. E. Carlson and E. J. Read



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LONDON

WILLIAM HEINEMANN

1903

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ANNE OLDFIELD, a noted actress, the fame of whose beauty, vivacity, and charm, has come down to our own day. She contributed largely to Fielding's success as a play-wright, taking the leading part in his first play *Love in Several Masques*. In his preface to this play, Fielding gratefully alludes to her "ravishing perfections." Steele also praises her in the *Tatler* and *Spectator*. She excelled both in tragedy and in comedy. She never married, but was always respected in society as being superior to women of her profession.

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The Theatre Royal in Drury Lane became from its founding one of the famous playhouses of the world. It was opened in 1663 just after the license of the Restoration allowed women to act upon the stage, for the first time. The original edifice cost fifteen hundred pounds. It was burned down in 1672, but soon rebuilt. Another fire occurred in 1809. The last building, the fourth upon that site, was erected in 1812. The theatre was variously styled the "King's Play House," and the "Old House." It was the scene of many royal and titled personages in its audiences and many noted plays and actors on its stage. Among the latter may be mentioned, Colley Cibber, Mrs. Oldfield, Kitty Clive, David Garrick, Edmund Kean and Mrs. Siddons. Several of Fielding's plays were first presented at Drury Lane, among them his earliest, *Love in Several Masques*, in 1723.

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<i>From an old engraving.</i>	
<p>Opposite Charles Street on the Haymarket, the "Little Theatre in the Haymarket" was built in 1720, by John Potter, an enterprising carpenter, at a cost of a thousand pounds. It was leased to the "French Comedians" and hence was first known as the "New French Theatre." Ten years later it was occupied by an English Company and then assumed its name of "Little Theatre" which it retained until 1820 when the original edifice was pulled down. Its site is now occupied by the "Café del' Europe." In 1734 Fielding ran it with a congenial band styled "The Great Mogul's Company, recently dropped from the clouds." The opening piece, Fielding's <i>Pasquin</i> was well received, and ran for more than fifty nights. His second play, <i>The Historical Register</i>, contained so audacious a caricature of Robert Walpole, that the Prime Minister caused an Act to be passed requiring the censorship of plays. This theatre during nearly its entire career was prosperous and much frequented by the fashionable world.</p>	
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L O V E
IN SEVERAL
M A S Q U E S.
A
C O M E D Y,

As it is Acted at the
THEATRE-ROYAL,
BY

His MAJESTY's Servants.

Written by Mr. *FIELDING*.

*Nec Veneris Pharetris macer est, nec Lampade feruet;
Inde faces ardent; veniunt a-Dote Sagittæ.*

Juv. Sat. 6.

L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN WATTS, at the Printing-Office,
in *Wild-Court*, near *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*. 1728.

[Price, 1 s. 6 d.]

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE LADY
MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE

MADAM,—Your ladyship's known goodness gives my presumption the hopes of a pardon, for prefixing to this slight work the name of a lady, whose accurate judgment has long been the glory of her own sex, and the wonder of ours: especially, since it arose from a vanity to which your indulgence, on the first perusal of it, gave birth.

I would not insinuate to the world that this play past free from your censure; since I know it not free from faults, not one of which escaped your immediate penetration. Immediate indeed! for your judgment keeps pace with your eye, and you comprehend almost faster than others overlook.

This is a perfection very visible to all who are admitted to the honour of your conversation; since, from those short intervals you can be supposed to have had to yourself, amid the importunities of all the polite admirers and professors of wit and learning, you are capable of instructing the pedant, and are at once a living confutation of those morose schoolmen, who would confine knowledge to the male part of the species; and a shining instance of all those perfections and softer graces, which nature has confined to the female.

But I offend your ladyship, whilst I please myself and the reader; therefore I shall only beg your leave to give a sanction to this Comedy, by informing the world that its representation was twice honoured with your ladyship's presence, and am, with the greatest respect,

Madam,

Your ladyship's most obedient,

Most humble servant,

HENRY FIELDING.

PREFACE

I BELIEVE few plays have ever adventured into the world under greater disadvantages than this. First, as it succeeded a comedy which, for the continued space of twenty-eight nights, received as great (and as just) applauses, as ever were bestowed on the English Theatre. And secondly, as it is co-temporary with an entertainment which engrosses the whole talk and admiration of the town.

These were difficulties which seemed rather to require the superior force of a Wycherley, or a Congreve, than of a raw and unexperienced pen; for I believe I may boast that none ever appeared so early upon the stage. However, such was the candour of the audience, the play was received with greater satisfaction than I should have promised myself from its merit, had it even preceded the Provoked Husband.

But after having returned thanks to the spectators, I cannot rest till I have been in some measure grateful to the performers. As for Mr. Wilks and Mr. Cibber, I cannot sufficiently acknowledge their civil and kind behaviour previous to its representation. How advantageously both they and the other personages set off their respective parts, at that time, has been spoken of by much politer and better judges than myself.

Lastly, I can never express my grateful sense of the good nature of Mrs. Oldfield; who, though she had contracted a slight indisposition by her violent fatigue in the part of Lady Townly, was prevailed on to grace that of Lady Matchless; which placed her in a light so far inferior to that which she had in the other. Nor do I owe less to her excellent

judgment, shown in some corrections, which I shall, for my own sake, conceal. But the ravishing perfections of this lady are so much the admiration of every eye and every ear, that they will remain fixed in the memory of many, when these light scenes shall be forgotten.

PROLOGUE

OCCASIONED BY THIS COMEDY'S SUCCEEDING THAT OF
THE PROVOKED HUSBAND

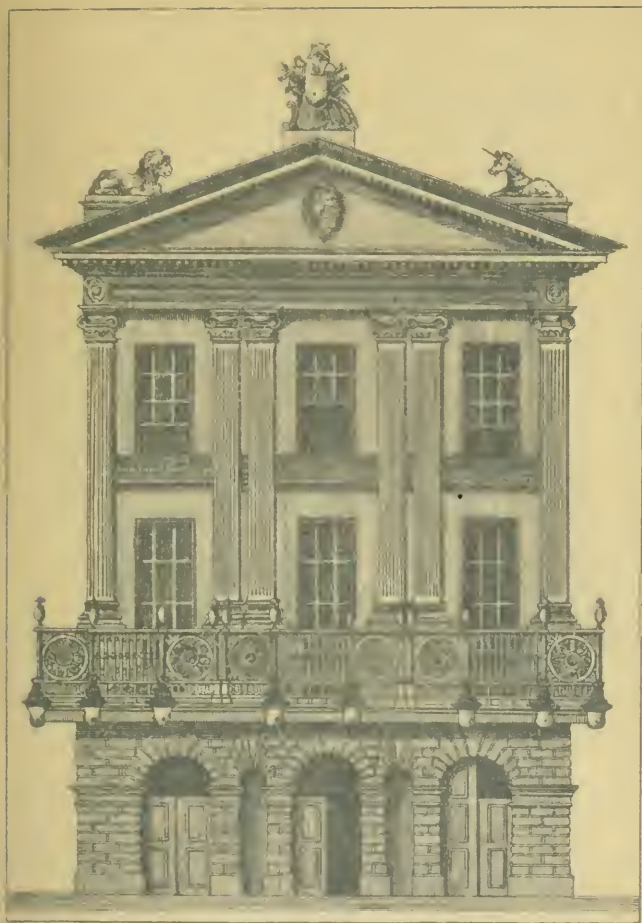
SPOKEN BY MR. MILLS

As when a Raphael's masterpiece has been,
By the astonished judge, with rapture seen;
Should some young artist next his picture show,
He speaks his colours faint, his fancy low;
Though it some beauties has, it still must fall,
Compared to that, which has excell'd in all.

So when, by an admiring, ravish'd age,
A finished piece is 'plauded on the stage,
What fate, alas! must a young author share,
Who, deaf to all entreaties, ventures there?
Yet, too, too certain of his weaker cause,
He claims nor equal merit nor applause.
Compare 'em not; should favour do its most,
He owns, by the comparison, he's lost.

Light, airy scenes, his comic muse displays,
Far from the buskin's higher vein he strays,
By humour only catching at the bays:
Humour still free from an indecent flame,
Which, should it raise your mirth, must raise your shame.
Indecency's the bane to ridicule,
And only charms the libertine or fool:
Nought shall offend the fair one's ears to-day,
Which they might blush to hear, or blush to say.
No private character these scenes expose,
Our bard at vice, not at the vicious, throws.

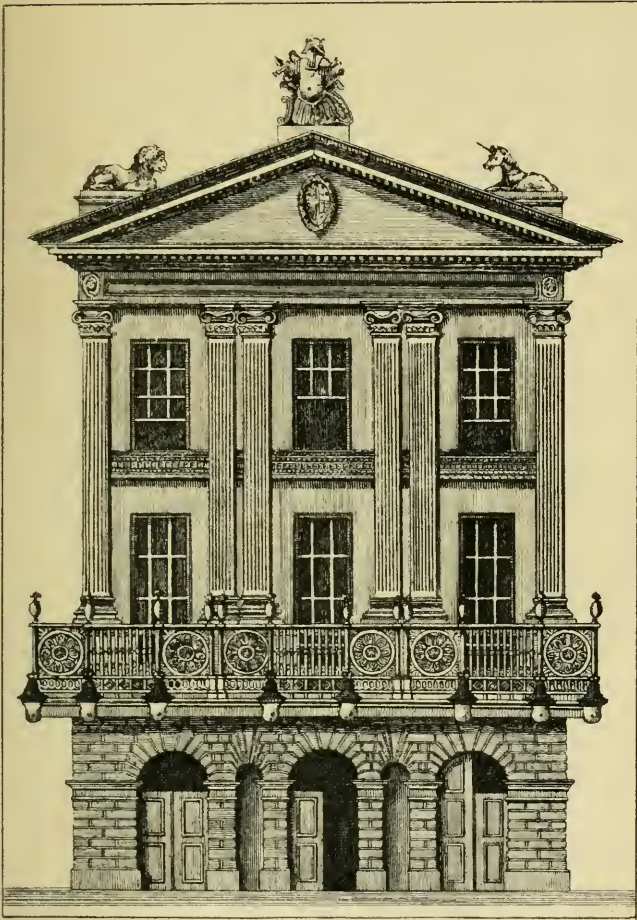
If any by his pointed arrows smart,
Why did he bear the mark within his heart?
Since innocently, thus, to please he aims,
Some merit, surely, the intention claims:
With candour, critics, to his cause attend;
Let pity to his lighter errors bend,
Forgive, at least; but if you can, commend.



FRONT of DRURY-LANE-THEATRE.

Front of Drury Lane Theatre.
From an old engraving, about 1860.

If any by his pointed arrows smart,
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FRONT of DRURY-LANE-THEATRE.

LOVE IN SEVERAL MASQUES

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

WISEMORE	<i>Mr. Mills.</i>
MERITAL	<i>Mr. Wilks.</i>
MALVIL	<i>Mr. Bridgewater.</i>
LORD FORMAL.	<i>Mr. Griffin.</i>
RATTLE	<i>Mr. Cibber.</i>
SIR POSITIVE TRAP	<i>Mr. Harper.</i>
SIR APISH SIMPLE	<i>Mr. Miller</i>

WOMEN

LADY MATCHLESS	<i>Mrs. Oldfield.</i>
VERMILIA	<i>Mrs. Porter.</i>
HELENA	<i>Mrs. Booth.</i>
LADY TRAP	<i>Mrs. Moor.</i>
CATCHIT	<i>Mrs. Mills.</i>

SCENE, LONDON

LOVE IN SEVERAL MASQUES

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Piazza.*

MERITAL, MALVIL.

MERITAL. Mr. Malvil, good morrow; I thought the spirit of champagne would have lengthened your repose this morning.

MALVIL. No, sir, the spirit of something else disturbs my mind too much: an unfortunate lover and repose are as opposite as any lover and sense.

MERITAL. Malapert simile! What is there in life, what joys, what transports, which flow not from the spring of love? The birth of love is the birth of happiness, nay, even of life. To breathe without it is to drag on a dull, phlegmatic, insipid being, and struggle imperfect in the womb of nature.

MALVIL. What in the name of fustian's here?

MERITAL. Did you not see the Lady Matchless last night? What ecstasies did she impart, even at a distance, to her beholders!

MALVIL. A beautiful, rich, young widow, in a front box, makes as much noise as a blazing star in the sky; draws as many eyes on her, and is as much criticised on in the polite world as the other in the learned. With what envious glances was she attacked by the whole circle of belles! and what amorous ones by the gentlemen proprietors of the toupet, snuff-box, and sword-knot!

MERITAL. Nor could all this elevate her to the least pride or haughtiness, but she carried it with an air not conscious of the envy and adoration she contracted. That becoming modesty in her eyes! that lovely, easy sweetness in her smile! that gracefulness in her mien! that nobleness, without affectation, in her looks! in short, that one complete charm in her person! Such a woman as this does as much mischief amongst the men of sense!—

MALVIL. As some beaux do amongst the women of none. But, by your speaking so feelingly, I should suspect some mischief here. *[Claps Merital's breast.]*

MERITAL. Why that fort is not impregnable to the batteries of a fair eye; but there is a certain beautiful, rich, young virgin who keeps guard there.

MALVIL. Ha, she is a blazing star indeed! Where does she live? or rather, where is she worshipped? and in what street is her temple?

MERITAL. I have described her, and sure my picture is not so bad as to require its name under it.

MALVIL. But it is so good that I am afraid you hardly took nature for a pattern.

MERITAL. Thou art always endeavouring to be satirical on the ladies; prythee desist: for the name of an ill-natured wit will slightly balance the loss of their favour. Who would not prefer a dear smile from a pretty face——

MALVIL. To a frown from an ugly one. But have I never seen this inestimable?

MERITAL. No, sir; the sun has never seen her but by peeping through a window. She is kept as close as a jealous Spaniard keeps his wife, or a city usurer his treasure; and is now brought to town to be married to that gay knight Sir Apish Simple.

MALVIL. You have a rival then, there's one difficulty.

MERITAL. Ay, and many difficulties, which, in love, are so many charms. In the first place, the young lady's guardian, Sir Positive Trap by name, is an old, precise knight, made up of avarice, folly, and ill-bred surliness of temper, and an odd, fantastic pride built on the antiquity of his

family, into which he enrolls most of the great men he ever heard of. The next is his lady, who is his absolute empress; for though he be monstrously morose to the rest of the world, he is as foolishly easy and credulous to his wife.

MALVIL. And she, I suppose, is as easy to the rest of the world, as imperious to him.

MERITAL. Then my mistress is made up of natural spirit, wit, and fire; all these she has improved by an intimate conversation with plays, poems, romances, and such gay studies, by which she has acquired a perfect knowledge of the polite world without ever seeing it, and turned the confinement of her person into the enlargement of her mind. Lastly, my rival—but his character you know already. And these are my obstacles.

MALVIL. But what objection does the old knight make to your pretensions?

MERITAL. Several. My estate is too small, my father was no baronet, and I am——no fool.

MALVIL. Those are weighty objections, I must confess: to evade the first you must bribe his lawyer, to conquer the second, purchase a title—and utterly to remove the last, plead lover.

MERITAL. Kindly advised. But what success are you like to reap from that plea with Vermilia?

MALVIL. Why faith! our affair is grown dull as a chancery suit; but, if it be much more prolix, my stock of love will be so far exhausted, that I shall be like a contested heir, who spends his estate in the pursuit of it, and when his litigious adversary is overthrown, finds his possessions reduced to a long lawyer's bill for more than he is able to pay.

MERITAL. But then your fates will be different, the one condemned to starve in a prison, the other to surfeit in matrimony. Though, by what I see, you are in little danger of bringing matters to that issue.

MALVIL. Hast thou seen? Come, perhaps you have discovered what, indeed, her late coldness gives me reason to fear.

MERITAL. What?

MALVIL. A rival.

MERITAL. Ha, ha, ha! you certainly are the most unfortunate in your temper, and most an enemy to yourself, of any man in the world. Be assured, Jack, that if, after what has passed between you, so long a service, and so many apparent signs of the sincerest passion on your side and such a manifest reception of it on hers, she jilts you; she yet has rid you of the greatest pest in nature.

MALVIL. 'Sdeath! could I reason thus with myself, I might think so, but I love her above my reason. I see my folly and despise it, and yet cannot shun it.

MERITAL. Well, you are the first in the class of romantic lovers. But, for my part, I would as soon turn chemist and search for the philosopher's stone, as a lover to run headlong after an *Ignis Fatuus*, that flies the faster the more it is pursued.

MALVIL. These are the known sentiments of you light, gay, fluttering fellows; who, like the weathercock, never fix long to a point till you are good for nothing.

MERITAL. And you platonic lovers, like the compass, are ever pointing to the same pole, but never touch it.

MALVIL. You are a sort of sportsmen, who are always hunting in a park of coquets, where your sport is so plenty that you start fresh game before you have run down the old.

MERITAL. And you are a sort of anglers ever fishing for prudes, who cautiously steal, and pamper up their vanity with your baits, but never swallow the hook.

MALVIL. But hast thou then discovered any thing in *Vermilia's* conduct that——

MERITAL. That makes me confident you will never gain her, so I advise you to raise the siege; for you must carry that garrison by storm, and, I know, you have not so much bravery in love——Ha, amazement! is not that *Wisemore*?

SCENE II.

WISEMORE, MERITAL, MALVIL.

WISEMORE. Mr. Merital, Mr. Malvil, your humble servant; I am fortunate, indeed, at my first arrival, to embrace my friends.

MALVIL. Dear Wisemore, a thousand welcomes; what propitious wind has drove thee to town?

WISEMORE. No wind propitious to my inclination, I assure ye, gentlemen; I had taken leave of this place long ago, its vanities, hurries, and superficial, empty, ill-digested pleasures.

MERITAL. But you have seen your error, and, like a relenting nun, who had too rashly taken leave of the world, art returned to enjoy thy pleasures again.

WISEMORE. No, 'tis business, business, gentlemen, that drags me hither; my pleasures lie another way, a way little known to you gentlemen of the town.

MALVIL. Not so little known as you imagine, Ned, nor have you been supposed alone these three years in the country. 'Tis no secret that you have had the conversation of——

WISEMORE. The wise, the learned, the virtuous. Books, sir, have been mostly my companions, a society preferable to that of this age. Who would converse with fools and fops, whilst they might enjoy a Cicero or an Epictetus, a Plato, or an Aristotle? Who would waste his afternoon in a coffee-house, or at a tea-table, to be entertained with scandal, lies, balls, operas, intrigues, fashions, flattery, nonsense, and that swarm of impertinences which compose the commonplace chat of the world? Who would bear all this, did he know the sweets of retirement?

MERITAL. Let me survey thee a little that I may be certain you are my old friend metamorphosed, and no apparition.

WISEMORE. Look ye, sirs, of all places in the world my spirit would never haunt this. London is to me what the country is to a gay, giddy girl, pampered up with the love of admiration; or a young heir just leapt into his estate and chariot. It is a mistress, whose imperfections I have discovered, and cast off. I know it; I have been a spectator of all its scenes. I have seen hypocrisy pass for religion, madness for sense, noise and scurrility for wit, and riches for the whole train of virtues. Then I have seen folly beloved for its youth and beauty, and revered for its age. I have discovered knavery in more forms than ever Proteus had, and traced him through them all, till I have lodged him behind a counter, with the statue of bankruptcy in his hand, and a pair of gilded horns in his pocket.

MERITAL and MALVIL. Ha, ha, ha!

WISEMORE. I know the folly, foppery, and childishness of your diversions—I know your vices too.

MALVIL. And hast practised them, to my knowledge.

WISEMORE. So much the more have they contracted my hate. Oons! If I do not get out of this vile town in three days, I shall get out of the world in four.

MERITAL. But what earnest business has drove thee hither now, so much against thy will?

MALVIL. He is married, his wife has drawn him hither, and he is jealous.

MERITAL. Or are you in law, and have been rid down this morning by a fat serjeant or solicitor?

MALVIL. He has been writing philosophy, and is come to town to publish it.

WISEMORE. I have been studying folly, and am come to town to publish it. I know that title will sell any productions, or some of your modern poets, who hardly merit that name by their works, would merit it by starving.

MERITAL. But they deal not so openly with the world, for they promise much though they perform little. Nay, I've sometimes seen treatises where the author has put all his wit in the title-page.

WISEMORE. Why, faith, and politic enough; for few readers now look farther than the title-page.

MERITAL. But prythee what is this errand of folly, as you are pleased to term it?

WISEMORE. O beyond conception; I shudder with the apprehension of its being known. But why do I fear it? folly or vice must be of a prodigious height to over-top the crowd; but if it did, the tall, overgrown monster would be admired, and, like other monsters, enrich the possessor. I see your women have gone through with the transformation and dress like us, nay, they frequent coffee-houses too; I was frightened from one just now by two girls in paduasuy coats and breeches.

MALVIL. Ha, ha, ha! these were two beaus, Ned.

WISEMORE. So much the greater transformation, for they had, apparently, more of the woman than the man about them. But, perhaps, by them this amphibious dress may be a significant calculation; for I have known a beau with everything of a woman but the sex, and nothing of a man besides it.

MALVIL. They will esteem you for that assertion.

WISEMORE. Why ay, it may recommend them to the tea-tables. For the natural perfections of our sex, and the unnatural acquisitions of her own, must be a rare compound to make a woman's idol.

MERITAL. Sure, never was a man so altered! Do not affect singularity this way; for in town we look on none to be so great a fool as a philosopher, and there is no fool so out of fashion.

WISEMORE. A certain sign fools are in fashion. Philosophy is a true glass, which shows the imperfections of the mind as plain as the other of the body; and no more than a true glass can be agreeable to a town constitution.

MERITAL. So, here comes one who will hit your taste——

SCENE III.

To them, RATTLE.

RATTLE. Merital, Malvil, a buss, dear boys. Ha! hum! what figure is that?

MERITAL. Mr. Rattle, pray know my friend, Mr. Wisemore.

RATTLE. That I will gladly. Sir, I am your most obedient, humble servant, sir.

WISEMORE. Sir, I am very much yours.

RATTLE. Well, I know you will be witty upon me, but since the town will blab, I will put on the armour of assurance, and declare boldly, that I am very, very deeply in love.

MALVIL. A bold declaration, indeed! and what may require some assurance to maintain, since it is ten to four thou hast never spoke to this new mistress, nay, perhaps, never seen more of her than her picture.

RATTLE. Her picture! ha, ha, ha! who can draw the sun in its meridian glories? Neither painting, poetry, nor imagination can form her image. She is young and blooming as the spring, gay and teeming as the summer, ripe and rich as the autumn.

MALVIL. Thy chemistry has from that one virtue extracted all the rest, I very modestly suppose.

MERITAL. You know, Harry, Malvil allows the sex no virtues.

RATTLE. That's because they allow him no favours. But to express my mistress's worth, in a word, and prove it too—She is the Lady Matchless.

WISEMORE. Ha! [*Aside.*

MERITAL. But what hopes can you have of succeeding against the multitudes which swarm in her drawing-room?

RATTLE. Pugh! Tom, you know I have succeeded against greater multitudes before now—and she is a woman of excellent sense.

WISEMORE. You fix your hopes on a very sound foundation, sir; for a woman of sense will, undoubtedly, set a just value on a laced coat, which qualification is undeniably yours.

RATTLE. Sir, as I take it, there are other qualifications appertaining to—

WISEMORE. But none preferable in the eyes of some women, and the persons of some men, sir.

RATTLE. I believe she will find some preferable in the person of your humble servant, sir.

WISEMORE. Say you so! then know, sir, I am your rival there.

RATTLE. Rival, sir! and do you think to supplant me, sir?

WISEMORE. I think to maintain my ground, sir.

MERITAL. And is this the folly you are come to town to publish? For a philosopher to go a widow-hunting is folly with a vengeance.

WISEMORE. [*Aside.*] Am I become a jest? I deserve it. Why did I come hither, but to be laughed at by all the world! my friends will deride me out of love, my enemies out of revenge; wise men from their scorn, and fools from their triumph, to see me become as great a fool as themselves. [*To them.*] I see, by your mirth, gentlemen, my company grows tedious, so I'm your humble servant.

SCENE IV.

MERITAL, MALVIL, RATTLE.

MERITAL. Nay, dear Ned.

RATTLE. What queer bundle of rusticity is that?

MERITAL. A man of admirable sense, I assure you. Your hopes in the widow now are not worth much.

RATTLE. Pugh! there's a rival indeed! besides, I am sensible that I am the happy he whom she has chosen out of our whole sex. She is stark mad in love, poor soul! and

let me alone when I have made an impression. I tell ye, sirs, I have had opportunities, I have had encouragements, I have had kisses and embraces, lads; but, mum. Now if you tell one word, devil take me if ever I trust you with a secret again.

MALVIL. You will pardon me, Harry; but if I believe one word of it, may I never know a secret again.

RATTLE. I am glad of that; my joy makes me blab, but it may be for the lady's honour not to have it believed.

MALVIL. Ay, faith, and for the honour of her sense too.

RATTLE. I pumped Sir Apish, as you desired; it seems, all matters are agreed on with the old folks, he has nothing now but to get his mistress's own consent.

MALVIL. That's only a form; miss says yes now after her father, as readily as after the parson.

RATTLE. Well, well, I thank fate my mistress is at her own disposal.

MERITAL. And did you not tell Sir Apish I was his rival? you can keep a secret?

RATTLE. O, inviolably to serve a friend, and provided there be an intrigue in the case. I love intrigues so well, I almost think myself the son of one.

MALVIL. And to publish them so well, that had you been so and known it, your supposed father would have known his blessing, and the world his title.

RATTLE. But why should you think I can't keep a secret? Now, upon my honour, I never publish any one's intrigues but my own.

MALVIL. And your character is so public, that you hurt nobody's name but your own.

RATTLE. Nay, curse take me, if I am ashamed of being publicly known to have an affair with a lady, at all.

MALVIL. No? but you should be ashamed of boasting of affairs with ladies, whom it is known you never spoke to.

MERITAL. There you are too hard on him, for Rattle has affairs.

RATTLE. And with women of rank.

MALVIL. Of very high rank, if their quality be as high as their lodgings are.

RATTLE. Prythee, Malvil, leave this satirical, ill-natured way, or, upon my word, we pretty fellows shall not care to be seen in your company.

MERITAL. You must excuse him, he is only envious of your success; and as the smiles of a mistress raise your gaiety, so the frowns of a mistress cause his spleen.

RATTLE. Do they? But you and I, Tom, know better: for, curse me, if it be in the power of the frowns of the whole sex to give me an uneasy moment. Neither do I value their smiles at a pinch of snuff. And yet, I believe I have as few of the first, and as many of the last, as——

MERITAL. How! how! not value the widow's smiles?

RATTLE. Humph! they are golden ones.

MALVIL. Here's a rogue would persuade us he is in love, and all the charms he can find in his mistress are in her pocket.

RATTLE. Agad, and that opinion is not singular. I have known a fine gentleman marry a rich heiress with a vast deal of passion, and bury her at the month's end with a perfect resignation.

MALVIL. Then his resignation seems to me much more apparent than his passion.

RATTLE. You fix his passion on the wrong object: it was her fortune he was so violently enamoured with, and had that been demanded of him, agad, he would have had no more resignation than a lawyer to refund his fee.

MERITAL. I am of Rattle's opinion; for if this was not the general notion, how would some celebrated toasts maintain their *éclat* who, considered out of the light of their fortune, have no more charms than beau Grin out of his embroidery?

RATTLE. Or my lady Wrinkle out of her paint.

MERITAL. And again, others be neglected who have every charm but wealth. In short, beauty is now considered as a qualification only for a mistress, and fortune for a wife.

MALVIL. The ladies are pretty even with us, for they

have learned to value good qualities only in a gallant, and to look for nothing but an estate in a husband.

RATTLE. These are rare sentiments in a platonic lover.

MERITAL. Well put. How can a man love, who has so ill an opinion of the sex?

MALVIL. Merital, you are always touching the wounds of your friends, which are too tender to endure it.

MERITAL. Well, gentlemen, are you for the Mall this morning?

RATTLE. With all my heart.

MALVIL. I have business, but will meet you there.

RATTLE. Gad, that's well thought on, I must call on some ladies, but they lie in our way.

MALVIL. Ay, your ladies commonly lie in every body's way.

MERITAL. You will find me in the Mall, or at St. James's.

SCENE V.

MERITAL, LORD FORMAL.

MERITAL. Ha! here's a fool coming, and he is unavoidable. My lord, your humble servant; to see you at this end of the town is a miracle, at so early an hour.

LORD FORMAL. Why, positively, Mr. Merital, this is an hour wherein I seldom make any excursions farther than my drawing-room. But, being a day of business, I have rid down two brace of chairmen this morning. I have been, sir, at three milliners', two perfumers', my bookseller's, and a fan-shop.

MERITAL. Ha, ha, ha! a very tiresome circuit.

LORD FORMAL. It has exagitated my complexion to that exorbitancy of vermeille, that I shall hardly have reduced it to any tolerable consistency under a fortnight's course of acids.

MERITAL. I think, my lord, it is hardly worth while to

be concerned about natural colours, now we are arrived at such a perfection in artificial.

LORD FORMAL. Pardon me. We have, indeed, made some progress in red, but for your pale colours, they must be acquired naturally; your white washes will not subdue cherry cheeks.

MERITAL. O if that be the malady, I would prescribe to the gentlemen a course of rakery, and to the ladies a course of vapours.

LORD FORMAL. Well, positively, going into a bookseller's shop is to me the last of fatigues, and yet it is a necessary one: for since the ladies have divided their time between cards and reading, a man, to be agreeable to them, must understand something of books, as well as quadrille.

MERITAL. I am afraid, if this humour continue, it will be as necessary in the education of a pretty gentleman to learn to read, as to learn to dance.

LORD FORMAL. Why, I'll tell you how I do. By going to a bookseller's shop once a month, I know the titles and authors of all the new books: so when I name one in company, it is, you know, of consequence supposed I have read it; immediately some lady pronounces sentence, either favourable, or not, according as the fame of the author and her ladyship's cards run high or low,—then good manners enrol me in her opinion.

MERITAL. A very equitable court of justice truly.

LORD FORMAL. Reading, sir, is the worst thing in the world for the eyes; I once gave in to it, and had in a very few months gone through almost a dozen pages in Cassandra. But I found it vastly impaired the lustre of my eyes. I had, sir, in that short time, perfectly lost the direct ogle—But I lose time—for I am going to make a visit just by—a—I presume, you hear that I intend shortly to quarter my coat of arms.

MERITAL. The world, my lord, is rather amazed how my Lord Formal has so long withstood such temptations.

LORD FORMAL. Why truly I have had as many temptations as any man. But I have ever laid it down as a maxim,

that a wife should be very rich. Men who do not know the world will talk of virtue and beauty. Now, in my opinion, virtue is so scarce, it is not worth the looking after; and beauty so common, it is not worth the keeping.

MERITAL. Do you think a fine woman so trifling a possession, my lord?

LORD FORMAL. Why a fine woman——is a very fine thing——and so——is a fine house, I mean to entertain your friends with: for they, commonly, enjoy both, with the additional pleasure of novelty, whilst they pall on your own taste.

MERITAL. This from you, my lord, is surprising. Sure, you will allow some women to be virtuous.

LORD FORMAL. O yes. I will allow an ugly woman to be as virtuous as she pleases, just as I will a poor man to be covetous. But beauty in the hands of a virtuous woman, like gold in those of a miser, prevents the circulation of trade.

MERITAL. It is rather like riches in the possession of the prudent. A virtuous woman bestows her favours on the deserving, and makes them a real blessing to the man who enjoys her; whilst the vicious one, like a squandering prodigal, scatters them away; and, like a prodigal, is often most despised by those to whom she has been most kind.

LORD FORMAL. This from the gay Mr. Merital, is, really, very surprising.

MERITAL. Yes, my lord, the gay Mr. Merital now stands candidate for a husband. So you cannot wonder that I would persuade the ladies of my good principles, which may engage some or other to choose me.

LORD FORMAL. It will as soon engage a country borough to choose you parliament-man. But I must take an abrupt leave. For the sweetness of your conversation has perfumed my senses to the forgetfulness of an affair, which, being of consequential essence, obliges me to assure you that I am your humble servant.

SCENE VI.

MERITAL. [*Alone.*] Prince of coxcombs! 'sdeath! 'tis in the mouths of such fellows as these that the reputations of women suffer; for women are like books. Malice and envy will easily lead you to the detection of their faults; but their beauties good judgment only can discover and good nature relish. And woman, that noble volume of our greatest happiness,

Which to the wise affords a rich repast,
Fools only censure from their want of taste.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—LADY MATCHLESS'S *House*.

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

LADY MATCHLESS. Upon my word, Vermilia, you wrong me, if you think noise, equipage, or flattery, give me any real pleasure; it is, indeed, a pleasing triumph for a prisoner eloped to reflect on her past confinement and present freedom; freed from that torment, an injurious husband: one who—but he is gone, and, I hope, to heaven.

VERMILIA. That's a generous wish, my dear; and yet I believe it is the wish of many whose husbands deserve a worse place.

LADY MATCHLESS. You mean, during the life of a bad husband; but those prayers then flow more from self-interest than generosity; for who would not wish her spouse in heaven, when it was the only way to deliver herself out of a hell?

VERMILIA. True, indeed. But yours are the efforts of pure good nature; you pray for the happiness of your tyrant, now you are delivered out of his power.

LADY MATCHLESS. Ah! poor man! since I can say nothing to his advantage, let him sleep in peace; my revenge shall not be on his memory, but his sex; that part of it which I know would follow his example, were they but in his place.

VERMILIA. You have opportunities enough of revenge, and objects enough to execute it upon; for, I think, you have as many slaves in your assemblies as the French king in his galleys.

LADY MATCHLESS. Why, really, I sometimes look on my drawing-room as a little parliament of fools, to which every different body sends its representatives. Beaus of all sorts. The courtly lord, who addresses me with a formal, well-bred dissimulation; the airy Sir Plume, who always walks in the minuet-step, and converses in recitativo.

VERMILIA. And is a Narcissus in everything but beauty.

LADY MATCHLESS. Then the robust warrior, who proceeds by way of storm or siege. The lawyer, who attacks me as he would a jury, with a cringe, and a lie at the tip of his tongue. The cit, who would cheat me by way of bargain and sale. And—your settling country 'squire, who would put my life into half his estate, provided I would put his whole family's into all mine.

VERMILIA. There is a more dangerous, though a more ridiculous fool than any of these, and that is a fine gentleman, who becomes the disguise of a lover worse than any you have named.

LADY MATCHLESS. O, ay; a man of sense acts a lover just as a Dutchman would a harlequin. He stumbles at every straw we throw in his way, which a fop would skip over with ease.

VERMILIA. But pray, my dear, what design have you in view from all these lovers?

LADY MATCHLESS. The very design nature had when she formed them, to make fools of them.

VERMILIA. But you will not be surprised if I admire

that you give the least encouragement to the finest gentlemen.

LADY MATCHLESS. Indeed, I approve your remark. Why, it proceeds from this reason; that of love, like other fevers, is only dangerous to a rich constitution, and therefore I am cautious of giving a distemper which I do not intend to cure—for I have no absolute intention ever to marry again.

VERMILIA. Nor absolute resolution against it, I dare swear.

LADY MATCHLESS. To say the truth, I cannot positively affirm I have, nor, if I had, am I confident I should be able to keep it. For when Sir William died I made a secret resolution never to run a second hazard; but—a—at the year's end, I don't know how—a—I had like to have fallen into the snare again.

VERMILIA. Well, and by what lucky chance delivered?

LADY MATCHLESS. The very night before our intended marriage I flew away to London, and left my poor, disappointed swain to vent his passion to the wind.

VERMILIA. O what a profusion was there of sighs, vows, prayers, oaths, tears, and curses!—And so you are fled to London as a place of security against love-debts? I know not why it is, but certainly a woman is the least liable to play the fool here; perhaps the hurry of diversions and company keep the mind in too perpetual a motion to let it fix on one object. Whereas, in the country our ideas are more fixed and more romantic. Courts and cities have few heroes or heroines in love.

LADY MATCHLESS. Ah, Vermilia, let the jealous husband learn from me; there is more danger in woods and purling streams than in an assembly or a playhouse. When a beautiful grove is your theatre, a murmuring cascade your music, nature's flowery landscapes your scene, heaven only the spectator, and a pretty fellow the actor—the Lord knows what the play will be:

VERMILIA. But I hope this five months' absence has restored you to a perfect *statu quo*.

LADY MATCHLESS. Had he pursued his conquest then, I

am afraid I should have fallen before him, but he has given resolution time to rally, and I am now so fortified against him that all his attacks would prove in vain.

VERMILIA. Be not too confident, for I have heard military men say, that a garrison, to be secure, should have its works well manned as well as strong.

SCENE II.

To them, CATCHIT.

CATCHIT. Madam, your ladyship's coach is at the door.

LADY MATCHLESS. Come, my dear; by this, I believe the Park begins to fill.

VERMILIA. I am ready to wait on you, my dear. Catchit, if Mr. Malvil comes, you may tell him where I'm gone.

CATCHIT. Yes, madam.

SCENE III.

CATCHIT. [*Alone.*] Well, sure nature has not a more ridiculous creature than a jealous lover. Never did a lady in my profession get more by forging smiles and favourable expressions from a mistress, than I, by making Mr. Malvil believe mine values him less than she does. He has promised me a diamond ring to discover his rival. Ay, but how shall I discover his rival, when he has none? Hum! suppose I make him one! Ay, but that may make mischief; well, but that must make for me. Well then. But who shall this rival be? Ha, Mr. Merital is a favourite of my lady, and is often here. There is an appointment too between him and Helena to meet here at five——my lady will be at home too. Now if I could but persuade Malvil that that assignation was meant with him. [*Stands considering.*]

SCENE IV.

MALVIL, CATCHIT.

MALVIL. Your servant, pretty Mrs. Catchit. What is that pretty head of yours meditating on?

CATCHIT. Whatever it be, sir, it is for your service; you will be the death of me, you will. I am always contriving, and plotting, and studying, and lying, and swearing, for you.

MALVIL. And you shall see no end of my gratitude.

CATCHIT. Nor no beginning either, I am afraid: you are in my debt at least five hundred pound at the rate of a guinea a perjury: if I had carried them to Westminster Hall I had made a better bargain.

MALVIL. Let me enjoy that dear cold mistress of thine, and thou shalt be paid.

CATCHIT. I fear that's an uncertain condition.

MALVIL. Ha! what say you?

CATCHIT. Why, sir, I say that—I say, sir, that you have the prettiest ring on your finger there.

MALVIL. 'Sdeath! do not torture me.

CATCHIT. It sparkles so sweetly.

MALVIL. Come, you have discovered something. I have a rival then. Vermilia is a jilt.

CATCHIT. Yes, marry, have you.

MALVIL. Be quick, dear tormentor.

CATCHIT. Well, it is the prettiest ring I ever saw.

MALVIL. Here, take it, take anything, tell me but all thou knowest.

CATCHIT. O your servant, sir; well, you are a charming man, and one can deny you nothing. I have made such a discovery.

MALVIL. O dear, dear rogue!

CATCHIT. This very morning has my lady been praising a certain gentleman with such raptures; running him over

from head to foot with so much admiration and fondness! then every now and then, Catchit, (says she) don't you think him an angel? Hum! a very dark one (says I). Did you ever see such eyes, such teeth, such a mouth? (says she). In my opinion, they are all very poor (says I). Then such a shape! such an air (says she)! Why, ay, the man would do for a dancing-master (says I). Lud! madam (says I), would you would think of poor Mr. Malvil. (And, to be sure, the tears stood in my eyes when I said it.) O no (says she), I will think of none but Merital. Then (says I)——

MALVIL. Torments and furies! Merital!

CATCHIT. My mistress dotes on him and has appointed to meet him.

MALVIL. How? where? when?

CATCHIT. Here, at five.

MALVIL. 'Sdeath! 'tis impossible.

CATCHIT. It may be impossible, perhaps; but it is true.

MALVIL. Merital a villain! Vermilia a jilt, then the whole world's an illusion. [*Walks and speaks disorderly.*]
D'ye hear; do not disclose a word of this to any one.

CATCHIT. You may depend on me, sir.

MALVIL. But where's Vermilia?

CATCHIT. Gone to the Park with Lady Matchless.

MALVIL. Be secret, and be diligent, and you shall not repent your pains.

CATCHIT. Not whilst you have jealousy in your head, and money in your pocket, signior. Well, how this affair will end I know not; but I am sure the beginning has been good. [*Kisses the ring.*]

SCENE V.—SIR POSITIVE TRAP'S *House.*

LADY TRAP, HELENA.

HELENA. To be sold! to be put up at auction! to be disposed of, as a piece of goods, by way of bargain and sale.

LADY TRAP. Niece, niece, you are dealt with, as a piece of rich goods; you are to be disposed of at a high price; Sir Positive understands the world, and will make good conditions for you. You will have a young gentleman, and a pretty gentleman.

HELENA. Yes; if a good estate can make a pretty gentleman.

LADY TRAP. Sooner than a pretty gentleman can make a good estate. The pretty gentlemen of our age know better how to spend, than to get one.

HELENA. Well, well, madam, my own fortune is sufficient to make the man I love happy. And he shall be one whose merit is his only riches, not whose riches are his only merit.

LADY TRAP. The man you love! O impudence! I would be ashamed, was I a young woman, to be even thought to have an indecent passion for a particular young fellow.

HELENA. I would, indeed, be ashamed, was I an old woman, to be known to have an indecent passion for all fellows in general.

LADY TRAP. Audacious! dare you reflect on me! on me for fellows! who am notorious for my abhorrence of that beastly sex. The young women of our age, really, are enough to put one out of countenance.

HELENA. Youth, madam, always will put age out of countenance in beauty, as age will youth in wisdom; therefore pray, aunt, don't you pretend to the one, and I'll resign all pretensions to the other.

LADY TRAP. Do you think you have so much beauty then, miss?

HELENA. I think I have enough to do so small an execution; and, I am sure, I have enough to please myself, and him I desire to please; let the rest of the world think what they will, 'tis not worth my care; I have no ambition to be toasted in every company of men, and roasted in every assembly of women: for the envy of women is a necessary consequence of the admiration of the men.

SCENE VI.

To them, SIR POSITIVE TRAP.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. What lie are you telling? ha!

LADY TRAP. Justify me, deary, justify me; your niece says I have an indecent passion for your whole sex.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. That I will, by the family of the Traps. So far from that, hussy, she hates our whole sex; she has hardly a decent passion for her own husband, because he's a man.

HELENA. You have hit the nail on the head, my dear uncle.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Hussy, hussy, you are a disgrace to the family of the Traps. I can hardly believe Sir Nicodemus Trap to have been your grandfather, Sir Gregory your father, and Sir Positive your uncle.

HELENA. Surfeiting genealogy! ha, ha, ha!

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Do you ridicule your ancestors, the illustrious race of Traps?

HELENA. No, sir; I honour them so far that I am resolved not to take a fool into the family.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Do you mean Sir Apish, minx? Do you call a baronet a fool, and one of so ancient a house? Hussy, the Simples and the Traps are the two ancientest houses in England. Don't provoke me, don't provoke me, I say; I'll send for Sir Apish immediately: and you shall be wedded, bedded, and executed in half an hour.

HELENA. Indeed! executed? O barbarous!

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. These girls love plain-dealing. She wants it *in puris naturalibus*. [Half aside.]

LADY TRAP. Had you heard her just now, you would have thought her ripe for anything; I protest she made me blush.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. O monstrous! make my lady wife blush!

HELENA. She who did that, I am sure, was ripe for any thing.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Hussy, you are no Trap; you have nothing of the Traps in you. The midwife put a cheat on Sir Gregory.

LADY TRAP. I have wondered how a creature of such principles could spring up in a family so noted for the purity of its women.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. She shall change her name to-morrow; prepare to receive Sir Apish, for this is the last day of your virginity.

HELENA. Do you look on my consent as unnecessary then? for he has never made any addresses to me.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Addresses to you! Why I never saw my lady there till an hour before our marriage. I made my addresses to her father, her father to his lawyer, the lawyer to my estate, which being found a Smithfield equivalent—the bargain was struck. Addressing quotha! What need have young people of addressing, or anything, till they come to undressing?

LADY TRAP. Ay, this courtship is an abominable, diabolical practice, and the parent of nothing but lies and flattery. The first who used it was the serpent to beguile Eve.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Oons! and it hath beguiled above half the women since. I hope to see the time, when a man may carry his daughter to market with the same lawful authority as any other of his cattle. But for you, madam, to-morrow's your wedding-day; I have said it, and I am positive.

HELENA. Yes. But know, uncle of mine, that I am a woman, and may be as positive as you; and so your servant.

LADY TRAP. After her, honey! don't leave her to herself in this rage.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. I'll bring her to herself, by the right hand of the Traps.

SCENE VII.

LADY TRAP. [*Alone.*] If Helena be Sir Simple's to-morrow, I have but this day for my design on Merital. Some way he must know my love. But should he reject it, and betray me? Why, if he does, 'tis but denying it bravely, and my reserved behaviour has raised me such a reputation of virtue that he would not be believed. Yet how to let him know? Should I write! that were too sure a testimony against me; and yet that's the only way. My niece goes to Lady Matchless's this evening; I'll make him an assignation, in her name, to meet by dark in the dining-room. But how to make it in her name? [*Pauses.*] Ha! I have thought of a way, and will about it instantly.

SCENE VIII.

HELENA and SIR POSITIVE TRAP.

HELENA. Don't tease me so, dear uncle. I can never like a fool, I abhor a fop.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. But there are three thousand pounds a year, and a title; do you abhor those, hussy?

HELENA. His estate I don't want, and his title I despise.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Very fine! very fine! Despise a title! Hussy, you are no Trap. Oons! I believe you are no woman either. What, would you take a scandalous, sneaking Mister? one who can't make you a lady?

HELENA. Since nothing else will do, I am engaged by all the strength of vows and honour.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Engaged? Why, was not the widow Jilt engaged to Mr. Goodland, and left him immediately on the arrival of Sir Harry Rich, whom she left again for my Lord Richmore? Never tell me of engagements, contracts, and I don't know what. Mere bugbears to frighten children

with; all women of sense laugh at them. You are no more obliged to stand to your word when you have promised a man than when you have refused him. The law dissolves all contracts without a valuable consideration; or, if it did not, a valuable consideration would dissolve the law.

HELENA. Perhaps, sir, I'll never marry at all.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Hussy, hussy, you have a sanguine constitution. You will either marry or do worse.

HELENA. In my opinion, I can't do worse than to marry a fool.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. A very fine notion indeed!—I must sell her soon, or she will go off but as a piece of second-hand goods. [*Aside.*]

SCENE IX.

To them, LADY TRAP with a letter.

LADY TRAP. O, my dear, see what good luck has presented us with. A letter from your niece to Merital.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP *reads*:

“DEAR SIR,—This afternoon my uncle will be abroad, to-morrow I am intended for Sir Apish. I need say no more than at six this evening you will find, in the dining-room, yours,
HELENA.

“P.S.—I shall be alone, and in the dark; ask no questions, but come up directly.”

But, deary, this is not her hand.

LADY TRAP. Do you think, child, she would not disguise it as much as possible?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. I smell it. I see it. I read it. 'Tis her hand with a witness. See here, thou vile daughter of Sir Gregory. An assignation to a man.

HELENA. Insupportable! to confront me with a forgery!

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Your own forgery, hussy.

LADY TRAP. But, really, it does not look very like her hand.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Let me see, hum! 'tis not exactly, very, very like. Methinks, 'tis not like at all.

[*Looking through spectacles.*]

LADY TRAP. This may be some counterfeit. I would engage my honour she is innocent. Copy it over before your uncle, my dear, that will be a conviction.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Copy it over before Sir Positive, hussy.

HELENA. Bring pen, ink, and paper there. You shall not have the least pretence to accuse me.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. I would not have thee guilty for the world. I would not have such a disgrace fall on our noble and ancient family. It might render us ridiculous to every upstart.

[*Here a servant brings pen, &c., Helena writes.*]

LADY TRAP. O horrible! write to a man! had I held a pen, at her age, with that design, my hand would have shook so that I should have spilt my ink with the bare apprehension.

HELENA. Now, sir, be convinced, and justify me.

[*Giving the letter with the copy to Sir Positive Trap.*]

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. There is, indeed, no resemblance.

LADY TRAP. Are you blind? they are both alike to a tittle.

[*Taking them.*]

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. To a dot. Her hand to a dot. I'll send for Sir Apish immediately. I smell it, a rank plot! I smell it.

HELENA. You have out-faced me bravely before Sir Positive. You may not, perhaps, do so before an impartial judge.

SCENE X.

LADY TRAP. [*Alone.*] It is strange that women should contend for wit in a husband, when they may enjoy such an advantage from having a fool.

SCENE XI.—*St. James's Park.*

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, MERITAL, RATTLE.

MERITAL. Indeed, Vermilia, it is very barbarous in you to torment poor Malvil so. Don't you think, if you should drive him to any desperate extremity, you would have a great deal to answer for? And I assure you, by words he has lately dropt, I fear he has some such design.

RATTLE. Don't you imagine, widow, that an humble servant of yours is in as much danger?

LADY MATCHLESS. If he be, I wish him a safe deliverance.

VERMILIA. Would he have me believe him mad enough to run his neck into one noose, because I am not mad enough to run mine into a worse? No, no. You all use those words, ropes, daggers, swords and pistols, only as embellishments of speech; or, if you have any design by them, it is to frighten us, not injure yourselves.

LADY MATCHLESS. But I am resolved not to be alarmed with threats. Let me see a gallant fairly swinging—And then—I'll say, poor Strephon, alas! he did love.

MERITAL. You might justly say, he had more love than reason.

VERMILIA. Why do you attempt then to persuade us into so despicable an opinion of your reason?

MERITAL. Malvil says, that's the surest way to your love: and that the lower we are in your opinion of our sense the higher we are in your favour. He compares those to two scales, of which as the one rises the other falls.

LADY MATCHLESS. And, upon my word, he is in the right; for who expects wit in a lover, any more than good music in an English opera, or common sense in an Italian one!—They are all three absolute farces—Not but I would have the creature be a little rational, and able to divert one in the sullenness of a monkey or a paroquet; so as to sing

half a favourite song, or read a new play, or fill up a party at quadrille.

MERITAL. As a chair does at a country dance, or a country justice a chair at a quarter sessions.

LADY MATCHLESS.—Right. A lover, when he is admitted to cards, ought to be solemnly silent, and observe the motions of his mistress. He must laugh when she laughs, sigh when she sighs. In short, he should be the shadow of her mind. A lady, in the presence of her lover, should never want a looking-glass; as a beau, in the presence of his looking-glass, never wants a mistress.

MERITAL. Since a lover is such a ridiculous thing, madam, e'en turn one into a husband.

LADY MATCHLESS. Ah! the very name throws me into the vapours——

RATTLE. It is a receipt which has cured many a vapoured lady of my acquaintance.

MERITAL. But, Lady Matchless, what would you say to a lover who should address himself to your reason, and try to convince you of the principal end in the formation of woman, and the benefits of matrimony: from the lights of nature and religion disclose to you the system of platonic love, and draw his pretensions from his wisdom, and his arguments from his philosophy?

LADY MATCHLESS. If he had more philosophy than love, I should advise him to seek his cure from that. But if he had more love than philosophy—Mercy upon him!

MERITAL. Then you have just such a lover arrived.

LADY MATCHLESS. Bless us! 'tis not Seneca's ghost, I hope.

MERITAL. No, 'tis the ghost of a departed beau, in the habit of a country 'squire, with the sentiments of an Athenian philosopher, and the passion of an Arcadian swain.

LADY MATCHLESS. This must be Wisemore. [*Aside.*]

VERMILIA. A motley piece, indeed. I fancy, my dear, there is as ridiculous a variety in this one, as in all the rest of your admirers.

RATTLE. Variety enough: for by his dress you would

imagine he came from North Friezland, and his manners seem piping hot from the Cape of Good Hope.

LADY MATCHLESS. Fie! you rally.

MERITAL. Why, positively, the poor man is an apter object of pity than of raillery, and would better become an elegy than a lampoon. He looked as melancholy, as ill-natured, and as absurd, as I've seen a young poet who could not out-live the third night.

RATTLE. —Or an old bridegroom who has outlived the third night.

VERMILIA. Dear Matchless, let us turn; for I see one coming whom I would avoid.

MERITAL. You won't be so cruel! I'll discover you.

VERMILIA. Do: and I will revenge myself on you to Helena.

SCENE XII.

MALVIL, MERITAL.

MALVIL. Who are those fine ladies you parted from?

MERITAL. Some of Rattle's acquaintance.

MALVIL. Was not Vermilia there?

MERITAL. She was.

MALVIL. Do you act friendly, Merital?

MERITAL. Ay, faith! and very friendly; for I have been pleading your cause with the same earnestness as if I had been your counsel in the affair. I have been a sort of proxy to you.

MALVIL. Confusion! [*Aside.*

MERITAL. Why, thou art jealous, I believe. Come, do we dine together?

MALVIL. I am engaged, but will meet at five.

MERITAL. Nay, then I am engaged, and to meet a mistress.

MALVIL. A mistress at five!

MERITAL. Ay, sir, and such a mistress—But I see some-

thing has put you out of humour: so I will not expatiate on my happiness: for I know lovers are, of all creatures, the most subject to envy. So, your servant.

SCENE XIII.

MALVIL. [*Alone.*] And thou shalt find they are subject to rage too. Do you laugh at your successful villainy! Yet his open carriage would persuade me he has no ill design. This morning too he told me of another mistress. But that may be false, and only intended to blind my suspicions. It must be so. Vermilia's fond expressions, her appointment, his denying her. O they are glaring proofs! and I am now convinced. Yet all these appearances may be delusions. Well, I will once more see her. If I find her innocent, I am happy; if not, the knowing her guilt may cure my love. But anxiety is the greatest of torments.

In doubt, as in the dark, things sad appear,
More dismal, and more horrid than they are.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—LADY MATCHLESS'S *House*.

MALVIL, VERMILIA.

MALVIL. How have I deserved this usage, madam? By what behaviour of mine have I provoked you to make me that despicable thing, the dangler after a woman who is carrying on an affair with another man?

VERMILIA. An affair, sir?

MALVIL. You know too well the justice of my accusation,

nor am I a stranger to your soft, languishing fondness, your wanton praises of my rival, of Merital, your walking in the Park, your appointment with him.

VERMILIA. O jealousy, thou child and bane of love! Rash, dreaming madman, could you awake from your errors, and see how grossly you abuse me, if you had the least spark of humanity left, it would raise a flame of horror in your soul.

MALVIL. O, it were worse than ten thousand deaths to find I have wronged you, and I would undergo them all to prove you innocent.

VERMILIA. To think you innocent, I must think you mad. Invention cannot counterfeit any other excuse.

MALVIL. A reflection on your own conduct, madam, will justify every part of mine, but my love.

VERMILIA. Name not that noble passion. A savage is as capable of it as thou art. And do you tax me with my love to Merital. He has as many virtues as thou hast blemishes. The proudest of our sex might glory in his addresses, the meanest might be ashamed of thine. Go, curse thy fate, and nature, which has made thee an object of our scorn: but thank thy jealousy, which has discovered to thee that thou art the derision of a successful rival, and my aversion.

SCENE II.

MALVIL, CATCHIT, [*Malvil stands as in amaze.*]

CATCHIT. O gemini! Sir, what's the matter? I met my mistress in the greatest rage.

MALVIL. You know enough not to have asked that. Here, take this letter, and when Merital comes to his appointment, you will find an opportunity to deliver it him. Be sure to do it before he sees your mistress; for I have contrived a scheme in it that will ruin him for ever with her.—You will deliver it carefully?

CATCHIT. Yes, indeed, sir.

MALVIL. And learn what you can, and come to my lodgings to-morrow morning—take this kiss as an earnest of what I'll do for you.

SCENE III.

CATCHIT. [*Alone.*] Methinks, I long to know what this scheme is. I must know, and I will know. 'Tis but wafer-sealed. I'll open it and read it. But here are the ladies.

SCENE IV.

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

LADY MATCHLESS. Ha, ha, ha! and so the creature has taken a fit of jealousy into his head, and has been raving most tragically! Don't look so dull, dear; what, because he gives himself airs, will you give yourself the vapours?

VERMILIA. I am concerned only that I should ever have favoured him in my opinion.

LADY MATCHLESS. Indeed, you have no cause: for you have revenge in your own hand, since nothing but matrimony will cure his phrenzy.

VERMILIA. Which cure when I afford him, may I—

LADY MATCHLESS. O, no oaths, no imprecations! But, if any, let it be this. When next you are inclined to forgive him, may he be so stubborn as not to ask it; that, I am sure, is curse enough.

VERMILIA. Nay, but, dear Matchless, do not rally me on that subject.

LADY MATCHLESS. Is there any subject fitter for raillery? the wise, you know, have always made a jest of love.

VERMILIA. Yes, and love has made a jest of the wise, who seem to have no other quarrel to it, but that they are the least successful in it.

LADY MATCHLESS. Nay, if you are an advocate for love, I shall think——

VERMILIA. What?

LADY MATCHLESS. That you are in love.

VERMILIA. Well, you are a censorious, ill-natured, teasing——

LADY MATCHLESS. Don't be out of humour, child. I tell you the fellow's your own.

SCENE V.

To them, RATTLE.

RATTLE. Ladies, your humble servant.

LADY MATCHLESS. O, you are most opportunely come, for poor Vermilia is horridly in the vapours, and you are, we know, a skilful physician.

RATTLE. But what signifies the skill of a physician, when the patient will not take his advice?

VERMILIA. When he mistakes the disease, his advice is not like to be safe. And, I assure you, I never was less in the vapours than now.

LADY MATCHLESS. That's a dangerous symptom: for when a sick lady thinks herself well, her fever must be very high.

RATTLE. Pox take her! would she was dead! for she's always in my way. *[Aside.*

VERMILIA. This is acting physicians, indeed, to persuade me into a distemper.

RATTLE. I believe, madam, you are in very little danger. But, widow, the whole town wonders you are not surfeited with so much courtship.

VERMILIA. Courtship, Mr. Rattle, is a dish adapted to the palate of our sex.

RATTLE. But there is a second course more agreeable, and better adapted to a lady's palate. Courtship is but a long,

dull grace to a rich entertainment, both equally banes to sharp-set appetite, and equally out of fashion; the beau-monde say only *Benedicite*, and then fall on.

LADY MATCHLESS. No; courtship is to marriage, like a fine avenue to an old falling mansion beautified with a painted front; but no sooner is the door shut on us, than we discover an old, shabby, out-of-fashioned hall, whose only ornaments are a set of branching stag's horns—lamentable emblems of matrimony.

SCENE VI.

LADY MATCHLESS, LORD FORMAL, VERMILIA, RATTLE.

LORD FORMAL. Ladies, I am your most obedient and obsequious humble servant. Mr. Rattle, I am your devoted.

RATTLE. That's an over-strained compliment, my lord: we all know you are entirely devoted to the ladies.

LADY MATCHLESS. That's an over-strained compliment to us; for we must be all proud of so elegant a *devoté*!

LORD FORMAL. Your ladyship has infused more pride into the ingredients of my nature by that one word than ever was in them since their first mingling into man. And if my title, or the opinion which the world has (I will not say justly) conceived of me, can render me agreeable to the fountain of beauty, I would, with pleasure, throw off all other canals, and let the pure current of my joys flow from her alone.

LADY MATCHLESS. That were to draw the envy of the whole world on me; and would be as unreasonable as a desire to monopolise the light of the sun.

LORD FORMAL. As your ladyship says, I have been compared to the sun. But the comparison will break, if pursued; for the sun shines on all alike; whereas my influence would be strictly confined to one centre.

RATTLE. Methinks, my lord, you who profess good-breeding, should be less particular before ladies.

VERMILIA. O, we may excuse particularity in a lover; besides, Lord Formal is so perfect a master of good-breeding, that if he launched a little out of the common road, the world would esteem it a precedent, and not an error.

LADY MATCHLESS. O, we shall never outshine the court of France, till Lord Formal is at the head of *les affaires de beau-monde*.

LORD FORMAL. Your ladyship's compliments are such an inundation, that they hurry the weak return of mine down their stream. But, really, I have been at some pains to inculcate principles of good-breeding, and laid down some rules concerning distance, submission, ceremonies, laughing, sighing, ogling, visits, affronts, respect, pride, love.

VERMILIA. Has your lordship published this book? It must be mightily read, for it promises much—And then the name of the author—

RATTLE. [*Aside.*] Promises nothing.

LORD FORMAL. Why, I am not determined to print it at all: for there are an ill-bred set of people called critics, whom I have no great notion of encountering.

SCENE VII.

To them, SIR POSITIVE TRAP, SIR APISH SIMPLE, HELENA.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Ladies, your humble servant; your servant, gentlemen.

LADY MATCHLESS. You are a great stranger, Sir Positive.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Ay, cousin, you must not take our not visiting you oftener amiss, for I am full of business, and she there, poor girl, is never easy but when she is at home. The Traps are no gadding family, our women stay at home and do business.

RATTLE. [*Aside.*] Their husbands' business, I believe.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. They are none of our fidgeting, flirting, flaunting lasses, that sleep all the morning, dress all the

afternoon, and card it all night. Our daughters rise before the sun, and go to bed with him: The Traps are housewives, cousin. We teach our daughters to make a pie instead of a curtsey, and that good old English art of clear-starching, instead of that heathenish gambol called dancing.

LORD FORMAL. Sir, give me leave to presume to ask your pardon.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Why, sir father of mine, you will not speak against dancing before the ladies. Clear-starching, indeed! you will pardon him, madam? Sir Positive is a little *à la campagne*.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Dancing begets warmth, which is the parent of wantonness. It is, sir, the great grandfather of cuckoldom.

LORD FORMAL. O, inhuman! it is the most glorious invention that has been conceived by the imagination of mankind, and the most perfect mark that distinguishes us from the brutes.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Ay, sir, it may serve some, perhaps; but the Traps have always had reason to distinguish them.

LORD FORMAL. You seem to have misunderstood me, sir; I mean the polite world from the savage.

LADY MATCHLESS. Have you seen the new opera, cousin Helena?

HELENA. I never saw an opera, cousin; and, indeed, I have a great curiosity——

LORD FORMAL. May I presume on the honour of waiting on you?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Sir, sir, my niece has an antipathy to music, it always makes her head ache.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Ha, ha, ha! music makes a lady's head ache!

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Ay, and her husband's heart ache too, by the right hand of the Traps.

LORD FORMAL. Pray, sir, who are the Traps?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Why, sir, the Traps are a venerable family. We have had, at least, fifty knights of the shire,

deputy lieutenants, and colonels of the militia in it. Perhaps the Grand Mogul has not a nobler coat of arms. It is, sir, a lion rampant, with a wolf couchant, and a cat courant, in a field gules.

LORD FORMAL. It wants nothing but supporters to be very noble, truly.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Supporters, sir! it has six thousand a year to support its nobility, and six thousand years to support its antiquity.

LORD FORMAL. You will give me leave to presume, sir, with all the deference imaginable to your superiority of judgment, to doubt whether it be practicable to confer the title of noble on any coat of arms that labours under the deplorable deficiency of a coronet.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. How, sir! do you detract from the nobility of my coat of arms? If you do, sir, I must tell you, you labour under a deficiency of common sense.

LADY MATCHLESS. O fie, Sir Positive! you are too severe on his lordship.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. He is a lord then! and what of that? An old English baronet is above a lord. A title of yesterday! an innovation! who were lords, I wonder, in the time of Sir Julius Cæsar? And it is plain he was a baronet, by his being called by his Christian name.

VERMILIA. Christened name! I apprehend, sir, that Cæsar lived before the time of Christianity.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. And what then, madam? he might be a baronet without being a Christian, I hope. But I don't suppose our antiquity will recommend us to you: for women love upstarts, by the right hand of the Traps.

SCENE VIII.

To them, WISEMORE.

WISEMORE. Ha! grant me patience, Heaven. Madam, if five months' absence has not effaced the remembrance of what

has passed between us, you will recollect me with blushing cheeks. Not to blush now were to forsake your sex.

LADY MATCHLESS. You have forsaken your humanity, sir, to affront me thus publicly.

WISEMORE. How was I deceived by my opinion of your good sense! but London would seduce a saint. A widow no sooner comes to this vile town, than she keeps open house for all guests. All, all are welcome. Your hatchments were at first intended to repel visitants; but they are now hung out for the same hospitable end as the bills, "Lodgings to let;" with this difference only, that the one invites to a mercenary, the other to a free tenement.

RATTLE. This behaviour, sir, will not be suffered here.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. No, sir, this behaviour, sir, will not be suffered here, sir.

LORD FORMAL. Upon my title, it is not altogether consonant to the rules of consummate good-breeding.

LADY MATCHLESS. Pray, gentlemen, take no notice.

WISEMORE. Madam, I may have been too rude; I hope you'll pardon me. The sudden surprise of such a sight hurried away my senses, as if I sympathised with the objects I beheld. But I have recovered them. My reason cools, and I can now paint out your errors. Start not at that word, nor be offended that I do it before so many of your admirers: for tho' my colours be never so lively, the weak eye of their understanding is too dim to distinguish them. They will take them for beauties: they will adore you for them. You may have a coronet, doubtless. A large jointure is as good a title to a lord, as a coronet is to a fine lady.

LADY MATCHLESS. Ha, ha, ha! witty, I protest, and true; for, in my opinion, a lord is the prettiest thing in the world.

LORD FORMAL. And your ladyship may make him the happiest thing in the world.

WISEMORE. O nature, nature, why didst thou form woman, in beauty the masterpiece of creation, and give her a soul capable of being caught with the tinsel outside of such a fop as this! this empty, gaudy, nameless thing!

LORD FORMAL. Let me presume to tell you, that nameless thing will be agreeable to the ladies, in spite of your envy.

WISEMORE. Madam, by all that's heavenly, I love you more than life; would I might not say, than wisdom. If it be not in my power to merit a return, let me obtain this grant, that you would banish from you these knaves, these vultures; wolves are more merciful than they. What is their desire, but to riot in your plenty? to sacrifice your boundless stores to their licentious appetites? to pay their desponding creditors with your gold? to ravage you, ruin you; nay, to make you curse that auspicious day which gave you birth!

LORD FORMAL. This is the rudest gentleman that ever offended my ears since they first enjoyed the faculty of hearing. [Aside.

VERMILIA. This is very unaccountable, methinks.

LADY MATCHLESS. Lord, my dear, don't you know he has been formerly a beau? and was, indeed, very well received in his time; till going down into the country, and shutting himself up in a study among a set of paper-philosophers, he, who went in a butterfly, came out a book-worm. Ha, ha, ha!

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha!

WISEMORE. When once a lady's raillery is set a running, it very seldom stops till it has exhausted all her wit.

RATTLE. Agad, I would advise you to wade off before the stream's too high; for your philosophy will be sure to sink you.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Ay, ay, sink sure enough: for, by the right hand of the Traps, a lady's wit is seldom any thing but froth.

RATTLE. I have seen it make many a wise 'squire froth at the mouth before now.

VERMILIA. That must be a very likely sign of a lover indeed.

WISEMORE. O very, very likely; for it is a certain sign of a madman.

LORD FORMAL. If those are synonymous terms, I have long since entered into a state of distraction.

WISEMORE. If I stay, I shall be mad, indeed. Madam,

farewell; may Heaven open your eyes before you are shut into perdition!

SCENE IX.

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, HELENA, LORD FORMAL, SIR POSITIVE TRAP, SIR APISH SIMPLE, AND RATTLE.

LADY MATCHLESS. Ha, ha, ha! rustic! Did you ever, ever see such a creature?

LORD FORMAL. No, upon my title; nor am I perfectly determinate what species of animal to assign him to, unless he be one of those barbarous insects the polite call country 'squires.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Barbarous! Sir, I'd have you know there are not better-natured people alive.

HELENA. [*Aside.*] I am uneasy at this disappointment of Merital.—Sir, my aunt will be at home before us.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. So she will, chucky. Lookee, cousin, you see the Traps don't love gadding.

LORD FORMAL. May I presume to lead you to your coach?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Sir, I always lead my niece myself: it's the custom of the Traps.

LORD FORMAL. Sir, your most obedient and obsequious humble servant.

SCENE X.

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, LORD FORMAL, SIR APISH SIMPLE, AND RATTLE.

LORD FORMAL. If they are all like you, the Traps are the worst-bred family in Europe. [*Aside.*] I presume that gentleman has some heiress with him.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Why, she is to be my wife to-morrow morning.

LADY MATCHLESS. How, Sir Apish! this is surprising.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Why, indeed, I do not like country education; but then I consider that the town air will produce town breeding; for there was Lady Rig, who, when she first came to town, nothing was ever so awkward. But now she swims a minuet, and sits you eight-and-forty hours at quadrille.

LORD FORMAL. Her ladyship is indebted to my instructions; for 'tis well known, before I had the honour of her acquaintance, she has publicly spoke against that divine collection of polite learning written by Mr. Gulliver: but now, the very moment it is named, she breaks out into the prettiest exclamation, and cries, O the dear, sweet, pretty, little creatures! Oh, gemini! would I had been born a Lilliputian!

LADY MATCHLESS. But methinks, Sir Apish, a lady who has seen the world should be more agreeable to one of your refined taste: besides, I have heard you say you like a widow.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Ah! l'amour! a perfect declaration! she is in love with me, mardie! [*Aside.*] Ah! madam, if I durst declare it, there is a certain person in the world, who, in a certain person's eye, is a more agreeable person than any person, amongst all the persons, whom persons think agreeable persons.

LADY MATCHLESS. Whoever that person is, she, certainly, is a very happy person.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Ah! madam, my eyes sufficiently and evidently declare, that that person is no other person than your ladyship's own person.

LADY MATCHLESS. Nay, all this I have drawn on myself.

LORD FORMAL. Your ladyship's eyes are two loadstones that attract the admiration of our whole sex: their virtues are more refined than the loadstone's; for you, madam, attract the golden part.

RATTLE. Come, gentlemen, are you for the opera?

LORD FORMAL. Oh! by all means. Ladies, your most humble servant.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Your ladyship's everlasting creature.

SCENE XI.

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

VERMILIA. And pray, my dear, what do you mean by an additional lover?

LADY MATCHLESS. To deliver my cousin Helena from so detestable a match. She entreated it of me; and I believe I have now done her business, and am a successful rival.

SCENE XII.

To them, CATCHIT.

CATCHIT. O, madam, I have been waiting this half hour for an opportunity! There's a terrible scene of mischief going forwards. Mr. Malvil has been taxing me about Mr. Merital; and so I let drop a few words, and so he has taken a fit of jealousy, and so see the consequences.

[Gives an open letter.

VERMILLA. Ha! 'tis a challenge! How came you by it?

CATCHIT. Why, madam, he had heard that Mr. Merital had an appointment here, and so he desired me to give him this letter, and so, and so——

VERMILIA. And so you had the curiosity to open it.

LADY MATCHLESS. Since it has given us an opportunity to prevent mischief, you must pardon her.

VERMILIA. Prevent! No, I'll further it rather.

LADY MATCHLESS. But, my dear, consider here is the life of the innocent as well as the guilty at stake.

CATCHIT. O, dear madam, don't let poor Mr. Merital suffer for my fault!

VERMILIA. Your fault?

CATCHIT. If you will pardon me, madam, I'll discover the whole mistake.

LADY MATCHLESS. On that condition, I'll assure your pardon.

CATCHIT. Why, madam, I had heard that Mrs. Helena was to be here at five, and so I sent word to Mr. Merital; and Mr. Malvil coming in at that time (which was when your ladyship went to the Park this morning), I dropt a word or two about meeting a mistress here; and so, I suppose, he thought it was your ladyship; and so, this afternoon he gave me a letter, which, I must own, my curiosity——

VERMILIA. Very fine, indeed!

LADY MATCHLESS. I have a thought just risen, which may turn this accident into a very lucky scene of diversion. Mistress Catchit, can you not change the name of Merital on the superscription into that of Wisemore?

CATCHIT. O, madam, I am dexterous at those things!

LADY MATCHLESS. Come in, then, and I'll tell you farther. Give me your hand, Vermilia: take my word for it, child, the men are very silly creatures; therefore let us laugh at mankind,

And teach them, that, in spite of all their scorn,
Our slaves they are, and for our service born.

SCENE XIII.—SIR POSITIVE TRAP'S *House*.

LADY TRAP *discovered, and then* MERITAL.

LADY TRAP. Every thing is prepared; now is the happy hour. I hear some steps; 'tis surely he. Who's there? my love?

MERITAL. My life! my soul! my joy!

LADY TRAP. Soft, my aunt will hear us.

MERITAL. O, name her not. She is a perfect antidote to love. Let these blessed moments be spent in nothing but

soft caresses. O! let me breathe out my fond soul on thy lips, and let thine own inform thee what I'd say. It will, I know, be tender as my thoughts.

LADY TRAP. [*Aside.*] What fools men are to make bustles about particular women, when they know not one from another in the dark?

MERITAL. But say, my life, what method shall I contrive for your escape? Consider you are in the jaws of wretches, who would, for a little profit, see you miserable for ever.

LADY TRAP. I must blame my ill-advised boldness, in trusting myself alone, even with you. I fear the frailty of my own sex, and the strength of yours.

MERITAL. Not infant babes can love their tender mothers with more innocence. Sure my Helena has observed nothing in my conduct to ground such a suspicion on. But let us not trifle: go with me now; do not trust your aunt; she has cunning enough to deceive a thousand Arguses.

LADY TRAP. Nay, you have no reason to asperse my aunt; she always speaks well of you, and I hate ingratitude.

[*Here HELENA entering with a candle, overhearing LADY TRAP, blows it out, retires to the corner of the scene, and listens.*]

MERITAL. 'Tis the aunt herself. What a nose have I, to mistake a bunch of hemlock for a nosegay of violets! I don't know the meaning of this; but I'll try how far she will carry it; perhaps I may blind her suspicions for the future. [*Aside.*] Come, come, madam, contrive some way for an escape, or I shall make use of the present opportunity. My passion must be cooled.

LADY TRAP. [*In a low voice.*] I'll call my aunt, if you dare attempt.

MERITAL. She is here already, madam. Ha, ha, ha! did you think I did not know a fine woman from a green girl? Could not my warm, vigorous kisses inform you that I knew on whom they were bestowed? You must long since have discovered my passion for your niece to have been a counterfeit, a covering on my flame for you. Be assured, madam, she has nothing agreeable to me but her fortune. Would you



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hemlock for a nosegay of violets!

From an original painting by E. J. Read.

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From an original painting by E. A. Ward



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manage wisely, you might secure yourself a gallant, and your gallant an estate.

LADY TRAP. Could I believe you, sir, it were an affront to my virtue.

MERITAL. Ah! madam, whom did you expect just now, when, with a languishing sigh, you cried, Who's there? my love? That's not a name for a husband.

LADY TRAP. Since I am discovered, I will own—

MERITAL. Let me kiss away the dear word.—Brandy and assafœtida, by Jupiter. *[Aside.]*

LADY TRAP. But will you be a man of honour?

MERITAL. *[Aloud.]* For ever, madam, for ever, whilst those bright eyes conquer all they behold. The devil's in it if this does not alarm somebody. *[Aside.]*

LADY TRAP. Softly, sir, you will raise the house.

MERITAL. *[Aside.]* I am sure I never wanted relief more—

LADY TRAP. Ha! I am alone, in the dark, a bedchamber by, if you should attempt my honour, who knows what the frailty of my sex may consent to? Or, if you should force me, am I, poor weak woman, able to resist? Ay, but then there is law and justice; yet you may depend too fatally on my good nature.

MERITAL. Consider, madam, you are in my power; remember your declaration. I had your love from your own dear lips. Consider well the temptation of so much beauty, the height of my offered joys, the time, the place, and the violence of my passion. Think of this, madam, and you can expect no other than that I should this moment seize on all my transports.

LADY TRAP. If you should—Heaven forgive you.

MERITAL. *[Louder still.]* Yet, to convince you of my generosity, you are at your liberty. I will do nothing without your consent.

LADY TRAP. Then to show you what a confidence I repose in your virtue, I vow to grant whate'er you ask.

MERITAL. *[Very loud.]* And to show you how well I deserve that confidence, I vow never to tempt your virtuous

ears with love again; but try, by your example, to reduce licentious passion to pure Platonic love.

SCENE XIV.

HELENA *behind*, with SIR POSITIVE TRAP *with a broadsword*.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. I hear 'em, I hear 'em.

LADY TRAP. Ha! Sir Positive's voice! Avaunt, nor think all thy entreaties shall avail against my virtue, or that it is in the power of all mankind to make me wrong the best, the kindest of husbands. I swear I never will even in thought, more than at this moment.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. O! incomparable virtue! what an excellent lady have I! Lights there, lights!

[Servants bring lights.

LADY TRAP. O! my dear, you are most seasonably come; for I was hardly able to resist him.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. What's your business here, sir?

MERITAL. My usual business, sir, cuckoldom. My design is against your worship's head and your lady's heart.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. A very pretty gentleman! And so, sir, you are beginning with my wife first?

MERITAL. Yes, sir, the easiest way to the husband is through the wife.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Come away, lady wife; come away, niece. Sir, there's the door: the next time I catch you here, I may, perhaps, teach you what it is to make a cuckold of Sir Positive Trap.

HELENA. Assure yourself I'll speak to you no more.

LADY TRAP. Au! the monster!

MERITAL. Your monster is gone before, madam.—So, whilst I am trying to blind the aunt with a pretended passion for her, the niece overhears, and she'll speak to me no more! —There never comes any good making love to an old woman.

SCENE XV.—WISEMORE'S lodgings.

WISEMORE (*alone.*) How vain is human reason, when philosophy cannot overcome our passion! when we can see our errors, and yet pursue them. But if to love be an error, why should great minds be the most subject to it? No, the first pair enjoyed it in their state of innocence, whilst error was unborn.

SCENE XVI.

To him, SERVANT with a letter.

SERVANT. A letter, sir.

WISEMORE. [*Reads.*]

“Sir,—You, who are conscious of being secretly my rival in the midst of an intimate friendship, will not be surprised when I desire that word may be cancelled between us, and that you would not fail me to-morrow at seven in Hyde Park.

“Your injured,

“MALVIL.”

What can this mean? Ha! here's a postscript.

“P.S. Your poor colourings of love for another woman, which you put on this morning, has confirmed, not baffled, my suspicion. I am certain you had no mistress to meet at Lady Matchless's but Vermilia.”

Who brought this letter?

SERVANT. A porter, sir, who said it required no answer.

WISEMORE. What am I to think? am I in a dream? or was this writ in one? Sure madness has possessed the world, and men, like the limbs of a tainted body, universally share the infection. What shall I do! to go is to encounter a

madman, and yet I will. Some strange circumstance may have wrought this delusion, which my presence may dissipate. And, since love and jealousy are his diseases, I ought to pity him, who know by dreadful experience,

When love in an impetuous torrent flows,
 How vainly reason would its force oppose;
 Hurl'd down the stream, like flowers before the wind,
 She leaves to love the empire of the mind.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Hyde Park.*

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, *masqued.*

LADY MATCHLESS. I am sure I saw some one hereabouts, who, by his posture, actions and dress, must be my swain. Well, Vermilia, this sure is the maddest prank—what will the world say?

VERMILIA. The world is a censorious, ill-natured critic, and I despise its cavillings. Besides, I am now grown careless of every thing. O! my dear! it is the most valuable privilege of friendship to disburthen our secrets into one another's bosoms. If you knew those of mine, I am sure you would pity me.

SCENE II.

To them, WISEMORE.

LADY MATCHLESS. I do pity you, indeed, for sure, to be in love——

WISEMORE. Is to be foolish, mad, miserable—To be in love is to be in hell. [*Advancing from behind.*

LADY MATCHLESS. Do you speak from experience, sir?

WISEMORE. From sad experience—I have been in love—so monstrously in love that, like a bow over-bent, I am now relaxed into an opposite extreme—and heartily hate your whole sex.

LADY MATCHLESS. Poor Cardenio! Ha! ha! ha! Be not so disconsolate; you may yet find your Lucinda.

WISEMORE. No, she has lost herself—and in a wilderness.

LADY MATCHLESS. How in a wilderness?

WISEMORE. Ay, in that town, that worst of wildernesses! where follies spread like thorns; where men act the part of tigers, and women of crocodiles; where vice lords it like a lion, and virtue, that phoenix, is so rarely seen, that she is believed a fable—But these sentiments do not please you, so, pray leave me.

VERMILIA. Our company, sir, was your own choice.

LADY MATCHLESS. And now you have raised our curiosity you shall lay it.

WISEMORE. I would have raised the devil sooner, and sooner would I have laid him.—Your curiosity, madam, is a sort of a hydra, which not even Hercules can tame; so dear ladies leave me, or I shall pull off your sham-faces——

LADY MATCHLESS. You would repent it heartily if you did.

WISEMORE. Perhaps so.—I believe, indeed, you show the best part of you.

LADY MATCHLESS. You would give half your soul to see the best part of me.

WISEMORE. Half-a-crown I will. The best sight to me is your back, turn it, and away; you lose your time, indeed you do. What can such as you with a plain honest man like me? Go, seek your game: the beaux will begin to yawn presently, and sots return home from their debauches; strike in there, and you make your fortune, at least, get a dinner, which you may want by staying here.

LADY MATCHLESS. Do not be angry, dear rustic, for we

are both enamouratas as well as you—nay, perhaps I am so with yourself. Hang constancy, you know too much of the world to be constant, sure.

WISEMORE. 'Tis from a knowledge of the world, madam, that I am constant—For I know it has nothing which can pay me for the exchange.

LADY MATCHLESS. Come, come, you would have more modern notions if you knew that a certain woman of fortune has some kind thoughts of you; and, I assure you, I am not what I seem.

WISEMORE. Faith, madam, I should not. Grandeur is to me nauseous as a gilded pill, and fortune, as it can never raise my esteem for the possessor, can never raise my love. My heart is no place of mercenary entertainment, nor owns more than one mistress. Its spacious rooms are all, all hers who slights and despises it. Yes, she has abandoned me, and I will abandon myself to despair; so, pray, leave me to it, for such as you can have no business with the unhappy.

LADY MATCHLESS. Generous, worthy man! [*Aside.*] Romantic nonsense! I tell you I am a woman of family and fortune, perhaps beauty too, and so violently enamoured of your humour, that I am afraid my life is in your power.

WISEMORE. Would your tongue was in my power, though I question, even then, the possibility of stopping it. I wonder the anatomy of a woman's tongue does not enable our modern philosophers to discover a perpetual motion. To me, the Turkish yawl at an onset, the Irish howl at a funeral, or the Indian exclamation at an eclipse, are all soft music to that single noise.—It has no likeness in nature but a rattlesnake; the noise as odious, and the venom as dangerous.

LADY MATCHLESS. But, like a rattlesnake, it gives you warning, and if you will front the danger you must blame your own prowess if you smart for it.

WISEMORE. The serpent practises not half your wiles. He covers not his poison with the cloak of love. Like lawyers, you gild your deceit, and lead us to misery, whilst we imagine ourselves pursuing happiness.

LADY MATCHLESS. Ha! ha! ha! piqued malice! You

have lost an estate for want of money, and a mistress for want of wit.

WISEMORE. Methinks, either of those possessions should be maintained by juster titles.—In my opinion, the only title to the first should be right, and, to the latter, merit, love, and constancy.

LADY MATCHLESS. Ha! ha! ha! Then know, thou romantic hero, that right is a sort of knight-errant, whom we have long since laughed out of the world. Merit is demerit, constancy dulness, and love an out-of-fashion Saxon word, which no polite person understands. Lookee, sir, pull out your purse to a lawyer, and your snuff-box to a lady, and I warrant you carry your point with both.

WISEMORE. The purse may, indeed, win the lawyer, but for the other, you must depend on chance. You may as well teach us a certain method to gain that fickle, airy, imaginary mistress, Fortune, whose emblems you are. For your favours, are as blindly bestowed, as fickle in their duration—and, like Fortune, you often curse him most to whom you seem most kind.

SCENE III.

To them, MALVIL.

MALVIL. Wisemore, and women? My philosopher turned rake? Good morrow, Ned; I see a country gentleman must have his morning walk.

WISEMORE. What does he mean? this coldness ill suits his letter. [*Aside.*] Ay, sir, and you are very seasonably come to my assistance, or I had been devoured by two she-wolves, more ravenous than any in the desarts of America.

MALVIL. Nay, ladies, it was barbarous to attack with odds, and when even singly you might have vanquished.

[*Talks apart with Vermilia.*

WISEMORE. Will you take away your companion, and leave us, for that gentleman and I have business?

LADY MATCHLESS. Not till you agree to an assignation. Promise to meet me barefaced at ten, and I am your servant.

WISEMORE. I'll promise anything to be rid of you.

LADY MATCHLESS. Step aside, then, and I'll give you the signals. [Malvil and Vermilia advance.

VERMILIA. Indeed, so gallant!

MALVIL. O, madam, a lady is never more agreeable to me than at first sight, for, to my temper, a woman palls as much by frequent conversation as enjoyment.

VERMILIA. But how are you sure that first sight will be agreeable?

MALVIL. Why, faith, as no woman has charms enough to engage my constancy to the last, so neither does any want enough to fire my desires at first. But, if thy face be potently ugly, keep it to thyself, and discover only thy beauties. You are young, I am sure, and well-shaped, have a vast share of wit, and very little share of modesty.

VERMILIA. Impudence! In what, pray, have I discovered my want of it?

MALVIL. In your pretension to it, child; and, faith, that's better than the real possession. What is modesty, but a flaming sword to keep mankind out of Paradise? It is a Jack-with-a-lanthorn, that misleads poor women in their roads to happiness. It is the contempt of all society. Lawyers call it the sign of a bad cause, soldiers of cowardice, courtiers of ill breeding, and women—the worst sign of a fool. Indeed it has sometimes made a good cloak for the beauteous, tawdry outside of a lady's reputation, but, like other cloaks, it is now out of fashion, and worn no where but in the country.

VERMILIA. Then, silence your impertinence at once, know, sir, that I'm a woman of fashion, rigidly virtuous, and severely modest.

MALVIL. A blank verse, faith, and may make a figure in a fustian tragedy. Four fine sounding words, and mean just nothing at all.

VERMILIA. I suppose these are sentiments of you fine

modern gentlemen. The beaux of this age, like the critics, will not see perfections in others which they are strangers to themselves. You confine the masterly hand of nature to the narrow bands of your own conceptions.

MALVIL. Why, what have we here? Seneca's morals under a masque.

VERMILIA. I hope that title will prevent your farther perusal.

MALVIL. I'll tell you a way to do it.

VERMILIA. O name it.

MALVIL. Unmasque then. If I like your face no better than your principles, madam, I will immediately take my leave of both.

VERMILIA. That's an uncertainty, I'm afraid, considering the sentiments you just now professed.—Was you, indeed, the hero in love which your friend was there?

MALVIL. No, faith. I have been hero in love long enough.

VERMILIA. What woman was blessed with so faithful an admirer? Pray what was your mistress's name?

MALVIL. Her name was nothing. I was violently enamoured with a constellation of virtues in a fine lady, who had not one in her whole composition.

VERMILIA. And pray, sir, how was you cured of your love?

MALVIL. As children are of their fear when they discover the bugbear.

LADY MATCHLESS. [*Advancing with Wisemore.*] Well, you will be punctual?

VERMILIA. O, my dear, I have met with a discarded lover too, full as romantic as yours.

LADY MATCHLESS. Say you so? then, I believe, these are the two famed heroes in Don Quixote.

WISEMORE. Shall we never lose your prating?

LADY MATCHLESS. Promise not to dodge us.

WISEMORE. Not even to look after you.

LADY MATCHLESS. Adieu then.

VERMILIA. By constancy; ha, ha, ha!

SCENE IV.

WISEMORE, MALVIL.

WISEMORE. Well, sir, you see I am come.

MALVIL. And am very sorry to see it too, Ned, ha, ha, ha!

WISEMORE. This reception, sir, ill agrees with your letter; but 'twere absurd to expect coherences in a madman's behaviour.

MALVIL. What's this?

WISEMORE. Was it, sir, from my expressed abhorrence of this civil butchery you pitched on me as one who would give you the reputation of a duellist without the danger? perhaps, you had rather met with another.

MALVIL. That I had, indeed.

WISEMORE. Death and the devil! did you invite me here to laugh at me?

MALVIL. Are you mad, or in a dream?

WISEMORE. He who denies to-day what he writes yesterday, either dreams, or worse. Your monstrous jealousy, your challenge, and your present behaviour, look like a feverish dream.

MALVIL. Invite! jealousy! challenge! what do you mean?

WISEMORE. [*Shows a letter.*] Read there, then ask my meaning?

MALVIL. [*Reads.*] Ha! my letter to Merital! villainous jade! she has altered the name too on the superscription. I am amused, indeed.

WISEMORE. Well, sir!

MALVIL. Wisemore, be assured my surprise is equal to yours. This letter, I did, indeed, write, but not to you.

WISEMORE. How!

MALVIL. Believe me, on my honour, I did not send it you. His name to whom I designed it is erased, and yours superscribed, I suppose, by the person to whom I entrusted the

delivery. And, be assured, you was not the enemy I wished to meet here.

WISEMORE. What novel's this?

MALVIL. Faith! it may be a pleasant one to you, and no less useful to me. But the morning is late; you shall go home, and breakfast at my lodgings, and, in the way, I will let you into the whole story.

WISEMORE. Whatever it be which clears my friend from the imputation of so wild a delusion must be agreeable to me.

MALVIL. And now we will have our swing at satire against the sex.

WISEMORE. I shall be as severe as a damned poet is on the age.

MALVIL. And, perhaps, for the same reason—at least the world will always give satire on women the names of malice and revenge—whoever aims at it will succeed,

Like a detracting courier in disgrace,
The wise will say, He only wants a place.

SCENE V.—SIR POSITIVE TRAP'S *House*.

HELENA. [*Alone.*] Of three deplorable evils, which shall I choose! to endure the tyranny of an imperious aunt? to venture on a man whose inconstancy I have been an ocular witness of? or support the company of a fool for life? Certainly the last is the least terrible. I do now think our parents are wiser than we are, and have reason to curb our inclinations: since it is a happier lot to marry a fool with a good estate than a knave without one.

SCENE VI.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP, HELENA.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Are you ready? Are you prepared? Hey?

HELENA. I am sensible, sir, how unworthily I had fixed my heart; and I think, neither wisdom nor honour oblige me to be undutiful to you longer.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. You are a wise girl! a very wise girl! and have considered doubtless the vast difference between a Baronet and a Mister. Ha, ha! and here he comes.

SCENE VII.

To them, SIR APISH SIMPLE.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Sir Apish Simple, your humble servant. You are early. What, you have not slept a wink. I did not sleep for a week before I was married to my lady.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. You had a very strong constitution then, Sir Positive.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Ay, sir, we are a strong family, an Herculean race! Hercules was a Trap by his mother's side. Well, well, my niece there has given her consent, and every thing is ready. So take her by the hand——and——

SIR APISH. Upon my word, Sir Positive, I cannot dance a step.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. How! when I was as young as you I could have danced over the moon, and into the moon too, without a fiddle. But come, I hate trifling. The lawyer is without with the deeds, and the parson is drest in his pontificalibus.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. The parson! I suppose he is a Welsh one, and plays on the violin, ha, ha, ha!

HELENA. I see my cousin has been as good as her word.

[*Aside.*

SIR POSITIVE TRAP.—Sir Apish, jesting with matrimony is playing with edged tools.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! Sir Positive is merry this morning.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Sir, you will put me out of humour presently.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Sir, I have more reason to be out of humour; for you have invited me to breakfast without preparing any.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Is not my niece prepared, sir?

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Sir, I am no cannibal.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Did you not come to marry my niece, sir?

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Sir, I never had such a thought since I was begotten.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. The man is mad. [*Staring.*

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Poor Sir Positive! is it his first fit, madam?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. A dark room and clean straw would be of service.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Nay, nay, I have no time to reason with a madman; but I hope when you hear I am married to one of the finest ladies about town it will cure your frenzy; and so, sir, your humble servant.

HELENA. Bless me, sir! what's the meaning of this?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Why the meaning is that he is mad, and this news will make my lady mad, and that will make me mad; and you may be mad for a husband, by what I can see, by the right hand of the Traps.

HELENA. So. I had yesterday two lovers; but now I have forsaken the one, and the other has forsaken me. Well, these men are jewels; so far, I am sure they are jewels, that the richest lady has always the most in her equipage.

SCENE VIII.—*The Piazza.*

MALVIL, WISEMORE.

MALVIL. How! an assignation from Vermilia?

WISEMORE. That's the name, the place this, the hour ten.

MALVIL. Impudent harlot!

WISEMORE. She made me pass my word to keep it secret from you; but, when I perceived it the same name with that in your letter, I thought myself obliged by friendship to discover it. The other signals were a red cloak and a masque.

MALVIL. Thou dearest, best of friends. Ten, you say? it is now within an hour of that time. Since you do not intend to keep your assignation, I will take it off your hands. But you may heap another obligation on me by your presence; for I am resolved to expose her.

WISEMORE. I am to meet a serjeant-at-law hard by—but will return with all possible expedition, and then—if I can be of service.

MALVIL. If you return before the hour you will find me at Tom's, if not here.

WISEMORE. Till then, farewell—How am I involving myself in other men's affairs, when my own require my utmost diligence! what course shall I take? I cannot resolve to leave her, and, I am sure, she has given me no hopes of gaining her. Yet she has not shown any real dislike, nor will I ever imagine her inclinations leaning to any of those fops she is surrounded with.

SCENE IX.

MERITAL, WISEMORE.

MERITAL. So thoughtful, Wisemore? What point of philosophy are you discussing?

WISEMORE. One that has puzzled all who ever attempted it—Woman, sir, was the subject of my contemplation.

MERITAL. Ha! hey! what point of the compass does the widow turn to now?

WISEMORE. A very frozen one.—Foppery.

MERITAL. Let me advise thee, Ned, to give over your attack, or change your method. For, be assured, widows are a study you will never be any proficient in, till you are initiated into that modern science which the French call *le bon assurance*!

WISEMORE. Ay, ay, we may allow you gentlemen of professed gaiety those known turns of raillery, since they were the estate of your forefathers: there is an hereditary fund of little pleasantries which the beaux of every age enjoy in a continual succession.

MERITAL. Well, and I hope you will do those of this age the justice to confess they do not attempt any innovation in the province of wit.

WISEMORE. Art thou so converted then as to despise the fops?

MERITAL. As much as thou dost the women, I believe, Ned.

WISEMORE. You mistake me. It is their follies only I despise. But there certainly are women, whose beauty to their minds, like dress to their beauty, is rather a covering than an ornament.

MERITAL. These are high flights, indeed. But, tell me, on what do you build your hopes of the widow?

WISEMORE. On an opinion I have of her good sense and good nature. The first will prevent her favouring a fop, the latter may favour me.

MERITAL. And, pray, what foundation is your opinion of her good sense built on? If, as you just now seemed to think, the beaux are its supporters—it is a very rotten one.

WISEMORE. No; when I said she inclined to foppery, I meant only for her diversion.

MERITAL. Hum! I believe women very seldom take matrimony for a penance.

WISEMORE. You draw too direct inferences from her conduct towards coxcombs. Depend on it, they are mirrors, in which you can hardly discover the mind of a woman of sense, because she seldom shows it them unmasqued. If she be not a woman of sense, I have, indeed, built a castle in the air, which every breeze of perfumes can overturn.

MERITAL. Why, really, it seems to me very little else, by what I know of her ladyship. But you are one of those reasonable lovers who can live a day on a kind look, a week on a smile, and a soft word would victual you for an East India voyage.

WISEMORE. I find the conversation of a friend effaces the remembrance of business.

MERITAL. Any thing to the island of love?

WISEMORE. No, no, to that of law.

MERITAL. Success attend you—why, I have been forgetful too, but fortune, I see, is so kind as to remind me.

SCENE X.

SIR APISH SIMPLE, MERITAL.

MERITAL. Sir. Apish, your humble servant.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Dear Tom, I kiss your button.

MERITAL. That's a pretty suit of yours, Sir Apish, perfectly gay, new, and *à la mode*.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. He, he, he! the ladies tell me I refine upon them. I think I have studied dress long enough to know a little, and I have the good fortune to have every suit liked better than the former.

MERITAL. Why, indeed, I have remarked that, as your dull pretenders to wisdom grow wiser with their years, so your men of gaiety, the older they grow, the finer they grow. But come, your looks confess there is more in this. The town says it too.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. What, dear Tom?

MERITAL. That you are to be married, and to a Yorkshire great fortune.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. He, he, he! I'll make you my confidant in that affair. 'Tis true, I had such a treaty on foot, for the girl has ten thousand pounds, which would have patched up some breaches in my estate; but a finer lady has vouchsafed to throw a hundred into my lap, and so I have e'en dropt the other.

MERITAL. What, are you in actual possession?

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Of her heart, sir, and shall be, perhaps, of every thing else in a day or two. Ah! she's a fine creature, Tom; she is the greatest beauty, and the greatest wit—Pshaw, can't you guess whom I mean?

MERITAL. No—for I know no orange-wench of such a fortune. [*Aside.*]

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Why, who can be all this but Lady Matchless?

MERITAL. Upon my word, I commend your exchange. Sir Apish, it lies in your power to do me an exquisite favour—and, I know, you will do any thing to serve your friend.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. I would as much as another, indeed—why, what a pox, does he intend to borrow money on me. [*Aside.*]

Yes, yes, as I was saying, Tom, I would do any thing to serve a friend in necessity; but badness of tenants, two or three supernumerary suits of laced clothes, and a bad run of dice, have reduced me really to such an extremity of cash—

MERITAL. You misapprehend me. You were this morning, I hear, to be married to Helena.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. And, ha, ha, ha! I must tell it you: I have been just now with Sir Positive Trap, her uncle; and, when he expected the performance of articles, I persuaded him he was mad, laughed at him, and, with a brave front faced him down that I knew nothing of the matter.

MERITAL. You shall go back then immediately, turn your former visit into raillery,—though it be a little absurd, it will pass on the knight—dissemble a willingness to go

through affairs; I will be your chaplain, and may, perhaps, go through affairs in your place.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Is she an acquaintance of yours then?

MERITAL. O, ay.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Dear Tom, I am very glad I can oblige you by a resignation, and will do to the utmost of my power; and to show you, sir, that I love to serve a friend, sir, I'll but step to the next street, and be here, sir, at your commands, sir, in a moment, sir.

MERITAL. [*Solus.*] My rencounter with the old lady, last night, surprised me: there must have been some mystery in that affair, which my disguise may help me to unravel. Men of capricious tempers would raise a hundred jealousies on this occasion; but it shall be ever my sentiments of a mistress, in all doubtful cases—

That if she's true, time will her truth discover;
But if she's false, I'll be as false a lover.

SCENE XI.—LADY MATCHLESS'S *House*.

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

LADY MATCHLESS. Ha, ha, ha! love and scandal are the best sweeteners of tea.

VERMILIA. The best embitterers, you mean; but, in my opinion, scandal is the sweetest of the two, and least dangerous.

LADY MATCHLESS. Love is not so dangerous to our sex as you imagine. It is a warfare wherein we always get the better, if we manage prudently; men are perfect empty bullies in it; and, as a certain poet says—

“Swift to attack, and swift to run away.”

VERMILIA. Well, but what do you intend by your assignation?

LADY MATCHLESS. Only to get an excuse for discarding a troublesome lover. Lookee, Vermilia, you shall attack him for me; I am afraid of a discovery myself. If you can but bring him to terms, that is, if you can procure his consent to a second treaty, I shall be very handsomely disengaged of mine.

VERMILIA. You banter, sure. But, if you are in earnest, I must advise you to get another proxy; for I heartily hate mankind, and will forswear any conversation with them.

LADY MATCHLESS. Nay, but you shall force your inclinations to serve a friend.

VERMILIA. And, pray, what has caused this sudden revolution in your temper, since, if I am not mistaken, you, but yesterday, expressed some favour for him?

LADY MATCHLESS. But I have found him such an out-of-fashion creature that I am heartily ashamed of him; besides, I have this morning received proposals from that prince of pretty fellows—Lord Formal.

VERMILIA. O constancy! thou art a virtue.

LADY MATCHLESS. It is indeed. For virtues, like saints, are never canonised till after they are dead—which poor Constancy has been long ago.

VERMILIA. I am afraid it proved abortive, and died before it was born. But, if it ever had being, it was most certainly feminine; and, indeed, the men have been so modest to allow all the virtues to be of our sex.

LADY MATCHLESS. O! we are extremely obliged to them; they have found out housewifery to belong to us too. In short, they throw their families and their honour into our care, because they are unwilling to have the trouble of preserving them themselves.

VERMILIA. But you rally, sure, in what you say concerning Lord Formal.

LADY MATCHLESS. Fie! my dear, is a title so ludicrous a thing?—But, come, you shall undertake my assignation with Wisemore.

VERMILIA. Were I sure it would give an uneasy moment

to Malvil, I would; for there is nothing I would stick at to be revenged on him.

LADY MATCHLESS. When we resolve revenge against our lovers that little rogue Love sits on his throne and laughs till he almost bursts.

Though ne'er so high our rage, the rogue will find
Some little, ticklish corner in the mind,
Work himself in, and make the virgin kind.
When next before her feet her lover lies,
All her resentment, in a moment, dies.
Then with a sigh the tender maid forgives,
And love's the only passion that survives.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—SIR POSITIVE TRAP'S *House*.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP, HELENA.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. I say, it was your own plot, your own contrivance, your own stratagem. You threatened him to—Hey! and he was fool enough to believe you!

HELENA. He was wise enough to believe me; for I threatened no impossibilities. But don't put on that severe aspect, dear uncle; for I protest it makes you look so like one of the Cæsar's heads in our long gallery.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Very likely, there may be a resemblance, indeed; for Julius Cæsar, by his great grandfather's wife's great grandmother, was a Trap.

HELENA. Ha, ha, ha! I am afraid we can hardly call him cousin. But pray, did he leave any legacy to us?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. A swinging legacy! abundance of honour!

HELENA. And pray, what will all that honour sell for?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Your right honour is not to be bought nor obtained: it is what a man brings into the world with him. He is as much an upstart who gets his own honour as he who gets his own estate. Take it for a maxim, child, no one can be a great man unless his father has been so before him. Your true old English honour, like your English oak, will not come to any maturity under a hundred years. It must be planted by one generation for the good of another.

HELENA. But, if I were to choose a husband, I should be more forward to inquire into his own merits than those of his ancestors.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Ay, ay, to be sure. You would prefer one, who is likely to leave a long retinue behind him, to one who has had never so many glorious ancestors before him; and be sooner enamoured of a fine coat than a fine coat of arms. Harkee, hussy, most of these fine fellows are but mere snails, they carry their all upon their backs; and yet it is as difficult to keep our wives and daughters from the one, as our fruit from the other.

HELENA. Do you think so, sir? I have heard there is not a more dangerous place than a china-shop: take care my aunt does not bring one home in a jar, and then you may chance to see it pop forth its horns on the top of your cabinet.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. [*Aside.*] Ha! I must own, I do not like these morning rambles.

HELENA. Lookee, sir, I can make discoveries to you; and, since my aunt has falsely accused me with being the occasion of Sir Apish's behaviour to-day, I will tell you out of revenge what I would never have told you out of love. In short, my aunt has——

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. How! what?

HELENA. Planted something that will branch to maturity in less than a hundred years, ha, ha, ha! She has set a modern front upon your old tabernacle, ha, ha, ha!—I hear the coach stop this moment. Step but into that closet, and you shall hear her convict herself.—I'll bring her to confession.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. [*Aside.*] Hum! methinks I grow suspicious.

HELENA. Nay, nay, nay, if you don't accept the trial, I shall proclaim you dare not.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Lookee, hussy, if you wrong my lady, by the right hand of the Traps——

HELENA. Any, any, punishment. But fly, she's just here.

SCENE II.

LADY TRAP, HELENA.

LADY TRAP. I am fatigued to death.—Oh! your servant, miss: but, perhaps, I ought to say, mistress; your husband may have changed your title since I saw you.

HELENA. And your ladyship may have changed your husband's title—But that change has been made long ago.

LADY TRAP. What do you mean, madam?

HELENA. Ha, ha, ha! dear aunt, the world knows the use of china-shops, though Sir Positive does not.

LADY TRAP. You seem to know, madam, I think, more than is consistent with your years.

HELENA. And you seem to practise, madam, more than is consistent with yours. The theory becomes my age much better than the practice does yours.

LADY TRAP. Your age! marry come up; you are always boasting of that youth and beauty which you have.

HELENA. That's more excusable than to boast of that youth and beauty which we have not.

LADY TRAP. I know whom you reflect on.—I thank my stars, indeed, I am no girl; and as for beauty, if my glass be allowed a judge——

HELENA. A very corrupt judge: for a glass is so well-bred a thing, that it tells every woman she is a beauty. O! it is the greatest flatterer in the world to our faces; but the reverse in one thing, for it never disparages us behind our backs.

LADY TRAP. Malapert creature! A girl is now-a-days no sooner out of her leading strings than she sets up for a toast. And as the girls are women before their time, so the men are children all their lives; for they will be devouring the green fruit.

HELENA. And sure the green is preferable to the withered, aunt. Come, come, madam, you had better make me your friend and confidant: for, if you declare war, I shall be able to enlist more soldiers than you. But here's my hand; and if you will let me into your secrets I'll give you the honour of a woman never to disclose them.

SCENE III.

To them, SIR APISH SIMPLE, MERITAL disguised as a Parson.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Lady Trap, I am your most obedient; sweet mistress Helena, I am everlastingly yours.

LADY TRAP. Sir Apish, your behaviour this morning staggered us; but I am glad to find you are relapsed.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. He, he, he! it was all a jest, upon my word; as I question not but my future behaviour will explain to that lady.

HELENA. It has already explained you, sir, to me, to be the greatest jest in nature.

LADY TRAP. Sir Apish, you know too much of the world to regard a young lady's coyness: and I assure you, sir, it is all affected; for she is ever repeating your name, even in her sleep. Don't blush, child. But you'll excuse the faults of youth: she will learn more sense.

HELENA. I don't know whether you move my anger or my pity most. But for that thing there, I'd have him know, I scorn and detest him.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. I would not have your ladyship chagrin at my bride's expression; for I'll engage we shall hate one another with as much good-breeding as any couple under the sun.

MERITAL. Give me the permission to lead you, madam.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. [*Apart to LADY TRAP.*] If you'd leave miss a few minutes with Mr. Parson here, I would engage for his success.—He is a noted matchmaker.

LADY TRAP. Niece, pray be attentive to that reverend gentleman; he will convince you of your errors.—Come, Sir Apish, we'll take a turn in the dining-room; Sir Positive will not be long. [*Apart to SIR APISH SIMPLE.*]

[*These two speeches spoken together.*]

HELENA. [*Aside.*] Sir Positive is safe, I'm sure, till I give him an opportunity to sneak off; so I've a reprieve at least.

SCENE IV.

HELENA, MERITAL.

HELENA. What, gone?—Ha!

MERITAL. Be not frightened, dear madam; for I have nothing of sanctity but the masque, I assure you.

[*Discovering himself.*]

HELENA. I believe it, nor of any other virtue.

MERITAL. Very prettily frowned.—I know some ladies who have practised a smile twenty years, without becoming it so well.—But, come, we have no time to lose.

HELENA. No, to upbraid you were loss of time, indeed; for the remonstrances of an injured woman have but little weight with such hardened sinners.

MERITAL. Hum! the sight of a gown has not inspired you, I hope: you don't intend to preach; but if you do, the wedding, you know, is always before the sermon,—which is one of the chief things wherein hanging and matrimony disagree.

[*Aside.*]

HELENA. Mr. Merital, I liked your raillery well enough whilst I believed you innocent. But as that gaiety in dress, which gives a bloom to beauty, shows deformity in its worst light; so that mirth and humour, which are vastly amiable in the innocent, look horrid in the guilty.

MERITAL. Are you really in earnest, child?

HELENA. That question surprises me, when you know I was witness to your last night's adventure.

MERITAL. Faith, my dear, I might have been more justly surprised that you should make me an assignation, and send your aunt to keep it.

HELENA. I make you an assignation! I'll never see you more.

MERITAL. Turn, mighty conqueress, turn your eyes this way,

And hear at once your priest and lover pray.

In vain, by frowns, you would the world subdue,

For when, with all your might, you've knit your brow

Your grandmother more wrinkles has than you.

Ha, ha, ha! don't put on those severe looks, dear Helena; good humour sets off a lady's face more than jewels.

HELENA. I wish my looks had power to blast you.

MERITAL. No, no, madam, I have a sort of armour called common-sense that's frown-proof, I assure you. Your smiles may melt, but your frowns will never pierce it. What, to make me an assignation with your own hand, then send your aunt for a proxy? My good nature, indeed, gave it the turn of a trial,—though she was a fitter object to try my vigour than my constancy. [*Half aside.*

HELENA. I write to you yesterday!

MERITAL. Why, I cannot positively say it was you; for I begin to think myself in Don Quixote's case, and that some wicked enchanters have transmographed my Dulcinea. I'll leave it to your own judgment whether you are not a little altered since you writ this. [*Shows a letter.*

HELENA. Ha! the letter I copied before my aunt! then I've wronged him, indeed. Unheard of baseness!—Mr. Merital, perhaps my suspicions have been too ill grounded; but for your reproaches, sir—

MERITAL. Nay, if there be a mystery in it, and I am guilty of undeserved reproaches, your justice cannot, shall not pardon me, till I have atoned for it with a ten years' service. Yet impute what I have said to the sincerity of

my love; my passions sympathise with yours; and if one wild delusion has possessed us, let us partake the equal joy of its discovery.

HELENA. That discovery is too long to be made now; but there is a riddle in that letter which will surprise you.

MERITAL. Let then those lovely eyes re-assume their sweetness, and like pure gold, rise brighter from the flames.

HELENA. Well, well, you know your own terms, a ten years' siege, and then——

MERITAL. Ah! but will not the garrison be starved in that long time? and I shall shut it up with a very close blockade—So you had best surrender now on honourable conditions.

HELENA. Well, but you'll allow the garrison to make a sally first.—Sir Positive, uncle, ha, ha, ha! come and help me to laugh.—The same worthy gentleman, who came after your wife last night, is now come after your niece.

SCENE V.

To them, SIR POSITIVE TRAP from the closet.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. A brave girl, a very brave girl! Why, why, why, what a pox do you want here, sir?

HELENA. Bless me, how he stares! I wonder he is not confined: I'm afraid he will take away somebody's life.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. I believe his intention is to give somebody life: such as he oftener increase families than diminish them.

HELENA. Or perhaps the poor gentleman is an itinerant preacher. Did you come to preach to us, sir?

MERITAL. Do you take me for the Ordinary of Bedlam, madam? Was I to reason with you, it should be by the doctrine of fire and faggot.

HELENA. Say you so? Nay then, I believe, uncle, he is a popish inquisitor.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. An inquisitor after fortunes, I suppose. Ah! sir, is not that your pious errand? You are one of the royal society of fortune-hunters? eh!

HELENA. I'll secure his masquerading garb among the trophies of our family.

SCENE VI.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP, MERITAL.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Well, sir, and pray have you any pretensions to my niece? Where's your estate, sir? what's your title, sir? what's your coat of arms? Does your estate lie in *terra firma*, or in the stocks?

MERITAL. In a stock of assurance, sir. My cash is all brass, and I carry it in my forehead, for fear of pick-pockets.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Are there no guardians to be cheated, no cuckolds to be made, but Sir Positive Trap? I'd have you know, sir, there has not been a cuckold amongst the Traps since they were a family.

MERITAL. That is, sir, I suppose, a tacit insinuation that you are the first of your family.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. You are ignorant as well as impudent. The first of my family! The whole world knows, that neither I, nor my father before me, have added one foot of land to our estate; and my grandfather smoked his pipe in the same easy chair that I do.

MERITAL. Very likely.—And what then?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. What then! Why, then there's the door, and then I desire you'd go out. Upstart, quotha! Sir Positive Trap an upstart! I had rather be called knave. I had rather be the first rogue of a good family, than the first honest man of a bad one.

MERITAL. Indeed!

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Ay, indeed; for do we not upbraid the son whose father was hanged; whereas many a man, who deserves to be hanged, was never upbraided in his whole life.

MERITAL. Oons! how am I jilted! [*Aside.*
 Lookee, Sir Positive, to be plain, I did come hither with a design of inveigling your niece; but she shall now die a maid for me. I imposed on Sir Apish, as I would have done on you; but you see I have failed: so you may smoke on in your easy chair, Sir Trap.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. So, so, I began to suspect Sir Apish was in the plot; but I'm glad to find my mistake.

SCENE VII.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP, LADY TRAP.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. O, my dear lady, are you come? I have such a discovery! such a rare discovery! you will so hug me——

LADY TRAP. Not so close as you do your discovery, my dear.—But where's Helena?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. He, he, he! rogue! conjurer! My lady's a conjurer! why, 'tis about her I am going to discover. But where's the baronet?

LADY TRAP. He waits below with his chaplain.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. His chaplain! ha, ha, ha! 'tis a rogue in the chaplain's habit; the wild young spark that has haunted my niece so long.

LADY TRAP. How!

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Ay, and he is stole off without his disguise, which the girl has secured as a trophy of her victory.

LADY TRAP. Cheated! ruined! undone!

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Ha! what?

LADY TRAP. She is gone, she is lost——without there——she's gone, I say, and we are cheated.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. How, by the right hand of the Traps!

LADY TRAP. By the wrong head of the Traps. I thought what your discovery would be.—Where's Sir Apish?

[*To a servant entering.*

SERVANT. Gone out with his chaplain and another gentleman, madam.

LADY TRAP. Pursue them, pursue them!

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Get down my broad sword and bandoliers, and Sir Gregory's blunderbuss. Fly, fly!

SCENE VIII.—*The Piazza.*

MALVIL *meeting* CATCHIT *masqued.*

MALVIL. So, I find she's exact to her assignation.—Well encountered, madam: what, I suppose I am not the game you look for. O thou perfidious, false, dissembling woman! Nay, do not offer to stir, for you are betrayed, and by all the powers of love you've wronged, I will expose you. Come, unmasque, unmasque this instant, or——

CATCHIT. [*Unmasquing.*] I protest you are very rude, Mr. Malvil; I would not be seen here for the world.

MALVIL. Ha! now I thank my stars indeed. Thou vile intriguer, forge some lie to excuse thyself in an instant, or it shall be thy last.

CATCHIT. O lud! you will frighten me into fits.

MALVIL. Come, confess how you came here? by what means did Wisemore get my letter? Confess all; and if I find you faltering in one syllable, I'll cram it down your throat with my sword.

CATCHIT. O lud! I——I——I——

MALVIL. What, you belied Vermilia in all you said? Speak—you belied her, I say?

CATCHIT. O! O! But will you pardon me then?

MALVIL. Speak the truth, I will pardon you; but if I ever discover the least falsehood in what you now tell me, if you had a thousand lives you should forfeit them.

CATCHIT. Why, then, indeed, it was all false: she never said a kind thing of Mr. Merital in her life—and—and, so, when you gave me the letter, I suspected what it was, and

so I carried it to my mistress; and Lady Matchless being by, she took it, and sealed, and set it to Mr.—, and so, my lady and she went into the park this morning: and Lady Matchless made an appointment in her name, and would have had her kept it, and she would not—and so I was sent.

MALVIL. And how!—how did the devil tempt you to belie her to me?

CATCHIT. O lud! sir, it was not the devil indeed; you had often teased and promised me, if I would discover your rival; and, heaven knows, you have none in the world.

MALVIL. But on what embassy was you sent hither?

CATCHIT. Here's a letter which, I believe, will tell you. But pray don't keep me, for we are all very busy; my Lady Matchless is to be married in a day or two to my Lord Formal.

MALVIL. How! to my Lord Formal?

CATCHIT. Yes, sir.

MALVIL. Well, tell her you delivered the letter as you was ordered. Don't mention a word of me.—Be trusty now, and I'll forgive the past.

CATCHIT. I will, indeed, sir.—O lud! I shall not recover it this week.

SCENE IX.

MALVIL, WISEMORE.

MALVIL. Wisemore, most opportunely arrived. I find you are more concerned in this assignation than I imagined, as this will explain to you.

WISEMORE *takes the letter, and reads—*

“SIR,—You will be surprised at the news of so sudden a conquest; but, I hope, that surprise will be an agreeable one, when you know it is over a woman of a considerable fortune: and if seven thousand a year can make me as acceptable to

Mr. Wisemore as his virtue renders him lovely to me, I shall meet with a favourable answer; for which the messenger who brings you this will attend an hour after the delivery. Yours till then,

INCOGNITA.

“P.S. I am glad I can inform you that my rival is this day to be married to another.”

How received you this letter?

MALVIL. From the very person who conveyed you mine.

WISEMORE. O Malvil, I find myself concerned indeed, and, I fear, fatally.

MALVIL. I am sorry to be the messenger of ill news—but I just now heard your mistress is carrying on a treaty with one of the greatest coxcombs in town.

WISEMORE. There is but one way, and I must beg your immediate assistance. I have contrived a stratagem to convince her of the mercenary views of her pretended admirers.

MALVIL. But do you draw any of your fears from that letter? For I have very good reason to believe it came from Lady Matchless.

WISEMORE. Impossible!

MALVIL. I am confident it did.

WISEMORE. By heaven, thou hast revived a spark of hope.

MALVIL. And lovers must nurse up feeble, infant hopes, till they grow big, and ripen into certain joys.

WISEMORE. I will do so: for I have always looked on love as on a sea, whose latitude no one ever discovered; and therefore,

Like mariners, without the compass tost,
We may be near our port when we esteem it lost.

SCENE X.—LADY MATCHLESS'S *House*.

LADY MATCHLESS, LORD FORMAL, SIR APISH SIMPLE,
VERMILIA AND RATTLE.

LADY MATCHLESS. I hope the sincerity which I have discovered in your lordship's passion, and the glorious character you bear in the world, will excuse my easy consent.

LORD FORMAL. I would not be so ill-bred as to blush; but your ladyship's compliments have really raised an inordinate flushing in my cheeks.

VERMILIA. Why, my dear, this will be a surprise to the town, indeed.

RATTLE. I'm sure it is no agreeable one to me. [*Aside*. Why, widow, do you intend to leave me in the lurch?

SIR APISH SIMPLE. And me in the lurch, too, madam? I assure you, I have refused a great fortune on your account. Has your ladyship forgot your declaration yesterday?

LADY MATCHLESS. Yesterday! O unpolite! are you so conversant in the *beau-monde*, and don't know that women, like quicksilver, are never fixed till they are dead?

RATTLE. Agad, they are more like gold, I think; for they are never fixed but by dross. [*Aside*.

SCENE XI.

To them, MERITAL, HELENA.

HELENA. Dear cousin Matchless!

LADY MATCHLESS. My dear, this is very kind; being earlier with me than my expectation is a double favour.

MERITAL. It may be called a double favour, madam, for you are partly obliged for it to your humble servant.

LADY MATCHLESS. How's this, Helena?

HELENA. I don't know, cousin; I was weary of my old guardian, I think, and so I chose a new one.

MERITAL. Yes, madam, and so we preferred the church to the chancery, to save expenses.

LADY MATCHLESS. O, it was a most commendable prudence. So you are married.—Well, give you joy, good people.—But, methinks you should not have made your guardian your heir. [*To Helena.*] No wise person ever suffered an heir to be trustee to his own estate.

MERITAL. Not till at years of discretion, madam; and I'm sure, the men should be that when they marry.

LADY MATCHLESS. And the women too, or they never will.

HELENA. Why so, cousin?

LADY MATCHLESS. Because it is probable they may soon after run mad. You see, my lord, I have not the highest notions of a married state; therefore, you may be sensible how high an opinion I must entertain of your merit, which can persuade me to it.

MERITAL. Do you intend to follow our example, Lady Matchless?

RATTLE. I can bear no longer. Lookee, my lord, if matrimony be your play, fighting must be your prologue.

[*Apart to Lord Formal.*]

LORD FORMAL. He, he, he! Mr. Rattle, fighting is more commonly the epilogue to that play.

RATTLE. Damn your joke, sir, either walk out with me, or I shall use you ill. [*Apart.*]

LORD FORMAL. Then you will show your ill-breeding, and give me an opportunity of displaying my gallantry, by sacrificing the affront to the presence of the ladies.

MERITAL. Fie, fie, gentlemen, let us have no quarrels, pray.

RATTLE. 'Sdeath! sir, but we will: I will not resign my mistress, sir.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Nor I neither; and so, madam, if you don't stand to your promise, I hope you'll give me leave to sue you for it.

LADY MATCHLESS. I have told you already, that a lady's promise is an insect which naturally dies almost as soon as it is born.

SCENE XII.

To them, WISEMORE, in a Serjeant's gown, his hat over his ears.

WISEMORE. Pray, which is the Lady Matchless?

LADY MATCHLESS. Have you any business with me, sir?

LORD FORMAL. This must be a very ill-bred gentleman, or he would not come before so much good company with his hat on. *[Aside.*

WISEMORE. It concerns an affair, madam, which will be soon so public that I may declare it openly. There is one Mr. John Matchless, who, being heir at law to your ladyship's late husband, intends to prosecute his right, which, as his counsel, out of a particular regard to your ladyship, I shall farther let you know, I am persuaded we shall make good—and, I'm afraid, it will touch you very sensibly.

LADY MATCHLESS. My cousin John Matchless heir at law to Sir William! I would not have you be under any apprehension on my account, good sir; I am afraid he has a better right to Bedlam than my estate.

MERITAL. Be not concerned, madam; a declaration of a title is not always a proof.

VERMILIA and HELENA. We condole you heartily, my dear, on this bad news.

LADY MATCHLESS. Ladies, I thank you for your kind concern; but do assure you, it gives me none.

WISEMORE. I am sensible you will find your error; my clerk will be here immediately with the ejection.

LORD FORMAL. I perceive the reason of her ladyship's haste to be married. *[Aside.*

LADY MATCHLESS. What can this mean! I know my title

to be secure; it must be some trumped-up cheat; and I'll try to divert the chagrin of my friends by a trial of my lovers, whom, I already know, I shall find guilty. [*Aside.*] —Well, as most misfortunes bring their allay with them, so this dispute of my estate will give me an opportunity to distinguish the sincerity of a lover. [*Looks on Formal.*]

LORD FORMAL. He, he, he! it has always been my good fortune to conduce to the entertainment of the ladies, and I find your ladyship has a most inexhaustible vein of raillery.

LADY MATCHLESS. Raillery, my lord!

LORD FORMAL. Ah, madam, it were an unpardonable vanity in me to esteem it otherwise. It would be contrary to all the rules of good manners for me to offer myself up at the shrine of your beauty. Ah! 'tis a sacrifice worthy a higher title than mine. Indeed, I have some thoughts of purchasing, which, when I do, I shall throw myself at your feet in raptures; but till then I am, with the greatest distance, madam, your ladyship's most obsequious humble servant.

RATTLE. Why, indeed, I think all raillery is unseasonable on so serious an occasion; therefore, to drop the jest, dear widow, I do assure you, all that has passed between us has been mere gallantry; for I have been long since engaged to a widow lady in the city.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. And to show you, madam, that no slights from you can lessen my affection, I do entirely relinquish all pretensions to any promise whatsoever.

SCENE XIII.

To them, MALVIL.

MALVIL. Where's, where's my injured mistress? where's Vermilia? O, see at your feet the most miserable of mankind!

VERMILIA. What mean you, sir?

MALVIL. Think not I would extenuate; no, I come to blazon out my crimes, to paint them in the utmost cast of horror, to court, not fly the severity of justice; for death's to me a blessing. Ah! my friend's blood cries out for vengeance on me; and jealousy, rage, madness, and false honour, stand ready witnesses against me.—[*To Vermilia.*] Of you, madam, I am to beg a pardon for your wronged innocence.—[*To Lady Matchless.*] But to you I have a harder task; to implore it, for having deprived you of the best of lovers, whose dying sighs were loaded with your name.—Yes, the last words your Wisemore uttered, were to implore eternal blessings on you; your Wisemore, whom this rash, this fatal hand has slain.

[*Lady Matchless sinks into the arms of Vermilia.*]

MERITAL. Help, help! she faints!

HELENA. A glass of water—the hartshorn immediately!

RATTLE. Rustic's dead then, hey? Poor rustic!

VERMILIA. How do you, dear?

LADY MATCHLESS. O! I shall rave, my frantic brain will burst: and did he bless me with his latest breath? he should have cursed me rather, for I alone am guilty. Oh! I have wildly played away his life—Then, take my fortune all, since he is gone, to reward whose merit I only valued riches. But now farewell content, greatness, happiness, and all the sweets of life.—I'll study to be miserable.

WISEMORE. O never, never; be blessed as love, and life, and happiness can make you—be blessed as I am now.

[*Discovering himself, and running to her.*]

LADY MATCHLESS. And art thou then my Wisemore.

[*After a long pause.*]

WISEMORE. And do I live to hear you call me yours? O my heart's joy! my everlasting bliss!

LADY MATCHLESS. And can you generously forgive?

WISEMORE. O name it not, but swear you never will revoke what you have said.

LADY MATCHLESS. O, would I had worlds to give thee! for all the happiness I can bestow is nothing to the merit of your love.

WISEMORE. My heart o'erflows with raptures. Oh! my tender love, now do I live indeed—

MERITAL. Why, after these high flights, Ned, I am afraid wishing you joy will be too low a phrase.

WISEMORE. Dear Merital, I thank you.—But here am I eternally indebted; for I shall always attribute my happiness (next to this lady) to your friendship. *[To Malvil.]*

MALVIL. Be assured it gives me an equal satisfaction, as if I had procured my own.

MERITAL. I have known two friends embrace just before cutting of throats; but I believe you are the first who ever embraced after it.

RATTLE. Formal. *[Sheepishly.]*

LORD FORMAL. By my title, I am perfectly amazed.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. We are all bit, egad! *[Aside.]*

MERITAL. Come, Harry, put the best face you can on the matter; though I know you have a little chagrin in your heart—As for his lordship, the lady may be a widow again before he gets his title.—And my friend Sir Apish has refused a very fine lady this morning before.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. Yes, I had two strings to my bow; both golden ones, egad! and both cracked.

VERMILIA. Dear Matchless, this sudden revolution of your fortune has so amazed me, that I can hardly recover myself to congratulate you on it.

LADY MATCHLESS. Well, but I hope you will not see your friend embarked on a second voyage, and hesitate at undertaking the first.

VERMILIA. If I was sure my voyage would be as short as yours has been; but matrimony is too turbulent a sea to be ventured on in so light a vessel as every little blast can overset.

MALVIL. Madam, when Mrs. Catchit has discovered the whole affair to you, as she has done to me. I doubt not but your good-nature will seal my pardon, since excess of love caused the offence.

LADY MATCHLESS. Nay, we must all sue.

MERITAL AND HELENA. All, all.

VERMILIA. Well, to avoid so much importunity, and to show you the power of a prevalent example—In hopes of future amendment, Mr. Malvil, here—take my hand.

MALVIL. O my fairest, softest! I have no words to express my gratitude, or my love.

VERMILIA. Pray let them both be understood then; for we have had so many raptures already, they must be but a dull repetition.

LORD FORMAL. When it is in vain to strive against the stream, all well-bred men sail with it. [*Aside.*] Ladies, I beg leave to presume to advance with my compliments of congratulation on this glorious occasion. I must own your ladyship's choice has something novel in it; but, by the sanction of so great an authority, I don't question, but it may be reconciled with the rules of consummate good-breeding.

SIR APISH SIMPLE. I am always his lordship's second. Ladies, I heartily wish you joy, upon my word.

RATTLE. And so do I, widow.—This fellow will be poisoned before the honeymoon's out. [*Aside.*]

SCENE *the last.*

SIR POSITIVE TRAP, LADY TRAP, LADY MATCHLESS, LORD FORMAL, VERMILIA, HELENA, WISEMORE, MALVIL, MERITAL, RATTLE, SIR APISH SIMPLE.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. O cousin, I am undone, and ruined! The Traps are abused, disgraced, dishonoured!

LADY MATCHLESS. What's the matter, Sir Positive?

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. I am undone, my niece is lost and ruined.

HELENA. I had been so, sir, but for the interposition of a worthy gentleman here.

MERITAL. It is, indeed, my happy fate to be——

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Is it so? is it so? and I believe

this will be your happy fate. [*Pointing to his neck.*] She is an heiress, and you are guilty of felony, and shall be hanged, with the whole company, your abettors.

LORD FORMAL. This gentleman must have had a barbarous education. [*Aside.*]

MERITAL. Lookee, madam, as you expect that what has passed between us shall be kept secret— [*To Lady Trap.*]

LADY TRAP. [*To Merital.*] I understand you.—Sir Positive, be appeased, and leave this matter to me.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. I am calm.

LADY MATCHLESS. My cousin, sir, is married to a gentleman of honour, and one who, I doubt not, loves her.—By your resentment, you will call your conduct, not hers, into question.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Then you have been her adviser, I suppose?

LADY MATCHLESS. If I have, cousin, you cannot be angry, since it is an advice I am like to follow myself.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Why, what, are you going to be married again?

WISEMORE. Sir Positive, I hope shortly to be your relation.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. That's more than I do, sir, till I know your name and family.

WISEMORE. You shall both, sir. My name is Wisemore.

SIR POSITIVE TRAP. Wisemore! Wisemore! why, it is a good name—but I thought that family had been extinct.—Well, cousin, I am glad to see you have not married a snuff-box.

LADY MATCHLESS. To perfect the good humour of the company, and since dinner is not yet ready, I'll entertain you with a song, which was sent me by an unknown hand. Is Mr. Hemhem there? Sir, if you will oblige us; gentlemen and ladies, please to sit.

SONG.

I.

Ye nymphs of Britain, to whose eyes
The world submits the glorious prize
Of beauty to be due;
Ah! guard it with assiduous care,
Let neither flattery ensnare,
Nor wealth your hearts subdue.

II.

Old Bromio's ranked among the beaus;
Young Cynthio solitary goes,
Unheeded by the fair!
Ask you then what this preference gives?
Six Flanders mares the former drives,
The latter but a pair.

III.

Let meaner things be bought and sold,
But beauty never trucked for gold;
Ye fair, your value prove:
And since the world's a price too low,
Like heaven, your ecstasies bestow
On constancy and love.

IV.

But still, ye generous maids, beware,
Since hypocrites to heaven there are,
And to the beauteous too:
Do not too easily confide,
Let every lover well be tried.
And well reward the true.

The COMPANY advance.

WISEMORE. The song is not without a moral.—And now ladies, I think myself bound to a solemn recantation of every slander I have thrown upon your sex: for I am convinced that our complaints against you flow generally (if not always) more from our want of merit than your want of justice.

For when vain fools or fops your hearts pursue,
To such the charming prize is never due:
But when the men of sense their passions prove,
You seldom fail rewarding 'em with love.
Justly on them the fair their hearts bestow,
Since they alone the worth of virtue know.

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY MISS ROBINSON, JUN.

OUR author, full of sorrow and repentance,
Has sent me here—to mitigate his sentence.
To you, tremendous critics in the pit,
Who on his first offence in judgment sit!
He pleads—Oh gad! how terrible his case is!
For my part, I'm frightened by your faces.
Think on his youth—it is his first essay;
He may in time, perhaps,—atonement pay,
If but reprieved this execution day.—
Methinks I see some elder critic rise,
And darting furious justice from his eyes,
Cry, “Zounds! what means the brat? why all this fuss?
What are his youth and promises to us?
For should we from severity refrain,
We soon should have the coxcomb here again.
And, brothers, such examples may invite
A thousand other senseless rogues to write!”

From you then—ye toupets—he hopes defence:
You'll not condemn him for his want of sense.
What, now you'll say, I warrant with a sneer,
“He's chose too young an advocate, my dear!”
Yet boast not (for if my own strength I know)
I am a match sufficient—for a beau!

Lastly, to you, ye charmers, he applies,
For in your tender bosoms mercy lies,
As certain as destruction in your eyes.
Let but that lovely circle of the fair
Their approbation, by their smiles, declare,
Then let the critics damn him—if they dare.

THE
TEMPLE BEAU.

A
COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the
THEATRE in *Goodman's - Fields.*

Written by Mr. *FIELDING.*

*Non aliter, quam qui adverso vix Flumine Lembum
Remigijs subigit.* Virg. Georg.

*Indignor quidquam reprehendi, non quia crasse
Compositum, illepidève putetur, sed quia Nobis.*
Hor. Art. Poet.



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. WATTS, at the Printing-Office in
Wild-Court near Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

MDCCLXXX.

[Price 1 s. 6 d.]

PROLOGUE

WRITTEN BY MR. RALPH, AND SPOKEN BY MR. GIFFARD.

HUMOUR and wit, in each politer age,
Triumphant, reared the trophies of the stage.
But only farce, and show, will now go down,
And HARLEQUIN'S the darling of the town.
WILL'S has resigned its old pretence to wit,
And beaux appear, where critics used to sit.
BUTTON himself, provoked at wit's decline,
Now lets his house, and swears he'll burn his sign.
Ah! should all others that on wit depend,
Like him provoked; like him their dealings end;
Our theatres might take th' example too,
And players starve themselves—as authors do.

But if the gay, the courtly world, disdain
To hear the Muses and their sons complain;
Each injured bard shall to this refuge fly,
And find that comfort which the great deny:
Shall frequently employ this infant stage,
And boldly aim to wake a dreaming age.
The comic muse, in smiles severely gay,
Shall scoff at vice, and laugh its crimes away;
The voice of sorrow pine in tragic lays,
And claim your tears, as the sincerest praise.

Merit, like Indian gems, is rarely found,
Obscure, 'tis sullied with the common ground:
But when it blazes in the world's broad eye,
All own the charms they passed unheeded by.
Be you the first t' explore the latent prize,
And raise its value, as its beauties rise.
Convince that town, which boasts its better breeding,
That riches—are not all that you exceed in.
Merit, wherever found, is still the same,
And this our stage may be the road to fame.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

SIR AVARICE PEDANT	<i>Mr. Collet.</i>
SIR HARRY WILDING	<i>Mr. Pinkethman.</i>
WILDING	<i>Mr. Giffard.</i>
VEROMIL	<i>Mr. W. Giffard.</i>
VALENTINE	<i>Mr. Williams.</i>
PEDANT	<i>Mr. Bullock.</i>
PINCET	<i>Mr. Bardin.</i>

WOMEN

LADY LUCY PEDANT	<i>Mrs. Giffard.</i>
LADY GRAVELY	<i>Mrs. Haughton.</i>
BELLARIA	<i>Mrs. Purden.</i>
CLARISSA	<i>Mrs. Seal.</i>

Tailors, Periwig-maker, Servants, &c.

. SCENE.—LONDON

THE TEMPLE BEAU

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Ante-chamber in SIR AVARICE PEDANT'S House.*

LADY LUCY PEDANT, LADY GRAVELY.

LADY LUCY [*entering in a passion, followed by the Lady Gravelly*]. No more of your lectures, dear sister. Must I be fatigued every morning with an odious repetition of fulsome, dull, antiquated maxims, extracted from old philosophers and divines, who no more practised what they wrote, than you practise what you read? Sure, never woman had such a time on't!—Between a husband mad with avarice, a son-in-law mad with learning, a niece mad with love—and a sister—

LADY GRAVELY. Ay, what am I? I'd be glad to know what I am.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. The world knows what you are—

LADY GRAVELY. How, madam!—the! world knows nothing of me.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. It says it does; it talks of you very freely, child. First, that you are not so young as you would seem; nor so handsome, or good as you do seem; that your actions are as much disguised by your words, as your skin by paint; that the virtue in your mouth no more proceeds from the purity of your heart, than the colour in your cheeks does from the purity of your blood.

LADY GRAVELY. Very fine, indeed!

LADY LUCY PEDANT. That your ardency to improve the world is too often rank envy; that you are not angry with

the deformities of the mind, but the beauties of the person: for it is notorious, that you never spoke well of a handsome woman, nor ill of an ugly one.

LADY GRAVELY. Impudent scandal!

LADY LUCY PEDANT. That you rail at the diversions of the town, for several reasons: but the love of goodness has nothing to do with any. Assemblies, because you are very little regarded in them; operas, because you have no ear; plays, because you have no taste; balls, because you can't dance: and lastly—that you went to church, twice a day, a whole year and half, because—you was in love with the parson; ha, ha, ha!

LADY GRAVELY. As ill as that malicious smile becomes you, I am glad you put it on: for it convinces me that what you have said is purely your own suggestion, which I know how to despise. Or, perhaps, you call a set of flirts the world: by such a world I would always be spoken ill of: the slander of some people is as great a recommendation as the praise of others. For one is as much hated by the dissolute world, on the score of virtue, as by the good, on that of vice. Sister, your malicious invectives against me reflect on yourself only: I abhor the motive, and I scorn the effect.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Nay, but how ungenerous is this! when you have often told me, that to put one in mind of faults is the truest sign of friendship; and that sincerity in private should give no more pain, than flattery in public, pleasure.

LADY GRAVELY. And yet (methinks) you could not bear plain-dealing just now. But I'm glad that your last hint has awakened me to a perfect sense of my duty; therefore sister, since we are in private, I'll tell you what the world says of you.—In the first place, then, it says that you are both younger and handsomer than you seem.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Nay, this is flattery, my dear!

LADY GRAVELY. No, indeed, my dear! for that folly and affectation have disguised you all over with an air of dotage and deformity.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. This carries an air of sincerity
——thank you, my dear.

LADY GRAVELY. That admiration is the greatest pleasure, and to obtain it, the whole business of your life; but that the ways you take to it are so preposterous, one would be almost persuaded you aimed rather at contempt; for the actions of an infant seem the patterns of your conduct. When you are in the playhouse, you seem to think yourself on the stage; and when you are at church, I should swear you thought yourself in the playhouse, did I not know you never think at all. In every circle you engross the whole conversation, where you say a thousand silly things, and laugh at them all; by both which the world is always convinced, that you have very fine teeth and very bad sense.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Well, I will convince you, for I must laugh at that; ha, ha, ha!

LADY GRAVELY. That you are not restrained from unlawful pleasures by the love of virtue, but variety; and that your husband is not safe from having no rival, but from having a great many; for your heart is like a coffee-house, where the beaux frisk in and out, one after another; and you are as little the worse for them, as the other is the better; for one lover, like one poison, is your antidote against another.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Ha, ha, ha! I like your comparison of love and poison, for I hate them both alike.

LADY GRAVELY. And yet you are in love, and have been in love a long while.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Dear soul, tell me who the happy creature is, for I am sure he'll think himself so.

LADY GRAVELY. That I question not; for I mean yourself.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Ha, ha, ha! and I'm sure you like my taste.

LADY GRAVELY. In short, to end my character, the world gives you the honour of being the most finished coquette in town.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. And I believe it is as little news to you, that you have that of leading the vast, grave, solemn body of prudes: so let us be friends——since, like the fiery partisans of state, we aim only at the same thing, by several ways: their aim is a place at court—ours is—this, my dear sister!

LADY GRAVELY. (Now would my arms were firebrands—I would embrace you then with better will.) [Aside.]

SCENE II.

To them, YOUNG PEDANT.

YOUNG PEDANT. Hey-day! what, is it customary here for you women to kiss one another? It intimates the men to be scarce, or backward, in my opinion.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. And so taking advantage of the dearth of gallants, you are come to town to be enrolled in the number.

YOUNG PEDANT. May I be expelled the university that day: if your women want fools till I turn one to please them, they shall want them——till their fools turn scholars like me, or till they themselves turn Penelopes, that is (*breviter*) till the world's turned topsy-turvey.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Or, till such illiterate pedants as you turn fine gentlemen.

YOUNG PEDANT. Illiterate! Mother-in-law?—You are a woman. [Scornfully.]

LADY LUCY PEDANT. You are a coxcomb.

YOUNG PEDANT. I rejoice in the irony. To be called coxcomb by a woman is as sure a sign of sense, as to be called a rogue by a courtier is of honesty.

LADY GRAVELY. You should except your relations, nephew; and truly, for the generality of women, I am much of your opinion.

YOUNG PEDANT. Are you? then you are a woman of sense, aunt! a very great honour to your sex.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Did you ever hear so conceited, ignorant a wretch?

YOUNG PEDANT. Ignorant!—Know, madam, that I have revolved more volumes than you have done pages; I might say lines. More sense has gone in at these eyes—

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Than will ever come out of that mouth, I believe.—Ha, ha, ha!

YOUNG PEDANT. What do you laugh at? I could convince you, that what you said then was only false wit. Look ye, mother, when you have been conversant with the Greek poets, you'll make better jests.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. And when you have conversed with a French dancing-master, you'll make a better figure; till when, you had best converse with yourself. Come, sister.

YOUNG PEDANT. Sooner than converse with thee, may I be obliged to communicate with a drunken, idle, illiterate soph: a creature, of all, my aversion.

SCENE III.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT *and* YOUNG PEDANT.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. How now, son! what puts you into this passion? I never knew any thing got by being in a passion.

YOUNG PEDANT. Sir, with your peace, I am not in a passion; I have read too much philosophy to have my passions irritated by women.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. You seem, indeed, to have read a great deal; for you said several things last night beyond my understanding: but I desire you would give me some account of your improvement in that way which I recommended to you at your going to the university; I mean that useful part of learning, the art of getting money: I hope your tutor has, according to my orders, instilled into you a tolerable insight into stock-jobbing. I hope to see you make a figure at Garraway's, boy.

YOUNG PEDANT. Sir, he has instructed me in a much nobler science—logic. I have read all that has been written on that subject, from the time of Aristotle, to that great and learned modern, Burgersdicius; truly, almost a cart-load of books.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Have they taught you the art to get a cart-load of money?

YOUNG PEDANT. They have taught me the art of getting knowledge. Logic is in learning, what the compass is in navigation. It is the guide by which our reason steers in the pursuit of true philosophy.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Did ever mortal man hear the like!—Have I been at this expense to breed my son a philosopher? I tremble at the name; it brings the thought of poverty into my mind. Why, do you think if your old philosophers were alive, any one would speak to them, any one would pay their bills!—Ah! these universities are fit for nothing but to debauch the principles of young men; to poison their minds with romantic notions of knowledge and virtue; what could I expect, but that philosophy should teach you to crawl into a prison; or poetry, to fly into one!—Well, I'll show you the world! where you will see that riches are the only titles to respect; and that learning is not the way to get riches. There are men who can draw for the sum of a hundred thousand pounds who can hardly spell it.

YOUNG PEDANT. Sir, you were pleased to send for me to town in an impetuous manner. Two days have passed since my arrival. I would therefore importune you to declare to me the reasons of your message.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. That is my intention, and you will find by it how nicely I calculate. You know my losses in the South-Sea had sunk my fortune to so low an ebb, that from having been offered, ay, and courted, to accept a wife of quality (my present lady) I fell so low, to have my proposals of marriage between you and the daughter of a certain citizen, rejected; though her fortune was not equal to that of my wife. For I must tell you that a thousand a

year is all you can expect from me, who might have left you ten.

YOUNG PEDANT. And is to me as desirable a gift.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. I am sorry to hear you have no better principles. But I have hit on a way to double that sum. In short, I intend to marry you to your cousin Bellaria. I observed her, the night of your arrival, at supper, look much at you, though you were then rough, and just off your journey: my brother sent her hither to prevent her marrying a gentleman in the country of a small fortune. Now I'll take care you shall have sufficient opportunities together: and I question not but to compass the affair; by which I gain just ten thousand pound clear, for her fortune is twenty.

YOUNG PEDANT. Sir, I desire to deliver my reasons opponent to this match; they are two: first, to the thing, matrimony. Secondly, to the person, who is my cousin-german.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Now, sir, I desire to deliver mine. I have but one, and that is very short. If you refuse, I'll disinherit you.

Enter a SERVANT.

SERVANT. Sir, here's a gentleman, who calls himself Wilding, at the door.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Show him in. Son, you will consider of what I have told you.

YOUNG PEDANT. Yes, I will consider, but shall never find a reply to so substantial, prevalent, and convincing an argument.

SCENE IV.

To them, SIR HARRY WILDING.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Is not your name, sir, Sir Avarice Pedant?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. At your service, sir.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Then, sir, I am your very humble servant.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. I don't know you, sir.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Don't you, sir! why, then, 'tis probable, by reading this letter, you will know more than you do now.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. [*Reads.*]

"DEAR BROTHER,—The bearer is my very good friend, Sir Harry Wilding; he comes to town to introduce his eldest son to Bellaria. The young man, I'm told, has a great character for sobriety, and I know his fortune equal to my demands. I fear her old lover will find her out, unless prevented by an immediate match. Get every thing ready as quick as possible: I will be in town soon; till when, be particularly civil to Sir Harry and his son.

[*Aside.* Ay, with a pox to them!]

"Your humble servant,

"and affectionate brother,

"GEO. PEDANT."

[*To Sir Harry Wilding.*] Sir, your very humble servant. My brother here informs me of your proposals; I presume, sir, I know your son.

SIR HARRY WILDING. I am surprised at that, sir, for he has no acquaintance but with books. Alas, sir, he studies day and night!

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. May I ask what he studies, sir?

SIR HARRY WILDING. Law, sir; he has followed it so close these six years, that he has hardly had time to write even—to me (unless when he wants necessaries). But I cannot convince you better than by one of his bills—let me see—ay, here—here it is!—here's a bill—I shall see the rogue a judge—This bill, sir, is only for one quarter.

For law-books, 50*l.*

Fifty pounds' worth of law books read in one quarter of a year.—I shall see the rogue a judge.

Item. For paper, pens, ink, sand, pencils, penknives, 10*l.*

For fire and candles, 8*l.*

You see he reads all night.

Paid a woman to brush books, 1*l*.

For places in Westminster Hall, 5*l*.

For coaches thither, at 4*s*. per time, 12*l*.

For night-gown, slippers, caps, physic——

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Hold, hold, pray; it's enough in conscience.

SIR HARRY WILDING. In short, the whole bill amounts to two hundred and seventy-five pounds, for the necessaries of study only. I shall see the rogue a judge.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. But (methinks) there is one article a little extraordinary: how comes it that your son pays four shillings for a coach to Westminster, when four lawyers go thither for one?

SIR HARRY WILDING. Ay! why, that's a question, now, that has been asked me several times: heart! I believe you are all envious of my boy. If he pays four times as much, he carries four times as much law, and that, I think, is an answer.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. I wonder, Sir Harry, a gentleman of your plentiful fortune should breed your eldest son to the law.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Oh, sir! I'll give you a very good reason for that——My father was a lawyer, and he got an estate. It was my misfortune to be bred a gentleman. My father kept me in the country till I was three-and-twenty, and my wife has kept me there ever since; for, except when I brought my son to the Temple, and this present journey, I never was twenty miles from home.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. It was your misfortune to be bred a gentleman, Sir Harry!

SIR HARRY WILDING. Ay, sir; but I always resolved to breed my son to the law; I determined it before he was born; and I don't question but to see him a judge.——I am impatient till I find him out; so I am your humble servant. You may expect me at dinner.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. That's kind, however.——You see, son, we have but a short time to execute our project in;

and if we are not expeditious, the stock will be sold to another purchaser. I am obliged to go into the city on business: after dinner I will introduce you to my niece. In the mean time, think on some fine speeches, some high compliments: for in dealing with women (contrary to all other merchandise) the way to get them cheap is to cry them up as much beyond their value as possible.

YOUNG PEDANT. So the matter is reduced to this, "Either to be married or disinherited." I'll accept the prior; for, if I am disinherited, I shall never get my estate again; but, if I am married (providentially) I may get rid of my wife.

SCENE V.—*St. James's Park.*

VALENTINE and VEROMIL.

VALENTINE. This was an agreeable surprise, indeed! for of all men, my Veromil is he whom I most wished but least expected to meet.

VEROMIL. My wishes, Valentine, were equal to yours, but my expectations greater; for I was told the town, and all its pleasures, had long engrossed the heart of my Valentine. Nor has my information been false, I find. These clothes! these looks! these airs! give me reason to wonder how I recollected my metamorphosed friend.

VALENTINE. Why, faith! I am a little changed since those happy times, when, after a day spent in study, we used to regale at night, and communicate our discoveries in knowledge over a pint of bad port. While, poor creatures! we were strangers to the greatest, pleasantest part of knowledge——

VEROMIL. What?

VALENTINE. Woman, dear Charles, woman; a sort of books prohibited at the university, because your grave dons don't understand them. But what part of the world has possessed you these years?

VEROMIL. The first twelvemonth after I left the university, I remained in the country with my father (you had not then forgot to correspond with me). I then made the tour of France and Italy. I intended to visit Germany; but on my return to Paris, I there received the news of my father's death!

VALENTINE. 'Sdeath! he did not deserve the name!—Nay, I am no stranger to your misfortunes. Sure Nature was as blind when she gave him such a son, as Fortune when she robbed you of your birthright.

VEROMIL. Valentine, I charge thee, on thy friendship, not to reflect on that memory which shall be ever sacred to my breast. Who knows what arts my brother may have used? Nay, I have reason to believe my actions abroad were misrepresented. I must have fallen by a double deceit. He must have coloured my innocence with the face of vice, and covered his own notorious vices under the appearance of innocence.

VALENTINE. Hell in its own shape reward him for it.

VEROMIL. Heaven forgive him. I hope I can.

VALENTINE. But tell me, (though I dread to ask) he did not, could not, disinherit you of all?

VEROMIL. All in his power. My mother's fortune fell to me, he could not hinder it. And, oh! my friend! I could with that small competency outvie my brother's happiness, had I not, with my fortune, lost a jewel dear to me as my soul—yet here I forget even that. To hold, to embrace so dear a friend, effaces every care.

VALENTINE. I still have been your debtor: 'tis your superior genius to oblige; my utmost efforts will be still your due.

VEROMIL. Let us then sacrifice this day to mirth and joy.

VALENTINE. With all my heart.

VEROMIL. Is not that Wilding just come into the Mall?

VALENTINE. I am sure he is altered since you saw him. I wonder his dress, indeed, did not prevent your knowing him.

VEROMIL. No; it is by his dress I do know him, for I saw him in the very same at Paris. He remembers me too, I perceive. Mr. Wilding, your humble servant.

SCENE VI.

WILDING, VEROMIL, VALENTINE.

WILDING. Ha! my dear Veromil, a thousand welcomes to England. When left you that delicious place, Paris?

VEROMIL. Soon after you left it.

WILDING. I thought you intended for Vienna. But I am glad that we enjoy you so much sooner. For I suppose you are now come to town for good?

VALENTINE. Nay, he shall not escape us again.

VEROMIL. My inclinations would bid me spend my whole life with my Valentine; but necessity confines our happiness to this day.

VALENTINE. This day?

VEROMIL. To-morrow night I am to meet a friend at Dover to embark for France. I am glad we meet so soon; for every hour I am with you, though it seems a moment, is worth an age.

WILDING. You are soon weary of your country, Mr. Veromil, which you longed to see so much when we were at Paris.

VEROMIL. Misfortunes have made it disagreeable.

WILDING. Come, come, I see the bottom of this; there is a mistress in the case.

VALENTINE. To France for a mistress!

WILDING. Ay, or what do all our fine gentlemen there?

VALENTINE. Learn to please an English one. It would be more rational in a Frenchman to come abroad for a dancing-master, than in an Englishman to go abroad for a mistress.

VEROMIL. However, you'll allow a lover to be partial;

you must excuse me if I think France has now the finest woman in the universe. But, to end your amazement, she is our countrywoman.

WILDING. And has some devilish coquette led you a dance to Paris? Never stir after her: if she does not return within ten weeks, I'll be bound to—fetch her.

VALENTINE. Who can this great uncelebrated beauty be?

VEROMIL. Oh! Valentine! she is one whose charms would delude stoicism into love! the luscious dreams of amorous boys ne'er raised ideas of so fine a form, nor man of sense e'er wished a virtue in his mistress's mind which she has not. That modesty! that sweetness! that virtue!

WILDING. Her name, her name?

VALENTINE. Her fortune, her fortune?

VEROMIL. I know, gentlemen, you who have lived so much in the gay world will be surprised to hear me talk so seriously on this affair. But, be assured, my whole happiness is in the breast of one woman.

WILDING. I own myself surprised; but our friend here can hardly be so, for he is to-morrow to be happy with one woman.

VEROMIL. How!

VALENTINE. Wilt thou never have done with it? A man can't appear in public after it's known that he is to be married, but every one who wants a wife will rally him out of envy.

WILDING. Ay,—and every one who has a wife out of pity.

VALENTINE. 'Sdeath! I'll be married to-morrow, and away into the country the next morning.

WILDING. Oh! the country is vastly pleasant during the honeymoon; groves and mountains give one charming ideas in the spring of matrimony. I suppose we shall have you in town again in the winter; at least you'll be so obliging to send your wife up. A husband would be as public-spirited a man, if he did not run away with his wife, as he who buys a fine picture, and hangs it up in his house for the benefit of all comers. But robbing the public of a fine woman is

barbarous; and he who buries his wife is as great a miser as he who buries his gold.

VEROMIL. The public may thank themselves; for no man would do either, had not the world affixed shame to the sounds of poverty and cuckoldom.

VALENTINE. You mention the name as if there was something frightful in it: one would imagine you had lived in the first age and infancy of cuckoldom. Custom alters every thing. A pair of horns (perhaps) once seemed as odd an ornament for the head as a periwig: but now they are both equally in fashion, and a man is no more stared at for the one than for the other.

WILDING. Nay, I rather think cuckoldom is an honour. I wish every cuckold had a statue before his door, erected at the public expense.

VALENTINE. Then the city of London would have as many statues in it as the city of Rome had.

WILDING. The ladies are obliged to you for your opinion.

VALENTINE. I think so. What is yours, pray?

WILDING. Mine! that the poets ought to be hanged for every compliment they have made them.

VEROMIL. Hey day!

WILDING. For that they have not said half enough in their favour—Ah! Charles! there are women in the world—

[Hugs Veromil.]

VEROMIL. Bravo! women!

WILDING. Dost thou think I confine my narrow thoughts to one woman? No; my heart is already in the possession of five hundred, and there is enough for five hundred more.

VALENTINE. Why, thou hast more women in thy heart than the Grand Turk has in his seraglio.

WILDING. Ay, and if I have not finer women—'Sdeath! well recollected. Valentine, I must wait on one of your aunts to an auction this morning.

VEROMIL. Nay, dear honest reprobate, let us dine together.

WILDING. I am engaged at the same place.

VALENTINE. Veromil, if you please, I'll introduce you.

Perhaps you will be entertained with as merry a mixture of characters as you have seen. There is (to give you a short *Dramatis Personæ*) my worthy uncle, whose whole life and conversation runs on that one topic, gain. His son, whom I believe you remember at the university, who is since, with much labour and without any genius, improved to be a learned blockhead.

VEROMIL. I guess his perfections by the dawnings I observed in him. His learning adorns his genius as the colouring of a great painter would the features of a bad one.

WILDING. Or the colouring of some ladies do the wrinkles of their faces.

VALENTINE. Then I have two aunts as opposite in their inclinations as two opposite points of the globe; and I believe as warm in them as the centre.

WILDING. And point to the same centre too, or I'm mistaken.

VALENTINE. Lastly, two young ladies, one of whom is as romantically in love as yourself, and whom, perhaps, when you have seen, you will not allow the finest woman in the world to be in France.

VEROMIL. I defy the danger. Besides, I desire we may have the afternoon to ourselves. I declare against all cards and parties whatsoever.

VALENTINE. I'll second your resistance; for I know we shall be asked; and they will be as difficultly refused too as a starving author, who begs your subscription to his next miscellany; and you will get much the same by both compliances, a great deal of nonsense and impertinence for your money—for he who plays at quadrille without being let into the secret, as surely loses, as he would at Newmarket.

WILDING. Ay, but then he is let sometimes into much more charming secrets.

VALENTINE. Faith! very rarely!—Many have succeeded by the contrary practice, which is the reason why sharpers have been so often happy in their favours. Your success would be more forwarded by winning five hundred than by losing five thousand.

WILDING. Why, faith! on a second consideration, I begin to be of your opinion—

For gratitude may to some women fall,
But money, powerful money, charms them all.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—WILDING'S *Chambers in the Temple.*

PINCET. [*Alone.*] 'Tis a fine thing to have a clear conscience: but a clear purse, and a loaded conscience, is the devil. To have been a rogue, in order to be a gentleman, and then reduced to be a servant again!—What, refuse paying my annuity the second half year, and bid discover if I dare! [*Shows a letter.*]—Discover if I dare! you shall repent that, my dear brother rogue: for, since I can't live like a gentleman by my roguery, I'll e'en tell the truth, and stand in the pillory, like one, by my honesty. [*Knocking.*] So, the duns begin: well, I can say truly my master is not at home now—but, if he were, it would be the same thing.

[*Knocking harder.*

SCENE II.

SIR HARRY WILDING, PINCET.

PINCET. Hey day! this is some scrivener, or dun of authority.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Here, you, sirrah, where's your master?

PINCET. I do not know, sir.

SIR HARRY WILDING. What, is not he at home?

PINCET. No, sir.

SIR HARRY WILDING. And when do you expect him home?

PINCET. I can't tell.

SIR HARRY WILDING. I warrant, gone to Westminster—A diligent rogue—when did your master go out?

PINCET. I don't know.—(What strange fellow is this?)

SIR HARRY WILDING. [*Aside.*] I warrant before this rascal was up.—Come, sirrah, show me your master's library.

PINCET. His library, sir?

SIR HARRY WILDING. His library, sir, his study, his books.

PINCET. My master has no books, sir.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Show me his books, or I'll crack your skull for you, sir.

PINCET. Sir, he has no books. What would you have with my master, sir?

SIR HARRY WILDING. What's this? [*Taking a book up.*] Rochester's poems? What does he do with poems?—but 'tis better to spend an hour so than in a tavern.—What book is this?—Plays—what, does he read plays too?—Hark ye, sirrah, show me where your master keeps his law-books.

PINCET. Sir, he has no law-books: what should he do with law-books?

SIR HARRY WILDING. I'll tell you, villain!

[*Goes to strike him.*

[*Knocking.*

O here, here he comes, I'll meet my dear boy.

SCENE III.

To them TAILOR.

TAILOR. Mr. Pincet, is your master within? I have brought my bill.

PINCET. You must come another time.

TAILOR. Another time! sir, I must speak with him now. I have been put off this twelvemonth, I can stay no longer.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Give me your bill.

TAILOR. Will you pay it, sir?

SIR HARRY WILDING. Perhaps I will, sir.

TAILOR. Here it is, sir.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Agad! it's a good long one. "For a suit of laced clothes made your honour last Michaelmas was two years, forty pounds"—What, do your Templars wear laced clothes?

TAILOR. Do they? ha, ha, ha! would they paid for them too. We have gentlemen here, sir, who dress as finely as any beaus of them all.

PINCET. And pay as finely too, I believe, to your sorrow. [*Aside.*]

SIR HARRY WILDING. "A suit of black velvet, twenty-three pounds." Agad, the rogue is extravagant.

SCENE IV.

To them MILLINER, PERIWIGMAKER, SHOEMAKER, HOSIER.

MILLINER. Mr. Pincet, is your master within?

PINCET. No, no, no.—You must all come another time.

PERIWIGMAKER. Sir, we shall not come another time; we agreed to come all in a body; and, unless we are paid, we shall take other methods. [*Knocking.*]

SIR HARRY WILDING. Hell and the devil! what have we here? [*Staring as in the greatest confusion.*]

PINCET. [*Without.*] He is not at home.

TRICKSY. I tell you he is, and I will see him.

SCENE V.

To them MRS. TRICKSY. *As she is crossing the stage* SIR HARRY WILDING *takes hold on her.*

SIR HARRY WILDING. Hark ye, madam, are you acquainted with my son?

TRICKSY. Nor none of the scrubs that belong to you, fellow, I hope.

SIR HARRY WILDING. The gentleman who owns these chambers, madam, is my son.

TRICKSY. Sir, you are an impudent coxcomb; the gentleman who owns these chambers has no such dirty relations.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Very fine, very fine! I see it now. My son is an extravagant rake, and I am imposed upon. But I'll be revenged on these fop-makers at least.

PERIWIGMAKER. Sir, I will have my money.

SIR HARRY WILDING. I'll pay you, sir, with a vengeance—Dogs! villains! whores! [*Beats them out and returns.*]

SCENE VI.

SIR HARRY WILDING. [*Alone.*] A rogue! a rogue! is this his studying law?—Oh! here's his strong box, we'll see what's in thee however. [*Breaks it open.*]—What's this?

[*Reads.*]

“DR. BUNNY,—I will meet you in the balcony at the Old Playhouse this evening at six. Dumps is gone into the country. I choose rather to see you abroad than at my own house; for some things lately happened, I fear, have given the cuckold reason for suspicion. Nothing can equal my contempt for him, but my love for you.

“Yours affectionately,

“J. G.”

Oh! the devil! the devil!—Law!—ay, ay, he has studied law with a vengeance. I shall have him suffer the law, instead of practising it. I'll demolish your fopperies for you, rascal.—Dear Bunny [*looks on the letter*]. I shall see the rogue hanged.

SCENE VII.—*An Antechamber in SIR AVARICE PEDANT'S House.*

LADY LUCY PEDANT, LADY GRAVELY, BELLARIA, CLARISSA.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Ha, ha, ha!—And have you the assurance to own yourself in love, in an age, when 'tis as immodest to love before marriage, as 'tis unfashionable to love after it?

BELLARIA. And when the merit of him I do love is much more a rarity than either. 'Tis only when we fix our affections unworthily that they are blamable; but, where virtue, sense, reputation, worth, love, and constancy meet in a man, the mistress who is ashamed of her passion must have a soul too mean to distinguish them.

LADY GRAVELY. What will the immodesty of this age come to?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. What will the stupidity of it come to?

LADY GRAVELY. A young woman to declare openly she loves a man!

LADY LUCY PEDANT. A young woman to declare openly she loves one man only? Your wit and beauty, Bellaria, were intended to enslave mankind. Your eyes should first conquer the world, and then weep, like Alexander's, for more worlds to conquer.

BELLARIA. I rather think he should have wept for those he had conquered. He had no more title to sacrifice the lives of men to his ambition than a woman has their ease. And I assure you, madam, had my eyes that power you speak of, I

would only defend my own by them, which is the only warrantable use of power in both sexes.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Well, for a woman who has seen so much of the world, you talk very strangely.

LADY GRAVELY. It is to her town education, to her seeing the world, as you call it, that she owes these immodest thoughts; had her father confined her in the country, as her uncle did, and as I advised him, she would have scorned fellows as much as I do.

BELLARIA. I hope, madam, I shall never give any of my friends reason to regret my education.

LADY GRAVELY. Yes, madam, I do regret it;—I am sorry I have a relation who has no more virtue than to love a man.

BELLARIA. My father commanded me, madam, to love him.

LADY GRAVELY. Yes, but your uncle has commanded you not.

BELLARIA. It is not in my power to obey him, nor am I obliged to it. I defy you to say I ever gave encouragement to any other: or to him, before I had my father's leave, his command. He introduced him to me, and bid me think of him as my husband. I obeyed with difficulty, till I discovered such worth, such virtues in his soul, that the reception which I at first gave him out of duty, I afterwards gave him out of love. I placed the dear image in my heart; and you or all the world, shall never tear it thence, or plant another's there.

LADY GRAVELY. Did you ever hear such a wretch? I could almost cry to hear her.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I can't help laughing at her; ha, ha, ha!

LADY GRAVELY. Madam! madam! more gravity would become you.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. More gaiety would become you, dear niece.

BELLARIA. I find, aunts, it's impossible to please you both, and I'm afraid it will be difficult for me to please

either; for indeed, Lady Gravely, I shall never come up to your gravity: nor, I believe, Lady Lucy, to your gaiety.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Dear creature! you will alter your opinion, when you have the liberty to go to the plays and assemblies.

LADY GRAVELY. Plays! and assemblies! send her to church.

BELLARIA. I dare venture to both—I shall never reach that sublime way of thinking, which imputes dulness to that, or levity to this. And if you will give me leave to be free, I think Lady Gravely may go more to the one, and Lady Lucy ought to go more to the other.

SCENE VIII.

To them SERVANT.

SERVANT. Ladies, Mr. Valentine, Mr. Wilding, and another gentleman, are below.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Show them up.

LADY GRAVELY. I'll not be seen.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Nay, Lady Gravely.

LADY GRAVELY. I don't like such company——besides, I have some business in my chamber.

SCENE IX.

VALENTINE, WILDING, VEROMIL, LADY LUCY PEDANT,
BELLARIA, CLARISSA.

VALENTINE. Ladies, your humble servant, I beg the honour of introducing a friend of mine—Lady Lucy, Mrs. Bellaria. [*They salute.*

BELLARIA. O, heavens! [*Aside.*

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Was there much company in the Park?

WILDING. All the world, but yourselves; I wonder you could resist the temptation of so fine a day, Lady Lucy.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. O! never be surprised at me, but when you see me walking; for I am the most lazy creature in the world. I would not have walked to my coach this morning to have been empress of the universe. Oh! I adore the eastern way of travelling on men's shoulders: but walking is so vulgar an exercise, I wonder people of quality give in to it.

VALENTINE. It has only the recommendation of being wholesome and innocent.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Great recommendations, truly, to some antiquated prude, some poor-spirited animal, who is proud of an innocent face.

WILDING. That is a face which never does the beholders any harm.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Unless it frightens them—ha, ha, ha!

WILDING. Some women are innocent from their want of beauty, as some men are from their want of courage.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. True. We should all be tyrants if we had power.

WILDING. You will be too late for the auction, Lady Lucy.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. The other lady has disappointed us, so I shall not go. But I have bought a picture since I saw you, which if you don't admire as much as I do, I shall not admire your judgment.

WILDING. If I do not admire it, I'll say I do, and that's the same thing.

SCENE X.

VALENTINE, CLARISSA, VEROMIL, BELLARIA.

VALENTINE. You look very ill to-day, Clarissa.

CLARISSA. You were not obliged to tell me so, methinks.

VALENTINE. Freedom in a husband, is—

CLARISSA. Impertinence——stay till you have the title.

VALENTINE. A day will give it me.

CLARISSA. Perhaps not. This troublesome impertinent freedom makes me believe you not so near your happiness.

VALENTINE. Madam! madam! this turbulency of temper makes me fear I am far too near my misery.

CLARISSA. I don't understand you.

VALENTINE. I fear you are more difficult to be understood than I am.—Stay till I have a title—He who marries a woman, or pays for an estate, before he is apprised of their real value, will find it then too late to lament. The purchaser, indeed, may sell his estate to another with loss; but the husband, like a loaded ass, must drag on the heavy burthen, till death alone relieves him.

CLARISSA. Intolerable insolence!——I'll never see you more.

VALENTINE. Pardon me, Bellaria, I must follow her.—To make the quarrel irreconcilable. [*Aside.*]

SCENE XI.

VEROMIL, BELLARIA.

[VEROMIL and BELLARIA, who had stood this while silent, rush into one another's arms.]

VEROMIL. My Bellaria!

BELLARIA. Are you——can you be my Veromil?

VEROMIL. Let this fond kiss confirm me to be Veromil, and yours.

BELLARIA. And this embrace, which pulls you to my heart, assure you that I know I hold my Veromil: for none but him these arms should e'er encircle.

VEROMIL. My dear, my tender love!

BELLARIA. Oh! tell me what strange, what unexpected chance has brought us once again together.

VEROMIL. A chance so strange; it seems the direction of a providence, which looks with a propitious pleasure on the sincerity of our virtuous loves; for had not the accidental meeting of a friend prevented it, I had to-morrow gone for France, whither I falsely heard you was sent.

BELLARIA. Did you never receive any letter from me?

VEROMIL. And did not my Bellaria then forget me?—Oh! how blest had I been to have seen a line from her.

BELLARIA. Then I have been betrayed; for know, my Veromil, I was forced from my uncle's house in the middle of the night, and in two days brought hither; where I have been kept the closest prisoner; yet I found means to write to you, and gave the letter to my maid, with a ring from my finger to enforce her faithfulness; and he has a thousand times sworn she sent it you.

VEROMIL. O the false jade!

BELLARIA. Heaven knows what different agonies I have felt! Sometimes I thought you dead. Nay, once I feared you false.

VEROMIL. Oh, my Paradise! no worlds could have tempted me; for, by this sweetest, dearest hand, I swear there's not an atom in that charming form, which I would change for worlds.

BELLARIA. You know how willingly I believe you.—But hark, if we are overseen, we are ruined.

VEROMIL. Tell me—O tell me, what I shall do.

BELLARIA. I'll think of it.—Is Valentine your friend?

VEROMIL. Most nearly.

BELLARIA. Then consult with him, if you believe it safe.

VEROMIL. Oh, Bellaria! } [Looking fondly on

BELLARIA. Farewell—My heart. } one another.

VEROMIL. Eternal transports, agonies of joy delight thy soul. Excellent, charming creature!—But ah! a sudden damp chills all my rising joys; for oh! what dragons must be overcome, before I gather that delicious fruit!—I must impart it to Valentine; for on his friendship hangs my sure success.

SCENE XII.

VALENTINE, VEROMIL.

VALENTINE. Alone, and musing, dear Veromil! Are you thinking on your lady in France?

VEROMIL. Valentine!—are you my friend?

VALENTINE. If you doubt it, I am not.

VEROMIL. It is in your power, perhaps, to grant me my utmost wish—will you?

VALENTINE. You know I will.

VEROMIL. Be it whatever—

VALENTINE. Humph!—Faith! unless it should be to go abroad with you to-morrow, for the same reason keeps me at home that sends you away—a woman; and I believe, now you have seen her, you will confess a fine one.

VEROMIL. What do you mean?

VALENTINE. In a word, that lady I left you alone with I dote on to distraction.—You seem disturbed, Veromil! Did I not know you already engaged, and the constancy of your temper, her charms might excuse my suspecting a sudden conquest.

VEROMIL. Be assured it is not in the power of wealth or beauty to change my passion.—And are you to be married to her to-morrow?

VALENTINE. Would I were! To show you I distrust not your friendship, I'll open my whole breast to you. I had for almost two years pursued that other lady, and, after a long series of importunity, at last obtained her consent, and to-morrow was the appointed day. But, about a month since, the lady whom I told you of in our way from the Park came hither; that I liked her you'll easily believe; but by frequent conversation the disease possessed my whole mind. My love for her, and aversion for my former mistress, increased daily—till I resolved to break with the old, and pursue the new passion. The one I have accomplished

in an irreconcilable quarrel with Clarissa: the first step I will take to the latter shall be, by all means whatsoever, to lessen her value for him she thinks herself engaged to—whom, could I once remove, I easily should supply his place.

VEROMIL. But can you do this with honour?

VALENTINE. Ha, ha, ha! you and I had strange notions of that word when we used to read the moralists at Oxford; but our honour here is as different from that as our dress. In short, it forbids us to receive injuries, but not to do them.

VEROMIL. Fine honour truly!—Just the reverse of Christianity.

VALENTINE. Pshaw!—thou art so unfashionably virtuous!

VEROMIL. Virtue may indeed be unfashionable in this age; for ignorance and vice will always live together. And sure the world is come to that height of folly and ignorance, posterity may call this the Leaden Age. But virtue loses not its worth by being slighted by the world, more than the pearl, when the foolish cock preferred a barleycorn. Virtue is a diamond, which when the world despises, 'tis plain that knaves and fools have too much sway therein.

VALENTINE. Ay, virtue and diamonds may be very like one another—but, faith! they are seldom the ornaments of the same person.

VEROMIL. I am sorry for it.

VALENTINE. Well, now tell me in what I can serve you?

VEROMIL. I must first persuade you into other thoughts: but I hear company. If you please, we'll walk in the garden.

SCENE XIII.

LADY GRAVELY, *following* SIR AVARICE PEDANT.

LADY GRAVELY. I tell you it's in every one's mouth—the whole world says it.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Well, and what do I lose by that?

Would you have me part with my wife, because the world is pleased to belie her? I'll as soon sell out of the stocks the next report that is raised about Gibraltar.

LADY GRAVELY. Insensible wretch!

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Insensible! you are mistaken; I have computed it, and I find it cheaper to maintain my wife at home, than to allow her a separate maintenance. She has great relations, and will consequently have a great allowance.

LADY GRAVELY. Abandoned! would you keep a serpent in your bosom?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. If she is a serpent, it's more than I know. If you can prove any thing against her, do it.

LADY GRAVELY. Will you prosecute it, if I do?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. If her gallant be rich: but if he's poor, look you, I will have nothing to do with him; for I have resolved never to go to law with a beggar or a lord: the one you will never cast, and the other you will get nothing by casting.

LADY GRAVELY. You'll get revenge.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. I am too good a Christian to give money for revenge.

LADY GRAVELY. But not to give up your conscience for money. Will you set up for a Christian without honesty?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. I'll have faith at least; and so, sister, I believe my wife honest, and will believe it till you prove the contrary.

LADY GRAVELY. Can a woman be honest who frequents assemblies, auctions, plays, and reads romances?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Very innocently, I dare swear.

LADY GRAVELY. Who keeps an assembly herself! whose house is a public rendezvous for idle young fellows! and who is, I am afraid, sometimes alone with one fellow.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. And very innocently, I dare aver.

LADY GRAVELY. How! innocently alone with a fellow! Brother, I would not be innocently alone with a fellow for the universe.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Since you enrage me, you yourself have a worse character than my wife.

LADY GRAVELY. Monster! I an ill character! I, who have lived reputably with two husbands!

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. And buried them both with great satisfaction.

LADY GRAVELY. The world knows how decently I grieved for them both; yes, you see too well I have not worn off the loss of the last to this day.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Nor will not, till you have got a third, which I hardly wish you had, that my house might be at ease, and that my poor wife, my poor Penelope, might not be disturbed. For I will no more believe any thing against her than I will believe a stock-jobber on the Exchange, or a lawyer in Westminster Hall.

LADY GRAVELY. The curses of cuckoldom and credulity attend you, till thy horns put out those eyes which cannot see them.

SCENE XIV.

WILDING and LADY GRAVELY.

WILDING. So, now must I transform myself into a shape as foreign to my natural one as ever Proteus did. [*Aside.*—Hem! hem!—Lady Gravelly, your humble servant!

LADY GRAVELY. How got you admittance here, sir? I thought you knew that I receive no visits from men at this hour!

WILDING. As my visits, madam, are always innocent, I presumed your ladyship might admit me at a time when you deny access to the looser of our sex. I am, indeed, unfortunately, of that part of the species which your ladyship disesteems; but sobriety, I know, recommends even a man to your ladyship's favour.

LADY GRAVELY. Sobriety! you have, indeed, a great title to sobriety, sir.

WILDING. I own, indeed, the former part of my life has been too freely spent; but love has made me a convert. Love, which has made the sober often gay, has made me sober.

LADY GRAVELY. I am glad a good effect can proceed from a bad cause. Who can she be who has wrought this miracle?

WILDING. Would I durst tell you!

LADY GRAVELY. What do you fear?

WILDING. Your anger.

LADY GRAVELY. Though I disapprove of love—if virtuous, I could forgive it.

WILDING. Then 'tis yourself, yourself, madam; the object of my thoughts, my dreams, my wishes—

LADY GRAVELY. In love with me! I hope, sir, my conduct has not given encouragement.

WILDING. O! do not, do not look thus cruel on me. Those eyes should only dart their lightnings on the profligate; but when approached with purity, should be all gentle, mild, propitious. I, madam, despise and hate the world as you. Coquettes are my aversion.

LADY GRAVELY. That, indeed, shows your sense.

WILDING. Would but my fate so far bless me, that I might have the opportunity of conversing with a woman of your sense, of communicating my censures on the world to you, and approving yours. Nothing can be harmful that passes between such a pair. [*Kissing her hand.*] Let what will proceed from their amours.

LADY GRAVELY. Odious name!

WILDING. Their virtuous hours. [*Kissing it harder.*] The world never lays any censure on their conduct.

LADY GRAVELY. The world is not half so censorious as it ought to be on the flirting part of the sex.—Really, I know very few who are not downright naughty.

WILDING. Yes, and openly—it is six times the crime. The manner of doing ill, like the manner of doing well, is chiefly considered—and then the persons too.

LADY GRAVELY. The giggling, ogling, silly, vile creatures.

WILDING. I don't know a woman, beside yourself, one can converse with.

LADY GRAVELY. Truly, I am at a loss for conversation among my sex.

WILDING. Ah! madam, might one who has the misfortune to be a man—

LADY GRAVELY. Don't call it a misfortune, since the women are so bad.

WILDING. Can I hope?

LADY GRAVELY. 'Tis to the men, too, we are obliged for knowing what women are; if they were secret, all women would pass for virtuous.

WILDING. Yet I abhor the want of secrecy. Had I been admitted to familiarities, I would have sooner died than discovered them.

LADY GRAVELY. I cannot deny, indeed, but that secrecy is a manly virtue.

WILDING. Oh! it is the characteristic of a man.

LADY GRAVELY. I am glad to see a young man of such charming principles.

WILDING. Oh, madam!

LADY GRAVELY. Such a just and bad notion of the world.

WILDING. Madam! madam!

LADY GRAVELY. Such a thorough, thorough hatred of bad women.

WILDING. Dear madam!

LADY GRAVELY. And at the same time such a perfect, tender, manly concern for the reputation, of all women.

WILDING. Oh! eternally careful, madam!

LADY GRAVELY. And to show you my approbation, I will venture to walk with you in the garden till dinner.—I will but speak to a servant and follow you. *[Exit.]*

WILDING. Soh! by what I can see, Lady Lucy, you are in a fair way to repent sending me of this errand. Make diversion for you! I shall make diversion for myself, I believe; for nothing but the devil can prevent my success, and I'm sure it's not his business to prevent it.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Antechamber.*

LADY LUCY and WILDING.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I have been half dead with impatience to know your success.

WILDING. If ever I am sent on such an errand again—

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I'll engage she gave it to you home.

WILDING. That she did, indeed.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. And—and—Ha, ha, ha!—How did she receive you?—Ha, ha, ha!

WILDING. Why, I attacked her in a grave solemn style. I put on as hypocritical a countenance as a Jesuit at a confession.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. And she received you like a nun, I suppose.

WILDING. Sir (says she), while you frequent my sister's assemblies, your affected sobriety will gain no place in my belief. I receive no visits from any man—but from such a gay, wild, loose, raking, dancing, singing, fluttering—

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Coxcomb! Ha, ha, ha!

WILDING. Would you recommend yourself to me, you must leave off your whole set of company, and particularly that wild, vain, thoughtless, flirting, unfix'd, inconstant—

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Hold! hold!

WILDING. Mimicking, sighing, laughing—

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Whom do you mean?

WILDING. She named nobody.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. No, she did not need. I know whom she scandalised, and I'll tell her, be it only to make mischief.

WILDING. I say she named nobody at first; but when she found I did not know the picture by her colours, she writ your name at the bottom.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. My name!

WILDING. 'Tis too true.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. The devil take you for telling me of it; it has discomposed me so—I find it impossible to have any complexion to-day.

WILDING. You need none, you have done mischief enough already; 'tis time to think of repairing some of it.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. But I will not repair any mischief I have done.

WILDING. That's an affectation: you are better natured.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Indeed, I am as cruel as Caligula. I wish your whole sex had but one pair of eyes, that I might kill them all with a frown.

WILDING. And one body, that you might recover them as easily. Come, come, Lady Lucy, I have been your fool long enough, and have had no reward for my pains.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. No reward! Have I not spoke to you in all public places? Have I not read your odious letters? Have I not sung your more odious songs? Have I not suffered you to gallant my fan, to kiss my lap dog? What can a reasonable creature ask, which I have not done?

WILDING. The only thing a reasonable creature would ask. You have turned the tables on me finely, indeed, and made that my reward which I should have pleaded as my merit. A prince would be finely served truly, who, when his soldiers asked him for a reward, was to tell them the honour of serving him was one.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I can reckon fifty lovers of mine contented with less.

WILDING. Rare lovers! A lady would be as finely served by such lovers as a king by such soldiers—fellows only fit to guard a drawing-room, or to court in it; and of no more use in the real fields of love or war than a eunuch in a bed-chamber, or a parson in a battle.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I have taken a sudden resolution.

WILDING. Have a care of a bad one!

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Never to see you more.

WILDING. I thank you for telling me, however, because it has led me into another resolution.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Impertinent!

WILDING. Never to leave you more, till you have given me all the joys in your power.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I hate you.

WILDING. That's barbarous, when you know my love.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Yes, I do know your love; and therefore I have used you like a spaniel, and will use you like a spaniel.

WILDING. And I, like a spaniel, will but fawn the more, my angel. [Takes her in his arms.]

SCENE II.

To them SIR AVARICE PEDANT.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Hoity-toity? Hey-day! What's here to do? Have I caught you, gentlefolks? I begin to see I am rightly informed. Are these your innocent gaieties madam?

SCENE III.

To them SIR HARRY WILDING.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Where is the dog? Sirrah! scoundrel! where are you? I shall see you hanged, rascal! I shall see you hanged, sirrah! I'll begin the executioner's work. I'll chastise you, sirrah!

WILDING. Humph!

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Sir Harry! what is the matter?

SIR HARRY WILDING. The matter! Why, sir, my boy, my lawyer, that I told you of, is ruined and undone.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. How, pray?—[*Aside.*] I'm glad to hear it, however.

SIR HARRY WILDING. How! why, he is a fop, coxcomb, and I shall see him hanged.—That's he, sir, that's the lawyer.—I'll disinherit you, dog.

WILDING. Sir, I hope I have done nothing to deserve such a fate.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Nothing! Is disappointing my hopes nothing? Is being a beau, when I thought you a lawyer, nothing?—I'll disinherit you, sirrah!—you are no son of mine—you have proved your mother a strumpet, and me a cuckold.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Truly, so he has me too, I'm afraid.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Heaven send us safe off. *[Aside.]*

SIR HARRY WILDING. You must know, sir, I came up to town to marry you to this gentleman's niece, a fine young lady with twenty thousand pound—

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Ha! *[Aside.]*

SIR HARRY WILDING. But you shall beg, or starve, or steal, it is equal to me. Sir, I cannot but be in a passion; he has injured me in the tenderest point.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. So he has me; truly.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. And me, I am sure.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. In short, I suspect, Sir Harry, that he has been too free with my wife; and he who is too free with one's wife, may, some time or other, rob one's house.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Nay, perhaps he has begun to rob already. It's probable I may see him hanged before I go out of town.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. He has been too free, indeed! What did you ever see in me, sir, or in my conduct which could give you an ill suspicion of me?

WILDING. So! I'm in a fine way i'faith. *[Aside.]*

SIR HARRY WILDING. I shall see him hanged.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. He deserves it truly.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. What could make you imagine that I was to be bribed to so mean, base, low an action! what could make you think I'd ever sell my niece?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT and SIR HARRY WILDING. How?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Sir Avarice, you are a stranger to the arts of this wicked young man; he has importuned me a thousand times, since Bellaria's coming to town, to betray her to him; and just now he vowed never to let me go, till I had promised.—Had you not come in, Heaven knows whether I should have ever got away from him.

WILDING. Can you blame the effects of love, madam? You yourself see what a metamorphosis it has caused in me.—I, who for six long years scarce ever lived out of a study, who knew no amusement, no diversion but in books, no sooner saw the charming maid, than reading grew my bane; gaiety, dress, every thing that might charm the fair, has since employed my thoughts.

SIR HARRY WILDING. What do I hear?

WILDING. My father here, who, from not knowing the cause of this transformation, has so severely resented it, can testify the truth of what I say.

SIR HARRY WILDING. I shall see the rogue a judge!—That I can, my dear boy; and I will take care that thou shalt not be forced to bribe or beg any one: the girl shall be thy own.—Sir Avarice, I ask your pardon; and, madam, I ask your pardon; and, Harry, I ask your pardon.

WILDING. Oh, sir! you make me blush. Dear witty creature!

[*Aside.*]

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. You were not so good as your word, at dinner, Sir Harry.

SIR HARRY WILDING. I was hunting after my boy here; but I will be glad to be recommended to the butler presently.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. At your own time.—Come, my dear; Sir Harry may have some privacies for his son: I have something to impart to you too.

SCENE IV.

SIR HARRY WILDING, YOUNG WILDING.

SIR HARRY WILDING. But hark you, young man; what's become of all your law-books, hey?

WILDING. Books, sir; at my chambers, sir.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Then they are invisible. If I could but have seen as much of them as of my own in the country (I mean the outsides) I should have been satisfied.—And pray, sir, how came you by this letter?

WILDING. Damnation! [*Aside.*]

SIR HARRY WILDING. Why don't you answer?

WILDING. That letter, sir!

SIR HARRY WILDING. Yes, sir, that letter, sir!

WILDING. That letter, sir!

SIR HARRY WILDING. Yes, sir.

WILDING. I don't know what it is, sir, I never read it.

SIR HARRY WILDING. You are too great a man to read your own letters, I suppose. You keep a secretary, I hope. I have paid off your secretary, I assure you. But I presume—a—you can read it.—You are not a perfect beau, I hope.

WILDING. What shall I do? I am ruined and undone.

[*Aside.*]

SIR HARRY WILDING. Or shall I read it for you? [*Reads it.*] I found this in your chamber, sir; in your strong box. Your effects were all paper, sir. Are not you a fine gentleman? Oh! Harry! Harry! that ever I should find such a letter as this, directed to—ha! to Capt. Belvil.

WILDING. 'Sdeath! how came I not to recollect that sooner? [*Aside.*] To Capt. Belvil!—I see the whole mistake.

SIR HARRY WILDING. What mistake?

WILDING. You have been at another gentleman's chambers.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Sir, I was at those chambers where I placed you.

WILDING. Ah, sir! there's the mistake. I changed them about a fortnight ago; they were so noisy, they discomposed me in my study. I should have sent you word of it in my next letter.

SIR HARRY WILDING. How? I have committed a fine set of errors, I'm sure.

WILDING. What have you done, sir?

SIR HARRY WILDING. Broke open a few locks, that's all—I may be hanged myself now before I go into the country.

WILDING. Forbid it—you have a most litigious man to deal with.

SIR HARRY WILDING. I must make it up in the best manner I can. You must assist me with law. But come, we will lose no time with our heiress. Besides, I long to see your chambers, and your books. I am resolved I'll find some time this afternoon. I'll first obey a certain call that I find within me, and then wash my face and hands, and get my wig powdered, that I may be fit to wait on the young lady: so don't be out of the way.

WILDING. This is a miraculous escape! or rather a short reprieve; for how to carry on the deceit I don't know. I'll e'en go and advise with trusty Pincet; for I believe he is (as well as several of my brother Templars' servants) a better lawyer than his master.

SCENE V.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT, LADY LUCY PEDANT, BELLARIA,
YOUNG PEDANT.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Be not angry with me, Bellaria, I get nothing by this match; and when I get nothing by an affair, it is very hard I should be blamed for it.

BELLARIA. I know not whom to be angry with.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Look you, Bellaria, I am heartily sorry for your misfortune; because I know nothing so inconvenient as being married to a very gay man. Mr. Wilding may be a diverting lover, but he is not fit for a husband.

BELLARIA. I cannot distinguish between those names, madam.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Don't affect the prude, dear Bellaria.—You see yourself reduced to a necessity of marrying, and I know but one way in the world to avoid the match proposed—and that too, by Sir Avarice's leave.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Anything in my power. I confess I do not approve of the young man.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Then let us leave the lovers together. If you can agree, Bellaria, to prefer a sober young man who loves you, to a wild fellow who values you no more than a thousand others, you may escape what you so much dread.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Well, well, you see my excessive fondness, niece. I sacrifice my reputation to your happiness.

SCENE VI.

BELLARIA, YOUNG PEDANT.

BELLARIA. I am infinitely obliged to your concern for me—
[A long silence here.]
So, cousin, you hear what my aunt says: you are in love with me, it seems.

YOUNG PEDANT. No, truly, I can't profess that I am. Matrimony is a subject I have very little revolved in my thoughts: but obedience to a parent is most undoubtedly due.

BELLARIA. Obedience to a parent, cousin!

YOUNG PEDANT. Nay, nay, I shall not require any thing to be given which admits of a dispute—or which (as Mr. Locke very well observes) does not receive our assent as soon

as the proposition is known and understood. Let us introduce then this syllogism:

Whatever the law of nature enjoins is indispensably just:

But the law of nature enjoins obedience to a parent:

Ergo, Obedience to a parent is indispensably just.

BELLARIA. Nay, but what have we to do with the law of nature?

YOUNG PEDANT. O, if you require farther—the divine law confirms the law of nature. I shall proceed to show that it is approved by profane writers also; translating them as they occur for their more immediate comprehension.

BELLARIA. I'll leave you to your meditations.

SCENE VII.

YOUNG PEDANT. [*Alone.*] Venus says to Æneas in Virgil, "Fear not the commands of a parent; nor refuse to obey her precepts."—What says Polynices to Jocasta in Euripides?—"Whatever you will, O my mother, shall also be grateful to me."—The sons of Metellus, as recorded by Alexander, are a great instance—Plautus in *Sticho*—"Whatever our parents command we are obliged to perform." Why are Cleobis and Biton preferred by Solon in Herodotus? why, for their piety to their mother. What an instance have we in the second son of Artaxerxes—

SCENE VIII.

To him VALENTINE, VEROMIL.

VALENTINE. So, cousin Pedant, what, arguing with yourself?

YOUNG PEDANT. What! is she gone?

VALENTINE. Who?

YOUNG PEDANT. The lady: Bellaria, I think they call her. The women of this age are profoundly wicked! I was proving to her the necessity of obeying a parent, and she would not stay to hear it.

VALENTINE. Oh! you must not entertain ladies with those subjects.

YOUNG PEDANT. I should rejoice egregiously not to be obliged to entertain them at all. I have a very hard fate, that I cannot be permitted to pursue my studies, but must be summoned up hither to be married. I have money enough to buy books, and the necessaries of life; and why should I marry then?—Because my wife is rich. Why, if it be granted that I have enough, the conclusion will be that I do not want more.

VEROMIL. Here's news for you, Valentine.

VALENTINE. The villainy of my uncle gives me more surprise than I have apprehension from his son.

VEROMIL. Surprised at villainy, now-a-days! No, Valentine, be surprised when you see a man honest; when you find that man whom gold will not transform into a knave, I will believe it possible you may find that stone which will change every thing into gold.

SCENE IX.

To them WILDING.

WILDING. Wish me joy, wish me joy, my friends!

VEROMIL. We should rather ask the occasion of your joy.

WILDING. The usual occasion, marriage—I don't know but I may be married to-morrow—But (perhaps) you'll think, from what I said to-day, I should have rather begged your pity than your congratulation.

VEROMIL. Your wife may (perhaps) want that most—But who is she?

WILDING. She is—she is—Ha, ha, ha!

VALENTINE. One thou art ashamed to name, I believe.

WILDING. She is a very great friend of a friend of yours. She is even——Bellaria.

VALENTINE. Bellaria?

VEROMIL. Confusion! [*Aside.*

WILDING. My father is arrived on that purpose. The matter is agreed with the guardian in the country, who is himself coming to town. This haste (it seems) is lest she should be discovered by a lover in the country. But you don't wish me joy, methinks.

VALENTINE. Because I believe you won't have her.

WILDING. Ha, ha, ha! If I have her not: if I don't win her, wed her, love her, and grow weary of her in a month, may I be reduced to that last extremity, to live by the charity of superannuated widows of the town, and either go to bed with an old woman, or without a supper.

VALENTINE. A very modest declaration! and may you thrive according to your merits. But I must leave you on some business——Veromil.

SCENE X.

WILDING, YOUNG PEDANT.

WILDING. So cold! 'Sdeath! this fellow's in love with matrimony itself, and jealous of any others sharing in it.

YOUNG PEDANT. Sir, if I recollect your face, your name is Wilding.

WILDING. Ha! Mr. Pedant, your very humble servant.

YOUNG PEDANT. I hear, sir, you are about to consummate with a young lady here. I assure you, none will so sensibly rejoice in your fortune as myself.

WILDING. Dear sir!

YOUNG PEDANT. For your preferment will be my deliverance, and the occasion of restoring me to my studies.

WILDING. Oh! sir!

YOUNG PEDANT. For books are, in my eye, as much preferable to women, as the Greek language is to the French.

WILDING. You say true—and women are as much more difficult to be understood.

YOUNG PEDANT. Ay, sir; and when you have studied them your whole life, you may justly say of them, what a certain philosopher romanced of learning—"That you know nothing at all."

WILDING. It is no doubt, a very great uneasiness to you to be absent from your books.

YOUNG PEDANT. Yet, sir, do not imagine me totally absent: I have the benefit of a friend's chambers in the Temple, one formerly my chum, now out of town, who has no very bad collection, and condescends to permit me the use of his rooms.

WILDING. You just now told me you rejoiced in my fortune.

YOUNG PEDANT. I remember.

WILDING. It is then in your power to promote it infinitely by lending me your chambers this afternoon.

YOUNG PEDANT. Sir, you may depend upon my doing—*quantum* in me, to serve you. How will they be instrumental?

WILDING. If you will walk with me I'll tell you, for I hear company.

SCENE XI.

CLARISSA, *followed by* BELLARIA, VALENTINE, *and* VEROMIL.

CLARISSA. Nothing shall prevail with me—I detest his sight; the appearance of ghosts or fiends can bring no greater horror, nor more would I avoid them.

VALENTINE. You see, Bellaria, how happy I should have been in a wife.

BELLARIA. This is only affectation; you must not part so. Follow her, Mr. Valentine; she can fly no farther than

that chamber. Nay, I vow you shall.—The little quarrels of lovers are only throwing water on the flames, which quells them for a while, then makes them burn the brighter.

VALENTINE. But, when you throw on too great a quantity, the flames may be extinguished.

BELLARIA. Nay, this is barbarous: you must and shall follow her, and appease her.

VALENTINE. Since you command, madam——It shall be my own fault, if this be not the last visit. [Aside.]

SCENE XII.

VEROMIL, BELLARIA.

VEROMIL. [*Looking on Bellaria, and speaking as to himself.*] Can deceit take root in such a soil?—No. I'll sooner disbelieve my friend—she can't be false; heaven never would have stamp't its image on so base a coin. The eyes which have beheld that face will never believe themselves against her—so lively is innocence writ there—can falsehood then——

BELLARIA. What means my love?

VEROMIL. I know not what I mean.

BELLARIA. Named you not falsehood?

VEROMIL. Ha! do you start at that sound? A guilty conscience starts when it is upbraided—the name of a crime has magic in it to the guilty ear.

BELLARIA. I am confounded!

VEROMIL. So am I, Bellaria!

BELLARIA. Oh! tell me what it is that afflicts you. I will relieve your pain.

VEROMIL. Have you the power then of that fabled spear, can you as easily cure as give a wound?

BELLARIA. [*Smiling.*] If I have given you the wound, I will have the charity to cure it.

VEROMIL. Your charity is extensive, madam; you would

do the same to more—to Valentine. But oh! you cannot wound him as you have wounded me; his heart is better fortified; one of those whom love may make a scar in for a while, which time will soon wear off. You have pierced my soul, Bellaria.

BELLARIA. It never felt a pain like that torments me now; tell me, be generous, and tell me all your griefs.

VEROMIL. What can they be? but that Bellaria's false; false with my friend; she triumphs in her falsehood, and bids me make a confidant of my happier rival.

BELLARIA. Do I hear this, and live!

VEROMIL. Wonder rather that I have lived to tell it. Live! I do not! my life was wrapped in you, in you, my only love, whom youth or beauty, wit or wealth, could never chase away from my bosom; whom, through a tedious three years' absence, amidst the splendour of foreign courts, my constant breast still cherished as its guardian angel, for whom I've sighed, I've wept more than becomes a man to boast of.

BELLARIA. I shall not boast what I have done for you; yet this: I would not have accused you without a cause.

VEROMIL. A cause! demonstration is one.

BELLARIA. Demonstration!

VEROMIL. Ay, madam! the words of such a friend are little less: he told me that you knew of his passion, and had not discouraged it.

BELLARIA. By all that's virtuous; by all the powers of heaven, he wronged me.

VEROMIL. Whom shall I believe?

BELLARIA. Your friend—a woman's testimony bears no proportion with a man's.

VEROMIL. By heaven it should not.

BELLARIA. Still maintain the unjust superiority; allow no virtue, no merit to us; make us as you do your slaves. Inconstancy, which damns a woman, is no crime in man. The practised libertine, who seduces poor, unskilful, thoughtless virgins is applauded, while they must suffer endless infamy and shame. Well have ye revenged the sin of Eve

upon us: for man has since supplied the serpent's place, and scandalously lurks to cause our ruin: for what but such an infernal spirit could inspire a villain to abuse my innocence to you?

VEROMIL. Could he be such a villain?

BELLARIA. Do believe him, ungrateful as thou art; but oh! remember this, you'll find too late how much you've wronged me, and curse that credulous ear which separates us for ever. *[As she is going, he catches hold of her.]*

VEROMIL. Oh, stay! *[Looking fondly at her]* by heavens thou canst not be false.

BELLARIA. Be not too sure of any thing; I was too sure you never could have thought me so.

VEROMIL. Oh! did you know the torments of my mind, you'd pity, not upbraid me.

BELLARIA. Witness heaven I do pity you; and while I am racked with torments of my own, I feel yours too.

VEROMIL. Oh! thou art all angel: would I had had no ears, or he no tongue, or that I had lost my own, ere I had said—I believe, I know thee innocent; thy mind is white as purest snow. But oh! that cursed suspicion has blackened mine. I never shall forgive it to myself.

BELLARIA. For my sake, ease the tempests of your mind. I'll never think on't more.

VEROMIL. When I deserve it, do. Surely thou art more than woman. How dearly mightest thou have revenged my unjust accusation, by keeping me a few moments in the horror of having offended thee, or doubt of thy pardon.

BELLARIA. Unkindly you think me capable of such a behaviour. No, Veromil, I know the sincerity of your love—and would not give you an uneasy hour, to gain more worlds than you deserve.

VEROMIL. Hear her, ye wanton fools, who sacrifice your own and lover's happiness to fantastic triumphs, and an ill-judging world. O, mayst thou be the pattern of thy sex; till women, learning by thy bright example, wipe off the scandals which are thrown upon them. O, let me press thee to my heart for ever.

Still searching out new beauties in thy mind,
A perfect woman till I prove, designed
By heaven, its greatest blessing on mankind.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Continues.*

WILDING, PINCET.

WILDING. You have your part perfect?

PINCET. As my catechism, sir; and I'll engage, that I act it to your satisfaction. If I am not revenged on those blows of yours, old gentleman—if I don't make your heart bleed, may you fetch the last drop out of mine!

WILDING. Fetch but the money out of his pocket—

PINCET. That's my intention—the way to most men's hearts is through their pockets.

WILDING. But do you think he will not discover you when you are disguised in the gown?

PINCET. Oh, sir! you need not fear that; a gown will hide a rogue at any time.

WILDING. Away, then; for, should the old gentleman see us together, we are ruined. My affairs in this house are in a very good situation. Here are four ladies in it, and I am in a fair way of being happy with three of them. Agad, I begin to wish myself fairly off with my two aunts; for I think a modest and reasonable man can desire no more than one woman out of a family. But, I have gone too far to make an honourable retreat; for women act in love, as heroes do in war; their passions are not presently raised for the combat: but when once up, there's no getting off without fighting. Here comes one. Humph!

[Stands with his arms across.]

SCENE II.

LADY GRAVELY, WILDING.

LADY GRAVELY. Are you meditating, Mr. Wilding?

WILDING. Lady Gravelly, I ask a thousand pardons.

LADY GRAVELY. Oh! you can't recommend yourself to me more; I love to see young men thoughtful. And really, young men now-a-days seem to be ashamed to think.

WILDING. They ought to be so! for the only excuse to their actions is a supposition that they do not.

LADY GRAVELY. That's very justly said. I find you and I sympathise in opinion.

WILDING. Their dress, however, would persuade one otherwise: the care and art employed in that seem the effects of thought—.

LADY GRAVELY. In milliners and *valets des chambres*.

WILDING. I wonder how they recommend themselves to so many fine ladies.

LADY GRAVELY. You mistake. There are half a dozen green-sickness girls, who long for beaus, and chalk, and those things—but they are equally despised by knowing women. For my part, I think them pardonable no longer than a doll.

WILDING. And of no more use. Like that too, they rise in value, as they are richer dressed.

LADY GRAVELY. They are my aversion.

WILDING. That, I fear, our whole sex is.

LADY GRAVELY. That's too generally spoken, I can't say all; I have found two exceptions already—and I don't know but I have seen a third.

WILDING. Is it possible!

LADY GRAVELY. You can't guess how excessively some things you have said have succeeded in my favour.

WILDING. O, my happiness!

LADY GRAVELY. So much, that I shall do for you—what, I vow I never did to any but my husbands.

WILDING. Soh!

[*Aside.*

LADY GRAVELY. Yet I fear I shall not prevail on you.

WILDING. O, my angel! I vow by this soft hand I'll instantly obey.

LADY GRAVELY. Then I will give you my advice.—Think no more of Bellaria.

WILDING. Humph.

LADY GRAVELY. What can she have to tempt you?

WILDING. She is really handsome.

LADY GRAVELY. Her face, indeed, looks pretty well; but she paints. Then for her shape; she bolsters her stays. Then I'll tell you two particular deformities—she has a rotten tooth in the left side of her upper jaw, and crooked legs.

WILDING. Still, madam, there is one pleasure, which recompenses all; my marrying your niece will entitle me to your conversation.

LADY GRAVELY. So far from that—If you marry her, I'll never see you more.

WILDING. What reason can you have?

LADY GRAVELY. A thousand—the world might suspect our familiarity; how must my reputation then suffer! O I would not for worlds even now be thought—but now a thousand excuses might be made.—There's no consanguinity in the case; the naughtiness of others; an agreeable young man! passion of love!

WILDING. Oh, my saint!

[*He takes her by the hand, and during the rest of the scene, is hauling her to the door.*

LADY GRAVELY. Though I would not now—yet—if I did—my reputation would suffer in so small a degree—now-a-days scarce at all.—And if you were secret—

WILDING. No torments should extort it from me.

LADY GRAVELY. I should have only my own conscience to satisfy.—And though no conscience is more tender: yet, temptations allowed for—

SIR HARRY WILDING. [*Without.*] Harry! Harry! where's Harry?

LADY GRAVELY. I faint, I die, I am undone! run, run

into that chamber, and fasten the door on the inside: I'll knock when you may come out.

SCENE III.

SIR HARRY WILDING, LADY GRAVELY.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Have you seen my son, madam?

LADY GRAVELY. Not since dinner, Sir Harry.

SIR HARRY WILDING. What can have become of him! I have been beating about this half hour. I have unkennelled a fox in less time.

LADY GRAVELY. Sir Harry, you may thank your stars that conducted you to me; for perhaps it is in my power to save your son from ruin.

SIR HARRY WILDING. How, madam!

LADY GRAVELY. I fear he is about marrying a woman who will make him miserable.

SIR HARRY WILDING. No, no, madam, I have taken care to prepare such a match as shall make him happy.

LADY GRAVELY. Perhaps you are mistaken. I speak against my relation; but honour obliges it. In short, Sir Harry, my niece has not those principles which can make a good wife.

SIR HARRY WILDING. I ask your pardon, madam, she has twenty thousand pounds—very good principles, I think.

LADY GRAVELY. She is a wild, flirting, giddy jilt.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Is that all?

LADY GRAVELY. I am afraid she is no better than she should be.

SIR HARRY WILDING. I don't expect it.

LADY GRAVELY. Her reputation has a flaw—a flaw, as wide in it—

SIR HARRY WILDING. She has money enough to stop it up, madam.

LADY GRAVELY. Would you marry your son to a woman who has a flaw in her reputation?

SIR HARRY WILDING. If she had as many as she has pounds; and if I were to receive a pound for every flaw, the more she had the better. *[Exit.]*

LADY GRAVELY. What shall I do? If he marries her, I lose him for ever.—I am distracted.

SCENE IV.

LADY LUCY PEDANT, LADY GRAVELY, YOUNG PEDANT.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. You seem discomposed, sister; what's the matter?

LADY GRAVELY. I suppose you are in the plot too.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. What plot?

LADY GRAVELY. To sell my niece; to give her up to a wild, raking, extravagant young fellow; to Wilding.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Indeed you wrong me. I came this moment to consult with you how to prevent it. Not that I imagine Wilding what you call him, or that Bellaria would be unhappy with him; but I have another's happiness in my view.

LADY GRAVELY. Distraction! she's in love with him herself. *[Aside.]*

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Now, my dear, if you may be trusted with a secret.

LADY GRAVELY. Any secret is safe with me, that is not contrary to virtue and honour.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Nay, but I am afraid that you refine too much on those words.

LADY GRAVELY. Refine, madam! I believe to censure your conduct needs no refinement. I see very well what your drift is; I know what you would say.

YOUNG PEDANT. Hold, aunt; that you can know what my mother is going to say is denied; for to know one's

thoughts before that knowledge is conveyed by words implies a supernatural insight into the mind. It will be proper, therefore, to prove you have that insight, before any assent to your proposition can be required.

LADY GRAVELY. Fool! coxcomb! pedant! You should be sent to an academy to learn men, before you converse with them; or else be confined to a tub, as one of your philosophers were, till you had learnt enough to know you are a fool.

YOUNG PEDANT. Aunt, I wish a female relation of mine was shut up, till any one thought her wise, beside herself. —Shut up in a tub! I agree, so that no women trouble me. I had rather live in a tub by myself than in a palace with a woman. You see, madam, what an encouragement I have to marry.—What a task must I undertake, to marry a girl, when my aunt, who has had two husbands, is not half tamed. Get me such a wife as Andromache was, and I'll marry; but for your fine ladies, as you term them, I would as soon put on a laced coat; for they are both alike; your fine coat is only admired when new, no more is your fine lady; your fine coat is most commonly the property of a fool, so is your fine lady. Your fine coat is to be bought, so is your fine lady. I despise them both to an excessive degree.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Leave us, sir, till you learn more manners.

YOUNG PEDANT. I obey willingly.

SCENE V.

LADY LUCY PEDANT, LADY GRAVELY.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. A pedant is a most intolerable wretch: I'm afraid she'll never endure him.

LADY GRAVELY. Who endure him?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. That is my secret.—Sir Avarice sent for this wretch to town, in order to match him to

Bellaria. I was afraid to trust you with it, because of your nice principles.

LADY GRAVELY. Indeed, I do not approve of any clandestine affair: but since it is the lesser evil of the two, it is to be preferred; for nothing can equal the misery of marrying a rake. O! the vast happiness of a life of vapours with such a husband.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I am a little in the vapours at this present: I wish, my dear, you would give me a spoonful of your ratafia.

LADY GRAVELY. Was ever any thing so unfortunate!—It is in the closet of my chamber, and I have lost the key.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. One of mine will open it.

LADY GRAVELY. Besides, now I think on't—I threw down the bottle yesterday, and broke it.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. You have more; for I drank some this morning.

LADY GRAVELY. Did you so? then, I assure you, you shall taste no more this day; I'll have some regard for your health, if you have none.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Nay, I will have one drop.

LADY GRAVELY. Indeed you sha'n't.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Indeed I will.

[They struggle, Lady Lucy gets to the door and pushes it.]

SCENE VI.

To them WILDING from the closet.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. If this be your ratafia, you may keep it all to yourself: the very sight of it has cured me. Ha, ha, ha!

LADY GRAVELY. Sir, if I may expect truth from such as you, confess by what art, and with what design, you conveyed yourself into my chamber.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Confess, sir, by what art did you open the door when the key was lost?

LADY GRAVELY. I cannot suspect a gentleman of a design to rob me.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Only, like a gentleman, of what you would not be a bit the poorer for losing.

LADY GRAVELY. Speak, sir; how got you there? what was your design?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. He is dumb.

LADY GRAVELY. Hé is inventing a lie, I suppose.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. He is bringing forth truth, I believe: it comes so difficultly from him.

WILDING. If I am not revenged on you, madam!—Look ye, ladies, since our design is prevented, I don't know why it should be kept a secret: so, Lady Lucy, you have my leave to tell it.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I tell!

LADY GRAVELY. Oh! the creature! is she in the plot? O virtue, virtue! whither art thou flown! O the monstrous impiety of the age!

WILDING. Nay, there was no such impiety in the case neither: so tell, Lady Lucy.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Surprising!

LADY GRAVELY. Oh! the confidence of guilt!

WILDING. Come, come, discover all: tell her ladyship the whole design of your putting me in her chamber.—But you will own you have lost the wager.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Impudence beyond belief!

LADY GRAVELY. Tell me, sir; I beseech you, tell me.

WILDING. Only a wager between Lady Lucy and me, whether your ladyship was afraid of sprites. So Lady Lucy conveyed me into your chamber; and if, upon my stalking out as frightful as possible, your ladyship shrieked out, I was to lose the wager.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Prodigious!

LADY GRAVELY. No, no, it is for evil consciences to fear; innocence will make me bold; but let me tell you, sister, I do not like jesting with serious things. So you thought

to frighten me, sir: I am not to be frightened, I assure you.—

LADY LUCY PEDANT. By any thing in the shape of a man, I am confident. [*Aside.*

SERVANT. [*Entering.*] Lady Basto, madam, is at the door.

LADY GRAVELY. I am to go with her to Deards's. I forgive your frolic, sister, and I hope you are convinced that I am not afraid of sprites.

SCENE VII.

LADY LUCY PEDANT, WILDING.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Leave the room.

WILDING. When you command with a smile, I obey: but as a fine lady never frowns but in jest, what she says then may be supposed to be spoken in jest too.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. This assurance is insupportable; to belie me to my sister; before my face too.

WILDING. Hear this now! What way shall a man take to please a woman? Did you not desire me to make love to her for your diversion? Have I not done it? Am I not striving to bring matters to an issue? Should I not have frustrated it all at once, if I had not come off some way or other? What other way could I have come off? Have I not been labouring, sweating, toiling for your diversion? and do you banish me for it?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Nay, if this be true——

WILDING. Rip open my heart, that fountain of truth, and there you will see it with your own dear image.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Well then, do one thing, and I forgive you.

WILDING. Any thing.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Refuse my niece.

WILDING. Any thing but that.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. You shall, you must.

WILDING. To refuse a fine lady, with twenty thousand pounds, is neither in my will, nor in my power. It is against law, reason, justice—In short, it is a most execrable sin, and I'll die a martyr to matrimony ere I consent to it.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. And I'll die a thousand times rather than you shall have her.

WILDING. What reason can you have?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Ill-nature.

WILDING. I see a better—you would have me yourself. Look'ee, madam, I'll lay a fair wager I am at liberty again before you. You will never bury Sir Avarice; you are not half fond enough. Kindness is the surest pill to an old husband; the greatest danger from a woman or a serpent is in their embraces.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Indeed you are mistaken, wise sir: I do not want to bury him; but if I did bury him, matrimony should be the last folly I'd commit again, and you the last man in the world I'd think of for a husband.

WILDING. But the first for a lover; my angel.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Keep off. Remember the serpent.

WILDING. I'm resolved to venture.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I'll alarm the house; I'll raise the powers of heaven and hell to my assistance.

WILDING. And I,

Clasped in the folds of love will meet my doom,
And act my joys, though thunder shake the room.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. [*Without.*] Oh! the villain, the rogue!

WILDING. It thunders now, indeed.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Was ever such a traitor heard of!

SCENE VIII.

To them, SIR AVARICE PEDANT.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. What's the matter, Sir Avarice?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Ask me nothing: I am in such a passion, I shall never come to myself again.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. That will break my heart certainly.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. We have harboured in our house a traitor, a thief, a villain.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Whom, my dear?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. The gentleman Valentine brought hither to-day I have overheard making love to Bellaria.

WILDING. Whom, Veromil?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I am glad to hear it. [*Aside.*]

SCENE IX.

To them, VALENTINE.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Pack up your all, sir, pack up your all, and be gone: you shall not bring a set of idle vagabonds to my house, I am resolved.

VALENTINE. You surprise me, sir! What vagabonds have I brought?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Why, good sir! the gentleman you were so kind to introduce to me this day I have discovered addressing Bellaria.

VALENTINE. How, sir!

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. I have overheard him, sir, just now. So, if you please to go to him from me, and desire him civilly to walk out of my house.

VALENTINE. Nay, sir—if it be so—

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. And hark'ee, sir, if you please to show him the way, to conduct him yourself, you will prevent

my using rougher means. Here, sir, you harbour no longer—I see him coming up the gallery; we'll leave you to deliver your message.—Hark you; cut his throat, and I will deal favourably with you in that affair: you know what I mean.
[*Aside.*]

SCENE X.

VALENTINE, VEROMIL.

VALENTINE. If Veromil be a villain!

VEROMIL. Valentine, I am glad to find you: I have been looking for you.

VALENTINE. I am sorry Mr. Veromil should have acted in a manner to make our meeting uneasy to either. I am forced to deliver you a message from my uncle, less civil than I thought you could have deserved.

VEROMIL. What's this, Valentine?

VALENTINE. The violation of our long and tender friendship shocks me so I have hardly power to disclose your crime, more—than that you know my love, and have basely wronged it.

VEROMIL. How, sir!

VALENTINE. You have injured me—you know it.

VEROMIL. Valentine, you have injured me, and do not know it: yet the injustice of the act you know. Yes, too well you know religion forbids an injury to a stranger.

VALENTINE. Preach not religion to me.—Oh! it well becomes the mouth of hypocrisy to thunder Gospel tenets to the world, while there is no spark of honour in the soul.

VEROMIL. You speak the meaning of a libertine age; the heart that throws off the face of religion wears but the mask of honour.

VALENTINE. Rather, he that has not honour wears but the mask of piety. Canting sits easy on the tongue that would employ its rhetoric against a friend.

VEROMIL. Your reflection on me is base and vain. You know I scorn the apprehension of doing a wrong.

VALENTINE. Ha!

VEROMIL. Nay, 'tis true; true as that you did intend to wrong another; to rob him of his right, his love; and Heaven, in vengeance on the black design, ordained it to be your friend. Yes, Valentine, it was from me the beautiful, lovely Bellaria was torn; her whom I ignorantly would have pursued abroad; and 'tis to you I owe that I am not robbed of her for ever.

VALENTINE. Curse on the obligation! 'Tis to chance, not me: for, had I known to whom I had discovered her, thou hadst still been ignorant. But thus I cancel it, and all our friendship, in a breath. Henceforward I am thy foe.

VEROMIL. Could I as easily be thine I should deride and scorn thee, as I pity thee now. By Heavens! I should disclaim all friendship with a man who falsely wronged my love.—You I can forgive.

VALENTINE. Forgive! I ask it not. Do thy worst.

[Laying his hand on his sword.]

VEROMIL. Hero in sin! wouldst thou seal all in thy friend's blood? Art thou a man, and can thy passion so outstrip thy reason, to send thee wading through falsehood, perjury, and murder, after a flying light which you can ne'er o'take!—Think not I fear you as a rival. By Heaven, 'tis friendship bids me argue with you, bids me caution you from a vain pursuit, whence the utmost you can hope is to make her you pursue as wretched as her you have forsaken.

VALENTINE. Hell! hell and confusion!

VEROMIL. You see she meets my passion with an equal flame; and though a thousand difficulties may delay our happiness, they can't prevent it. Yours she can never be; for all your hopes must lie in her affection, which you will never gain. No, Valentine, I know myself so fixed, so rooted in that dear bosom, that art or force would both prove ineffectual.

VALENTINE. I'm racked to death!

VEROMIL. Reflect upon the impossibility of your success—But grant the contrary; would you sacrifice our long, our

tender friendship, to the faint, transitory pleasures of a brutal appetite? for love that is not mutual is no more.

VALENTINE. Grant not that I might succeed. No passion of my soul could counterpoise my love, nor reason's weaker efforts make a stand against it.

VEROMIL. Think it impossible then.

VALENTINE. Thou knowest not the strugglings of my breast; for Heaven never made so fine a form.

VEROMIL. Can love, that's grounded on the outside only, make so deep an impression on your heart?—Possession soon would quench those sudden flames. Beauty, my Valentine, as the flowery blossoms, soon fades; but the diviner excellences of the mind, like the medicinal virtues of the plant, remain in it, when all those charms are withered. Had not that beauteous shell so perfect an inhabitant, and were our souls not linked, not joined so fast together, by Heaven I would resign her to my friend.

VALENTINE. O Veromil! Life, fortune, I could easily abandon for thy friendship.—I will do more, and strive to forget thy mistress.

VEROMIL. Let me applaud thy virtue, and press thy noble bosom to my heart.

VALENTINE. It will be necessary for you to remove from hence. I will, if possible, find some means to effect your wishes. Within this hour you shall find me at the coffee-house.

VEROMIL. Once more let me embrace thee.—The innocent, the perfect joy that flows from the reflection of a virtuous deed far surpasses all the trifling momentary raptures that are obtained by guilt. To triumph o'er a conquered passion is a pride well worthy of a man.

Safe o'er the main of life the vessel rides,
 When passion furls her sails, and reason guides:
 While she who has that surest rudder lost,
 'Midst rocks and quicksands by the waves is tost;
 No certain road she keeps, no port can find,
 Toss'd up and down by ev'ry wanton wind

ACT V.

SCENE I.—CLARISSA'S *Apartment.*

CLARISSA [*alone, rising from a table with a letter in her hand*]. So! the task is done: Heaven knows how difficult a one; so entirely to subdue the stubbornness of my resentment. What have I writ? I will see once more.

[*Breaks open the letter.*]

“If there be the least spark of honour remaining in your breast, you will, you must be obliged to relent of your behaviour towards me. I am now too well assured of the reason of your late conduct, from Bellaria: but as it is impossible you should succeed there, I hope”——I can read no farther——“I hope you will reflect on those vows you have so solemnly made to the unhappy

“CLARISSA.”

I am resolved not to send it. [*Throws it down on the table.*]

SCENE II.

To her, VALENTINE.

CLARISSA. Ha! he's here, and comes to insult me. Distraction!

VALENTINE. I fear, madam, you are surprised at this sudden renewal of my visit.

CLARISSA. I own, sir, I expected your good breeding, if not your good nature, would have forbidden you to continue your affronts to a woman—but if your making me uneasy, wretched, miserable, can do you any service to Bellaria——cruel, barbarous! how have I deserved this usage? If you can be cruel, perfidious, forsworn, forgetful of your honour——yet, sure, to insult me is beneath a man.

VALENTINE. If to relent—if with a bleeding heart to own my crime, and with tears to ask your pardon, be insulting—

CLARISSA. Ha!

VALENTINE. See, see my grief, and pity me. I cannot excuse, nor dare I name my crime; but here will kneel till you forgive it.

CLARISSA. Nay, since you repent, you shall not have a cause for kneeling long—Rise, I forgive it.

VALENTINE. Sure, such transcendent goodness never commanded a woman's heart before! it gives new strength to my reviving passion; a love which never more shall know decay. Let us this moment tie the joyful knot.

CLARISSA. Never, never, Valentine. As a Christian, I forgive you; but as a lover will never regard you more. Oh, I have seen too lively an instance of your inconstancy!

VALENTINE. Forbid it, Heaven!

CLARISSA. May it, indeed, forbid our marriage. No, Valentine, if ever more I hearken to your vows; if ever I once think of you as my husband, may I—

VALENTINE. Swear not, I conjure you; for unless you make me happy in yourself, your pardon but augments my misery.

CLARISSA. 'Tis all in vain.—Were you to kneel, swear, threaten, I'd never grant it. If my forgiveness will content you, well; if not, you never shall have more. There is another more worthy of my love.

VALENTINE. Oh! name him.

CLARISSA. Not till your vengeance shall come too late.

VALENTINE. This letter may unfold—

[Takes the letter from the table.]

CLARISSA. Oh! I am ruined.—Deliver it, ravisher!

VALENTINE. What do I see?—Is it possible!

CLARISSA. It will do you little service.

VALENTINE. Not to discover the man: but it has shown me a woman in the liveliest colours. This letter, madam, is the production of no new amour. 'Tis too plain, you are

false. Oh! how happy is this discovery. What a wretch should I have been, with the cast, forgotten, slighted mistress of another. When I see you next, when I am that slave to ask, to wish, to hope you for a wife, may I be cursed with all the plagues that ever cursed a husband.—Adieu.

CLARISSA. O! stay, and hear my innocence.

VALENTINE. 'Tis impossible.

CLARISSA. You, you are the man, whose forgotten mistress you have called me—I blush to say, 'twas you to whom that letter was intended. Nay, read, read the direction.

VALENTINE. Amazement!

CLARISSA. Your genius is triumphant, and here my empire ends; for I must own, with blushing shame must own, that all my disdain to you has still been counterfeit. I had a secret growing love for you, even before you first intimated yours. But I am sure the agonies I have this day felt have severely revenged all those pangs my vanity has given you.—So here's my hand.

VALENTINE. Let my eternal gratitude demonstrate with what raptures I receive it.

SCENE III.

To them, BELLARIA, with an open letter.

BELLARIA. I am witness of the bargain. The farther sealing it shall be performed at the finishing another.—I have considered your friend's proposals, [*Shows the letter*] and approve them.

VALENTINE. I hope then, madam, my diligence in their execution will prevail on you to forget—

BELLARIA. I am sure I shall have no reason to recollect

VALENTINE. This goodness, madam, at the same time that it pardons, pleads also an excuse for my crime.—I shall do my utmost to merit it.

SCENE IV.

CLARISSA, BELLARIA.

CLARISSA. I am afraid, my dear, my late conduct has appeared very strange to you, after what you have formerly seen.

BELLARIA. Your former conduct was to me much more wonderful; for, to disguise our passions is, in my opinion, a harder task than to discover them. I have often laughed at the ridiculous cruelty of women; to torment ourselves to be revenged on an enemy is absurd; but to do it, that we may give pain to a lover, is as monstrous a folly as 'tis a barbarity.

CLARISSA. You would strip beauty of all its power?

BELLARIA. I would strip beauty of all its imperfections, and persuade her whom nature has adorned without, to employ her chief art to adorn herself within; for, believe it, my dear Clarissa, a pretty face, over-affectation, pride, ill-nature, in a word, over-coquetry is but a gilt cover over a volume of nonsense, which will be despised by all wise men; and, having been exposed to sale for a few years in all the public auctions of the town, will be doomed to rust neglected in the possession of a coxcomb!

SCENE V.

To them, WILDING, and SIR HARRY WILDING dressed and powdered.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Madam, your most humble servant. I suppose, madam, Sir Avarice has opened the affair to you which has brought me to town; it was settled before I left the country, as to the material points. Nothing now

remains but the ceremonies of the marriage, &c.—So this visit is to desire to know what day you fix on for that purpose.

BELLARIA. Your method of proceeding, sir, something surprises me! Your son has never mentioned a word of that nature to me.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Alack-a-day, madam! the boy is modest; Harry's modest, madam: but alas! you are the only person to whom he has not mentioned it: perhaps the rogue may think, as old Cowley says:

“I will not ask her—'tis a milder fate,
To fall by her not loving, than her hate.”

BELLARIA. Very gallant, Sir Harry! By what I can see, you give greater proofs of love than your son does.

WILDING. I wish those lovely eyes could see as far into my heart as they pierce: I should not then be obliged to paint in the weak colourings of words a passion no language can express, because none ever felt before.

SIR HARRY WILDING. To her, boy, to her. I'll leave you together. Come, young lady, you must not spoil sport.

SCENE VI.

WILDING, BELLARIA.

WILDING. I am afraid, madam, what you have heard me rally of matrimony makes you suspect my ill opinion of it; but that state, which, with all other women, would be hell to me, with you is paradise, is heaven. Oh! let me touch that tender hand, and pressing it in raptures to my heart—

BELLARIA. Ay, this is something like love; by that time you have sighed away two years in this manner, I may be persuaded to admit you into the number of my admirers.

WILDING. [*Aside.*] I shall be admitted into Bedlam first I hope.—'Tis that very thing makes so many couple un-

happy; for you ladies will have all our love beforehand, and then you expect it all afterwards. Like a thoughtless heir, who spends his estate before he is in the possession; with this difference—he ante-dates his pleasures, you postpone them.

BELLARIA. Finely argued! I protest, Mr. Wilding. I did not think you had made such a proficiency in your studies.—It would be pity to take so promising a young man from the bar.—You may come to be a judge.

WILDING. You only rally me; for I cannot think you believe that I ever studied law: dress, and the ladies, have employed my time.—I protest to you, madam, I know no more of the law, than I do of the moon.

BELLARIA. I thought you had been six years in the Temple.

WILDING. Ha, ha, ha! madam, you may as well think I am a scholar because I have been at Oxford, as that I am a lawyer because I have been at the Temple.

BELLARIA. So, then, you have deceived your father in the character of a lawyer; how shall I be sure you will not me in that of a lover?

WILDING. Oh! a thousand ways, madam: first, by my countenance; then by the temptation; and lastly, I hope, you will think I talk like a lover. No one, I am sure, ever heard me talk like a lawyer.

BELLARIA. Indeed you do now,—very like one; for you talk for a fee.

WILDING. Nay, madam, that's ungenerous. How shall I assure you? if oaths will—I swear—

BELLARIA. No, no, no; I shall believe you swear like a lawyer too—that is, I shall not believe you at all. Or, if I was to allow your oaths came from a lover, it would be much the same; for I think truth to be a thing in which lovers and lawyers agree.

WILDING. Is there no way of convincing you?

BELLARIA. Oh! yes. I will tell you how. You must flatter me egregiously; not only with more perfections than I have, but than ever any one had; for which you must

submit to very ill usage. And when I have treated you like a tyrant over-night, you must, in a submissive letter, ask my pardon the next morning, for having offended me; though you had done nothing.

WILDING. This is easy.

BELLARIA. You must follow me to all public places where I shall give an unlimited encouragement to the most notorious fools I can meet with, at which you are to seem very much concerned, but not dare to upbraid me with it—then, if, when I am going out you offer me your hand, I don't see you, but give it to one of the fools I mentioned—

WILDING. This is nothing.

BELLARIA. Then you are sometimes to be honoured with playing with me at quadrille; where, to show you my good-nature, I will take as much of your money as I can possibly cheat you of. And when you have done all these, and twenty more such trifling things, for one five years, I shall be convinced—that you are an ass, and laugh at you five times more heartily than I do now. Ha, ha, ha!

SCENE VII.

WILDING. [*Alone.*] Shall you so?—I may give you reason for another sort of passion long before that time. I shall be master of the citadel with a much shorter siege, I believe.—She is a fine creature; but pox of her beauty, I shall surfeit on't in six days' enjoyment. The twenty thousand pound! there's the solid charm, that may last, with very good management, almost as many years.

SCENE VIII.

To him, LADY GRAVELY.

Your ladyship's most humble servant. You have not made a great many visits.

LADY GRAVELY. No, the lady I went with has been laying out a great sum of money; she carried me as a sort of appraiser; for I am thought to have some judgment. But I believe Sir Harry is coming up stairs. I was desired to give you this by one who has an opinion of my secrecy and yours.

SCENE IX.

WILDING [*Solus, reads*]: "I hear, by Sir Harry, you have a great collection of books. You know my curiosity that way, so send me the number of your chambers, and this evening I will come and look over them."

What shall I do? If I disappoint her, her resentment may be of ill consequence, and I must expect the most warm one. I do not care neither, at this crisis, to let her into the secret of my deceit on my father. Suppose I appoint her at young Pedant's—that must be the place. And, since I can't wait on her myself, I'll provide her other company. I'll appoint Lady Lucy at the same time and place; so they will discover one another, and I shall be rid of them both, which I begin to wish; for, since I have been proposed a wife out of it, my stomach is turned against all the rest of the family.

SCENE X.

PINCET, as a Counsellor, SERVANT.

SERVANT. I believe, sir, Sir Harry is in the house; if you please to walk this way, I'll bring you to him.

PINCET. But stay; inquire if he has any company with him—if so, you may let him know I am here, and would be glad to speak with him.

SERVANT. Whom, sir, shall I mention?

PINCET. A counsellor at law, sir.

SERVANT. Sir, I shall.

PINCET. I am not much inclined to fear or superstition, or I should think I this day saw the ghost of him I've injured. I cannot rest with what I have done, nor know I well by what course to make a reparation.—But here comes my game.

SCENE XI.

To him, SIR HARRY WILDING, and WILDING.

Mr. Wilding, your servant. I presume this may be my client, the good Sir Harry.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Sir!

PINCET. I believe, Sir Harry, I have not the honour of being known to you. My name is Ratsbane—Counsellor Ratsbane, of the Inner Temple. I have had, sir, according to the order of your son, a conference with Mr. Counsellor Starchum, who is for the plaintiff, and have come to a conclusion thereon.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Oh! have you?—I am your humble servant, dear sir; and if it lies in my power to oblige you, in return—

PINCET. Oh, dear sir! No obligation! we only do our duty. Our case will be this—first, a warrant will be issued: upon which, we are taken up; then we shall be indicted; after which, we are convicted (that no doubt we shall, on such a strength of proof), immediately sentence is awarded against us, and then execution regularly follows.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Execution, sir!—what execution?

WILDING. Oh! my unfortunate father!—Hanging, sir.

PINCET. Ay, ay, hanging, hanging is the regular course of law; and no way to be averted. But, as to our conveyance to the place of execution, that I believe we shall be favoured in. The sheriff is to render us there; but whether in a coach or cart, I fancy a small sum may turn that scale.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Coach or cart! Hell and the devil! Why son, why sir, is there no way left?

PINCET. None. We shall be convicted of felony, and then hanging follows of course.

WILDING. It's too true—so says Coke against Lyttelton.

SIR HARRY WILDING. But sir, dear sir, I am as innocent—

PINCET. Sir, the law proceeds by evidence—my brother Starchum indeed offered, that upon a bond of five thousand pounds he would make up the affair; but I thought it much too extravagant a demand; and so I told him flatly—we would be hanged.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Then you told a damned lie; for if twice that sum would save us, we will not.

PINCET. How, sir, are you willing to give that money?

SIR HARRY WILDING. No, sir, I am not willing; but I am much less willing to be hanged.

WILDING. But do you think, Mr. Counsellor, you could not prevail for four thousand?

PINCET. That truly we cannot reply to, till a conference be first had.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Ay, or four hundred?

PINCET. Four hundred?—why it would cost you more the other way, if you were hanged anything decently. Look you, sir, Mr. Starchum is at the Crown and Rolls just by; if you please we will go thither, and I assure you to make the best bargain I can.

WILDING. Be quick, sir; here's Sir Avarice coming.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Come along—Oons! I would not have him know it for the world.

SCENE XII.

VALENTINE, SIR AVARICE PEDANT, YOUNG PEDANT.

VALENTINE. Have but the patience to hear me, sir. The gentleman I unwittingly brought hither was the very man on whose account Bellaria was sent to town.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. How!

VALENTINE. Bellaria, imagining me his friend, in the highest rage of despair, when she found her lover discovered, laid open her whole breast to me, and begged my advice; I have promised to contrive an interview. Now, I will promise her to convey her to Veromil, and bring her to a place where she shall meet you and your son. When you have her there, and a parson with you, if you do not finish the affair, it will be your own fault.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Hum! it has an appearance.

VALENTINE. But, sir, I shall not do this, unless you deliver me up those writings of mine in your hands, which you unjustly detain.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Sir!

VALENTINE. And moreover, sir, unless you do, I will frustrate your design for ever.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Very well, sir, when she is married.

VALENTINE. Sir, I will have no conditions. What I ask is my own, and unless you grant it, I will publish your intentions to the world, sooner than you can accomplish them.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Well, well, I'll fetch them; stay you here, and expect my return.

SCENE XIII.

VALENTINE, YOUNG PEDANT.

YOUNG PEDANT. Cousin Valentine, have I offended you? have I injured you in any way?

VALENTINE. No, dear cousin.

YOUNG PEDANT. Will you please, sir, then to assign the reason why you do contrive my ruin, by espousing me to this young woman?

VALENTINE. Are you unwilling?

YOUNG PEDANT. Alas! sir, matrimony has ever appeared to me a sea full of rocks and quicksands; it is Scylla, of whom Virgil—

“Delphinum caudus utero commissa luporum;”

Or as Ovid—

“Gerens latrantibus inguina monstis.”

VALENTINE. Well, then you may be comforted; for I assure you, so far from bringing you into this misfortune, I am taking measures to deliver you out of it.

SCENE XIV.

To them, SIR AVARICE PEDANT.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Here, sir, is a note which I believe will content you.

VALENTINE. How, sir; these are not my writings.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. No, sir; but if your intentions are as you say, it is of equal value with them. I have there promised to pay you the sum which you say I have in my hands, on the marriage of my niece. Now, if you scruple accepting that condition, I shall scruple trusting her in your hands.

VALENTINE. [*Having read it and mused.*] well, sir, to show you my sincerity, I do accept it; and you shall find I will not fail delivering the young lady at the appointed hour and place.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Let the hour be eight, and the place my son's chambers. I'll prepare matters that nobody shall prevent you. And hark'ee, suppose you give her a dose of opium in a dish of chocolate; if she were married half asleep, you and I could swear she was awake, you know.

YOUNG PEDANT. I cannot assent to that. Suppose the *Positum* be——

The woman is but half asleep: will it follow,
Ergo, she is awake?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. The *Positum* is twenty thousand pounds—*ergo*—I will swear any thing.

YOUNG PEDANT. Oh dear! oh dear! was ever such logic heard of? did Burgersdicius ever hint at such a method of reasoning?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Burgersdicius was an ass, and so are you.

VALENTINE. Be not in a passion, Sir Avarice; our time is short. I will go perform my part; pray, observe yours.

SCENE XV.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT, YOUNG PEDANT.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Logic, indeed! can your logic teach you more than this? two and two make four: take six out of seven, and there remains one. The sum given is twenty thousand pounds; take naught out of twenty, and there remains a score. If your great logician, your Aristotle, was alive, take naught out of his pocket, and there would remain naught. A complete notion of figures is beyond all the Greek and Latin in the world. Learning is a fine thing, indeed, in an age when of the few that have it the greater part starve. I remember when a set of strange fellows used to meet at Wills' coffee-house; but now it's another Change Alley. Every man now who would live, must be a stock-jobber.—Here is twenty thousand pounds capital stock fallen into your hands, and would you let it slip?

YOUNG PEDANT. But, sir, is not injustice a——

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Injustice! Hark you, sirrah! I have been guilty of five hundred pieces of injustice for a less sum. I don't see why you should reap the benefit of my labours, without joining your own.

SCENE XVI.—YOUNG PEDANT'S *Chambers*.

LADY GRAVELY, SERVANT.

LADY GRAVELY. Your master has not been at home yet?

SERVANT. No, madam; but if you please to divert yourself with these books, I presume he will not be long. (I dare not ask her what master she means, for fear of a mistake: though, as I am in no great doubt what her ladyship is, I suppose it to be my beau master.) [Aside.

LADY GRAVELY. It is now past the time of our appointment; and a lover who retards the first will be very backward indeed on the second. His bringing me off yesterday to my sister gave me no ill assurance of both his honour and his wit. I wish this delay would not justify my suspecting his love.—Hark, I hear him coming.

SCENE XVII.

LADY LUCY PEDANT, LADY GRAVELY.

LADY GRAVELY. Ah!

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Sister, your servant; your servant, sister.

LADY GRAVELY. I am surprised at meeting you here.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Ha, ha, ha! I am a little surprised too. Ha, ha!

LADY GRAVELY. I have scarce strength enough to tell you how I came here. I was walking up from the Temple stairs to take a chair, (I'll never venture myself alone by water as long as I live,) what should I meet but a rude young Templar who would have forced me to a tavern; but, by great fortune, another Templar, meeting us, endeavoured to wrest me from him: at which my ravisher let go my

hand to engage his adversary. I no sooner found myself at liberty, but, seeing a door open, in I run, so frightened, I shall never recover it.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. You were a little unfortunate though, not to find the doctor at home.

LADY GRAVELY. What doctor?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Ha, ha, ha! Doctor Wilding, my dear, a physician of great practice among the ladies—I presume your ladyship uses him.

LADY GRAVELY. I know no such physician.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. But you know a gentleman of that name, I suppose.

LADY GRAVELY. Sure I am not in that wretch's chambers?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Indeed you are.

LADY GRAVELY. It must be the devil, or my evil genius, that has laid this trap for me,—What can have brought you hither too?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. A chair, my dear.

LADY GRAVELY. By what accident?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. By my own orders.

LADY GRAVELY. How, sister!

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Indeed, sister, 'tis true.

LADY GRAVELY. And have you the confidence to own it to me? I desire, madam, you would not make me privy to your intrigues: I shall not keep them secret, I assure you. She who conceals a crime is in a manner accessory to it.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. I see your policy. You would preserve yourself by sacrificing me: but though a thief saves his life by sacrificing his companion, he saves not his reputation. Your nice story of a couple of Templars will not be admitted by the court of scandal at Lady Prude's tea-table.

LADY GRAVELY. Madam, madam, my brother shall know what a wife he has.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Madam, madam, the world shall know what a sister I have.

LADY GRAVELY. I disclaim your kindred. You are no relation of mine.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. You make me merry.

LADY GRAVELY. I may spoil your mirth: at least I'll prevent it this time, I'm resolved.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. That's more ill-natured than I'll show myself to you—so, your servant. *[Exit.]*

LADY GRAVELY. I'll take a hackney coach and be at home before her—I see he's a villain; but I'll find a way to be revenged on them both.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. *[Re-entering.]* Oh! for heaven's sake, let us lay aside all quarrels, and take care of both our reputations. Here's a whole coach load coming up stairs. I heard them inquire for these chambers—Here's a closet; in, in—I never was so frightened in my whole life.

SCENE XVIII.

VALENTINE, VEROMIL, BELLARIA, CLARISSA.

VEROMIL. The clergyman outstays his time, or the impatience of my love outflies it. I'm racked till the dear bond be tied beyond the power of art to undo. Think then, my sweet, if the least apprehension of losing thee can shock my soul; what agonies must I have lived in, when hope was as distant as fear is now.

BELLARIA. Too easily, my Veromil, I guess; I know them by my own; for sure I am not in debt one sigh to love.

VEROMIL. In debt! not all the service of my life can pay thee for a tender thought of me. Oh! how I long for one soft hour to tell thee all I've undergone. For to look back upon a dreadful sea, which we've escaped, adds to the prospect of the beauteous country which we are to enjoy.

SERVANT. *[Entering.]* Gentlemen, a clergyman in the other room——

VEROMIL. Come, my Bellaria, a few short moments lead me into Paradise.

VALENTINE. Would thou hadst found another; but love forbids you this—You know I strove with all my power



Would thou hadst found another; but love forbids you this.

From an original painting by E. J. Read.

LADY GRAVELY. I may spoil your mirth: at least I'll prevent it this time, I'm resolved.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. That's more ill-natured than I'll show myself to you—so, your servant. *[Exit.]*

LADY GRAVELY. I'll take a hackney coach and be at home before her—I see he's a villain; but I'll find a way to be revenged on them both.

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VEROMIL. In debt! not all the service of my life can pay thee for a tender thought of me. Oh! how I long for one soft hour to tell thee all I've undergone. For to look back upon a dreadful war, which we've escaped, adds to the prospect of the beautiful country which we are to enjoy.

SERVANT. *[Entering.]* Gentlemen, a clergyman in the other room.—

VEROMIL. Come, my Bellaria, a few short moments lead me into Paradise.

VALENTINE. Would thou hadst found another; but love forbids you this—You know I strove with all my power

Would thou hadst found another; but love forbids you this.



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against it; but it has conquered—and through my heart you only reach Bellaria.

VEROMIL. Ha! Nay then, wert thou as much my friend, as thou art unworthy of the name—through twenty hearts like thine, I'd rush into her arms.

[*Fight. The women shriek. Lady Lucy, Lady Gravely, run out of the closet; they all hold Valentine; and as Veromil is leading off Bellaria, Sir Harry, Wilding, and Pincet meet them at the door.*]

Then take thy life—and now, my sweetest—

SCENE XIX.

SIR HARRY WILDING, WILDING, PINCET, LADY LUCY PEDANT, LADY GRAVELY, VALENTINE, VEROMIL, BELLARIA, and CLARISSA.

VALENTINE. Away. Stand off. Eternal furies seize you!

LADY LUCY PEDANT. You may rave, good sir; but three women will be too hard for you, though you were as stout and as mad as Hercules.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Hey-day! we had but one whore before, here's a seraglio.

VEROMIL. Let me pass, sir.

SIR HARRY WILDING. No, indeed, sir. I must first know how you came here, and then, perhaps, you shall pass—to the Round-house.

VEROMIL. Then I'll force my way thus.

WILDING. Nay, I must secure my father.

[*Veromil makes at Sir Harry, Wilding interposes—he pushes at Wilding, and is disarmed—the ladies loose Valentine.*]

BELLARIA. O heavens! my Veromil, you are not wounded?

VEROMIL. Through the heart, Bellaria, by this prevention.

BELLARIA. Be easy then; for all the powers of hell shall never part us.

SCENE XX.

To them, SIR AVARICE PEDANT, YOUNG PEDANT.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Hey! what have we here? my wife, and sister, and Sir Harry, and all the world!

SIR HARRY WILDING. Death and the devil! what does this mean?

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Nay, good people! how came you all here?

SIR HARRY WILDING. Ay, how came you all here? for I will know before any one go out—

PINCET. Sir, I beg to be excused— [*Offering to go.*]

SIR HARRY WILDING. Not a step: I shall have business for you. I'll see by what law these people make a public rendezvous of my son's chambers.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Your son's chambers, Sir Harry!

YOUNG PEDANT. That they were his, *datur*—that they are his, *negatur*—for the time that they were lent for is expired—*ergo*, they were his, but are not.

LADY LUCY PEDANT and LADY GRAVELY. What's this?

SIR HARRY WILDING. Were his, but are not—What, have you sold these too, Harry!

WILDING. 'Twill out.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Speak, sir; why don't you speak? are not these your chambers?

WILDING. No, sir.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. His!

LADY LUCY PEDANT. His, indeed!

LADY GRAVELY. What do you think, Sir Harry, I should do in your son's chambers?

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Or what do you see here like the

apartment of a beau—but I ask pardon. Your son is a lawyer.

OMNES. A lawyer! Ha, ha, ha!

LADY GRAVELY. In short, Sir Harry, your son is as great a rake as any in town.

YOUNG PEDANT. And as ignorant as any at the university.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Ay, or as one half of his brother Templars.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. And as great a rogue, I am afraid, as the other half.

SIR HARRY WILDING. He shall be as great a beggar then as those that are honest.

WILDING. That, sir, an honest captain of my acquaintance will prevent; for as they were my locks that were broke open, he has given up those articles, you were pleased to enter into, to me and my use. For which I am to thank the honest counsellor Ratsbane; into whose possession you have given a bond of annuity of five hundred pounds a year.

SIR HARRY WILDING. Cheated! abused! dog! villain!—ha! I'll see whether I am able to recover it——

[*Searches Pincet's pockets, throws out several papers, and pulls his wig off.*]

WILDING. It's beyond your search, I assure you.

PINCET. Help! murder!

VEROMIL. Nay, Sir Harry!

SIR HARRY WILDING. Dog! rascal! I'll be revenged on you all——

SCENE XXI.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT, YOUNG PEDANT, LADY LUCY PEDANT,
LADY GRAVELY, WILDING, VEROMIL, VALENTINE,
BELLARIA, CLARISSA, and PINCET.

VEROMIL. [*Taking up a letter.*] Here's one of your papers, sir—[*starts*]. Gilbert, my father's servant!—*looking on the*

letter] By heavens! my brother's hand too—then my curiosity is pardonable. [Reads it.]

PINCET. Heaven I see is just.

VEROMIL. Prodigious!—Gentlemen, I beg that man may be secured.

WILDING. He is my servant, sir.

VEROMIL. He formerly was my father's—This letter here, which is from my brother to him, will inform you farther.

“GILBERT,—I received yours, and should have paid you your half year's annuity long since, but I have had urgent occasions for my money—You say, it is hard to be reduced to your primitive degree, when you have ventured your soul to raise yourself to a higher; and a little after have the impudence to threaten to discover—discover if you dare—you will then find you have ventured your body too; and that perjury will entitle you to the same reward as you audaciously say forgery will me—expect to hear no more from me. You may discover if you please, but you shall find I will not spare that money, which your roguery has assisted me in getting, to have the life of him who is the cause of my losing it. “J. VEROMIL.”

PINCET. If there yet want a stronger confirmation—I, sir, the wretch whom the hopes of riches have betrayed to be a villain, will openly attest the discovery, and, by a second appearance in a public court, restore the lawful heir what my first coming there has robbed him of.

BELLARIA. Is this possible?

VEROMIL. Yes, my sweet—I am now again that Veromil, to whom you first were promised, and from whose breast nothing can tear you more. Sir Avarice, you may be at your ease; for it is now in my power to offer up a better fortune to this lady's merit than any of her pretenders.

BELLARIA. No fortune can ever add to my love for you, nor loss diminish it.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. What is the meaning of this?

VEROMIL. That fortune, sir, which recommended me to

this lady's father, and which by forgery and perjury I was deprived of, my happy stars now promise to restore me.

PINCET. You need not doubt your success. The other evidence to the deed has been touched with the same scruples of conscience, and will be very ready on an assured pardon to recant.

WILDING. Dear Veromil, let me embrace thee. I am heartily glad I have been instrumental in the procuring your happiness; and, though it is with my mistress, I wish you joy sincerely.

VEROMIL. Wilding, I thank you; and in return, I wish you may be restored into your father's favour.

WILDING. I make peace with sword in hand, and question not but to bring the old gentleman to reason.

BELLARIA. There yet remains a quarrel in the company, which I would reconcile. Clarissa, I think I read forgiveness in your face; and I am sure penitence is very plain in Valentine's.

VALENTINE. I am too much a criminal to hope for pardon. Yet, if my fault may be atoned for, I will employ my utmost care to do it. Could I think the acquisition of fortune any recommendation, Sir Avarice has obliged himself to pay me seven thousand pounds on this lady's marriage.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. The conditions are not fulfilled, sir, and——

VALENTINE. Not till she is married, sir. As you have not been pleased to mention to whom, Veromil will fill the place as well as any other.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Sir!

VALENTINE. Sir, what you have agreed to give is but my own; your conditions of delivering it are as scandalous as your retaining it: so you may make a bustle, and lose as much reputation as you please; but the money you will be obliged to pay.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. And pray, sir, why did you invite all this company hither?

VALENTINE. How some of it came here, I know no more than you do.

LADY GRAVELY. I can only account for myself and sister.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Ay, my sister and I came together.

WILDING. Mine is a long story: but I will divert you all with it some other time.

PINCET. May I then hope your pardon?

VEROMIL. Deserve it, and I will try to get his majesty's for you, which will do you most service.

SCENE *the last.*

To them, a SERVANT.

SERVANT. An't please your honour, your honour's brother, Mr. Pedant, is just come to town, and is at home now with Sir Harry Wilding.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Then all my hopes are frustrated. Get chairs to the door.

VEROMIL. This is lucky news indeed! and may be so for you too, Wilding: Sir Harry is too good-humoured a man to be an exception to the universal satisfaction of a company. I hope this lady will prevent the uneasiness of another.

[*To Clarissa.*

VALENTINE. This generosity stabs me to the soul.—Oh! my Veromil! my friend! let this embrace testify my repentance.

VEROMIL. And bury what is past.

VALENTINE. Generous, noble soul!

VEROMIL. Madam, give me leave to join your hands.

BELLARIA. Nay, since I have been the unfortunate cause of separating them, I must assist.

CLARISSA. I know not whether the world will pardon my forgiving you—but—

VALENTINE. Oh! say no more, lest I am lost in too excessive joy.

LADY LUCY PEDANT. Indeed, I think she need not.

LADY GRAVELY. [*To Wilding.*] Your excuses to me are

vain. We have both discovered you to be a villain. I have seen the assignation you made my sister, and she has seen mine: so you may be assured we will neither of us speak to you more.

WILDING. I hope to give you substantial reasons for my conduct: at least my secrecy you may be assured of.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT. Come, gentlemen and ladies, we will now adjourn, if you please, to my house; where sir, [*to Veromil,*] if my brother and you agree (as certainly you will, if you prove your title to your father's estate,) I have nothing to say against your match.

YOUNG PEDANT. Nor against my returning to the university, I hope.

VEROMIL. Sir Avarice, I wait on you; and, before the conclusion of this evening, I hope you will not have a discontented mind in your house. Come, my dear Bellaria; after so many tempests, our fortune once more puts on a serene aspect; once more we have that happiness in view which crowns the success of virtue, constancy, and love.

All love, as folly, libertines disclaim;
And children call their folly by its name.
Those joys which from its purest fountains flow,
No boy, no fool, no libertine can know:
Heaven meant so blest, so exquisite a fate,
But to reward the virtuous and the great.

EPILOGUE

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND AND SPOKEN BY MRS. GIFFARD.

CRITICS, no doubt you think I come to pray
Your pardon for this foolish, virtuous play.
As Papists, by a saint; so authors practise
To get their crimes atoned for by an actress.
Our author too would fain have brought me to it;
But, faith! I come to beg you'd damn the poet.

What did the dullard mean by stopping short,
And bringing in a husband to spoil sport?
No sooner am I in my lover's arms,
But—pop—my husband all our joys alarms!
Madam, to save your virtue, cries Sir Bard,
I was obliged. To save my virtue! Lard!
A woman is her own sufficient guard.
For, spite of all the strength which men rely in.
We very rarely fall—without complying.

Some modern bards, to please you better skilled,
Had, without scruple, the whole thing fulfilled;
Had sent us off together, and left you in
A sad suspense, to guess what we were doing;
Then fans had hid the virtuous ladies' faces,
And cuckolds' hats had sheltered their grimaces.
But ours, forsooth, will argue that the stage
Was meant t'improve, and not debauch the age.
Pshaw! to improve!—the stage was first designed,
Such as they are, to represent mankind.
And, since a poet ought to copy nature,
A cuckold sure, were not so strange a creature.

Well, though our poet's very modest muse
Could, to my wish, so small a thing refuse,

Critics, to damn him, sure, will be so civil—
That's ne'er refused by critics—or the devil.
But should we both act parts so very strange,
And, though I ask, should you refuse revenge;
Oh! may this curse alone attend your lives!
May ye have all Bellarias to your wives!

SUNG BY MISS THORNOWETS IN THE SECOND ACT

I.

LIKE the whig and the tory
Are prude and coquette;
From love these seek glory,
As those do from state.
No prude or coquette
My vows shall attend,
No tory I'll get,
No whig for a friend.

II.

The man who by reason
His life doth support,
Ne'er rises to treason,
Ne'er sinks to a court.
By virtue, not party,
Does actions commend;
My soul shall be hearty
Towards such a friend.

III.

The woman who prizes
No fool's empty praise;
Who censure despises,
Yet virtue obeys;

EPILOGUE

With innocence airy,
 With gaiety wise,
 In everything wary,
 In nothing precise:

IV.

When truth she discovers,
 She ceases disdain ;
 Nor hunts after lovers
 To give only pain.
 So lovely a creature
 To worlds I'd prefer ;
 Of bountiful Nature
 Ask nothing but her.

SUNG IN THE THIRD ACT, BY THE SAME PERSON

I.

VAIN, Belinda, are your wiles,
 Vain are all your artful smiles,
 While, like a bully, you invite,
 And then decline th' approaching fight.

II.

Various are the little arts,
 Which you use to conquer hearts ;
 By empty threats he would affright,
 And you, by empty hopes, delight.

III.

Cowards may by him be braved ;
 Fops may be by you enslaved ;
 Men would he vanquish, or you bind,
 He must be brave, and you be kind.

THE AUTHOR'S FARCE

WITH

A PUPPET-SHOW

CALLED

THE PLEASURES OF THE TOWN

FIRST ACTED AT THE HAYMARKET IN 1729, AND REVIVED SOME
YEARS AFTER AT DRURY LANE, WHEN IT WAS REVISED,
AND GREATLY ALTERED BY THE AUTHOR,
AS NOW PRINTED.

————— "*Quis iniquae*

Tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus, ut teneat se?"

JUVENAL, Satire 1.





London. Published 1st Dec^r 1815. by Robert Wilkinson. N^o 58 Strand



The New, or Little, Theatre in the Haymarket.
From an old engraving

The New, or Little Theatre in the Haymarket
from an old engraving.



London. Published 1st Dec^r 1845. by Robert Wilkinson. N^o 58. Cornhill.



PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. JONES

Too long the Tragic Muse hath awed the stage,
And frightened wives and children with her rage.
Too long Drawcansir roars, Parthenope weeps,
While every lady cries, and critic sleeps.
With ghosts, rapes, murders, tender hearts they wound,
Or else, like thunder, terrify with sound.
When the skilled actress to her weeping eyes,
With artful sigh, the handkerchief applies,
How grieved each sympathising nymph appears!
And box and gallery both melt in tears.
Or when, in armour of Corinthian brass,
Heroic actor stares you in the face,
And cries aloud with emphasis that's fit, on
Liberty, freedom, liberty and Briton!
While frowning, gaping for applause he stands,
What generous Briton can refuse his hands?
Like the tame animals designed for show,
You have your cues to clap, as they to bow;
Taught to commend, your judgments have no share;
By chance you guess aright, by chance you err.

But handkerchiefs and Britain laid aside,
To-night we mean to laugh, and not to chide.

In days of yore, when fools were held in fashion,
Though now, alas! all banished from the nation,
A merry jester had reformed his lord,
Who would have scorned the sterner Stoic's word.

Bred in Democritus his laughing schools,
Our Author flies sad Heraclitus' rules :
No tears, no terror plead in his behalf ;
The aim of Farce is but to make you laugh.
Beneath the tragic or the comic name,
Farces and puppet-shows ne'er miss of fame.
Since then, in borrowed dress, they've pleased the town,
Condemn them not, appearing in their own.

Smiles we expect from the good-natured few
As ye are done by, ye malicious, do ;
And kindly laugh at him, who laughs at you.

PERSONS IN THE FARCE

MEN

LUCKLESS, the Author and Master of the Show		<i>Mr. Mullart.</i>
WITMORE, his friend		<i>Mr. Lacy.</i>
MARPLAY, Sen. } Comedians	}	<i>Mr. Reynolds.</i>
MARPLAY, Jun. }		<i>Mr. Stopler.</i>
BOOKWEIGHT, a Bookseller		<i>Mr. Jones.</i>
SCARECROW } Scribblers	}	<i>Mr. Marshal.</i>
DASH }		<i>Mr. Hallam.</i>
QUIBBLE }		<i>Mr. Dove.</i>
BLOTPAGE }		<i>Mr. Wells, Jun.</i>
INDEX		_____
JACK, Servant to Luckless		<i>Mr. Achurch.</i>
JACK-PUDDING		<i>Mr. Reynolds.</i>
BANTOMITE		<i>Mr. Marshal.</i>

WOMEN

MRS. MONEYWOOD, the Author's Landlady		<i>Mrs. Mullart.</i>
HARRIOT, her Daughter		<i>Miss Palms.</i>

PERSONS IN THE PUPPET-SHOW

PLAYER	<i>Mr. Dove.</i>
CONSTABLE	<i>Mr. Wells.</i>
MURDERTEXT, a Presbyterian Parson	<i>Mr. Hallam.</i>
GODDESS OF NONSENSE	<i>Mrs. Mullart.</i>
CHARON	<i>Mr. Ayres.</i>
CURBY, a Bookseller	<i>Mr. Dove.</i>
A POET	<i>Mr. W. Hallam.</i>
SIGNOR OPERA	<i>Mr. Stopler.</i>
DON TRAGEDIO	<i>Mr. Marshal.</i>
SIR FARCICAL COMIC	<i>Mr. Davenport.</i>
DR. ORATOR	<i>Mr. Jones.</i>
MONSIEUR PANTOMIME	<i>Mr. Knott.</i>
MRS. NOVEL	<i>Mrs. Martin.</i>
ROBGRAVE, the Sexton	<i>Mr. Harris.</i>
SAILOR	<i>Mr. Achurch.</i>
SOMEBODY	<i>Mr. Harris, Jun.</i>
NOBODY	<i>Mr. Wells, Jun.</i>
PUNCH	<i>Mr. Reynolds.</i>
JOAN	<i>Mr. Hicks.</i>
LADY KINGCALL	<i>Miss Clarke.</i>
MRS. CHEAT'EM	<i>Mrs. Wind.</i>
MRS. GLASSRING	<i>Mrs. Blunt.</i>
COUNT UGLY	<hr style="width: 100%;"/>

THE AUTHOR'S FARCE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—LUCKLESS'S *Room in Mrs. MONEYWOOD'S House.*

MRS. MONEYWOOD, HARRIOT, LUCKLESS.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Never tell me, Mr. Luckless, of your play, and your play. I tell you, I must be paid. I would no more depend on a benefit-night of an unacted play, than I would on a benefit-ticket in an undrawn lottery. Could I have guessed that I had a poet in my house! Could I have looked for a poet under laced clothes!

LUCKLESS. Why not? since you may often find poverty under them: nay, they are commonly the signs of it. And, therefore, why may not a poet be seen in them as well as a courtier?

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Do you make a jest of my misfortune, sir?

LUCKLESS. Rather my misfortune. I am sure I have a better title to poverty than you; for, notwithstanding the handsome figure I make, unless you are so good to invite me, I am afraid I shall scarce prevail on my stomach to dine to-day.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. O never fear that: you will never want a dinner, till you have dined at all the eating-houses round.—No one shuts their doors against you the first time; and I think you are so kind seldom to trouble them a second.

LUCKLESS. No.—And if you will give me leave to walk out of your doors, the devil take me if ever I come into 'em again.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Pay me, sir, what you owe me, and walk away whenever you please.

LUCKLESS. With all my heart, madam; get me a pen and ink, and I'll give you my note for it immediately.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Your note! who will discount it? Not your bookseller; for he has as many of your notes as he has of your works; both good lasting ware, and which are never likely to go out of his shop and his scrutoire.

HARRIOT. Nay, but, madam, 'tis barbarous to insult him in this manner.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. No doubt you'll take his part. Pray get you about your business. I suppose he intends to pay me by ruining you. Get you in this instant: and remember, if ever I see you with him again, I'll turn you out of doors.

SCENE II.

LUCKLESS, MRS. MONEYWOOD.

LUCKLESS. Discharge all your ill-nature on me, madam, but spare poor Miss Harriot.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Oh! then it is plain. I have suspected your familiarity a long while. You are a base man. Is it not enough to stay three months in my house without paying me a farthing, but you must ruin my child?

LUCKLESS. I love her as my soul. Had I the world I'd give it her all.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. But, as you happen to have nothing in the world, I desire you would have nothing to say to her. I suppose you would have settled all your castles in the air. Oh! I wish you had lived in one of them, instead of my house. Well, I am resolved, when you are gone away (which I heartily hope will be very soon) I'll hang over my door in great red letters, "No Lodgings for Poets."—Sure never was such a guest as you have been. My floor is all spoiled with

ink, my windows with verses, and my door has been almost beat down with duns.

LUCKLESS. Would your house had been beaten down, and every thing but my dear Harriot crushed under it.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Sir, sir——

LUCKLESS. Madam, madam! I will attack you at your own weapons; I will pay you in your own coin.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. I wish you'd pay me in any coin, sir.

LUCKLESS. Look ye, madam, I'll do as much as a reasonable woman can require; I'll show you all I have: and give you all I have too, if you please to accept it.

[Turns his pockets inside out.]

MRS. MONEYWOOD. I will not be used in this manner. No, sir, I will be paid, if there be any such thing as law.

LUCKLESS. By what law you will put money into my pocket I know not; for I never heard of any one who got money by the law, but the lawyers. I have told you already, and I tell you again, that the first money I get shall be yours; and I have great expectations from my play. In the mean time, your staying here can be of no service, and you may possibly drive some fine thoughts out of my head. I would write a love-scene, and your daughter would be more proper company, on that occasion, than you.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. You would act a love-scene, I believe; but I shall prevent you; for I intend to dispose of myself before my daughter.

LUCKLESS. Dispose of yourself!

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Yes, sir, dispose of myself——'Tis very well known that I have had very good offers since my last dear husband died. I might have had an attorney of New Inn, or Mr. Filpot the exciseman; yes, I had my choice of two parsons, or a doctor of physic; and yet I slighted them all: yes, I slighted them for—for—for you.

LUCKLESS. For me!

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Yes, you have seen too visible marks of my passion; too visible for my reputation. *[Sobbing.]*

LUCKLESS. I have heard very loud tokens of your passion; but I rather took it for the passion of anger than of love.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. O! it was love, indeed. Nothing but love, upon my soul.

LUCKLESS. The devil! This way of dunning is worse than the other.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. If thou canst not pay me in money, let me have it in love. If I break through the modesty of my sex, let my passion excuse it.—I know the world will call it an impudent action; but if you will let me reserve all I have to myself, I will make myself yours for ever.

LUCKLESS. Toll, loll, loll!

MRS. MONEYWOOD. And is this the manner you receive my declaration, you poor beggarly fellow? You shall repent this; remember you shall repent it, remember that. I'll show you the revenge of an injured woman.

LUCKLESS. I shall never repent any thing that rids me of you, I am sure.

SCENE III.

LUCKLESS, HARRIOT.

LUCKLESS. Dear Harriot!

HARRIOT. I have waited an opportunity to return to you.

LUCKLESS. Oh! my dear, I am so sick!

HARRIOT. What's the matter?

LUCKLESS. Oh! your mother! your mother!

HARRIOT. What, has she been scolding ever since?

LUCKLESS. Worse! worse!

HARRIOT. Heaven forbid she should threaten to go to law with you.

LUCKLESS. Oh, worse! worse! she threatens to go to church with me. She has made me a generous offer, that if I will but marry her, she will suffer me to settle all she has upon her.

HARRIOT. Generous creature! Sure you will not resist the proposal?

LUCKLESS. Hum! what would you advise me to?

HARRIOT. Oh, take her, take her, by all means; you will be the prettiest, finest, loveliest, sweetest couple—Auh! what a delicate dish of matrimony you will make! Her age with your youth, her avarice with your extravagance, and her scolding with your poetry.

LUCKLESS. Nay, but I am serious, and I desire you would be so. You know my unhappy circumstances, and your mother's wealth. It would be at least a prudent match.

HARRIOT. O! extremely prudent—ha, ha, ha!—the world will say, Lard! who could have thought Mr. Luckless had had so much prudence? This one action will overbalance all the follies of your life.

LUCKLESS. Faith, I think it will: but, dear Harriot, how can I think of losing you for ever? And yet, as our affairs stand, I see no possibility of our being happy together. It will be some pleasure, too, that I may have it in my power to serve you. Believe me it is with the utmost reluctance I think of parting with you. For if it was in my power to have you—

HARRIOT. Oh, I am very much obliged to you—I believe you—Yes, you need not swear, I believe you.

LUCKLESS. And can you as easily consult prudence, and part with me? for I would not buy my own happiness at the price of yours.

HARRIOT. I thank you, sir——Part with you——intolerable vanity!

LUCKLESS. Then I am resolved; and so, my good landlady, have at you.

HARRIOT. Stay, sir, let me acquaint you with one thing; you are a villain! and don't think I'm vexed at any thing, but that I should have been such a fool as ever to have had a good opinion of you. *[Crying.]*

LUCKLESS. Ha, ha, ha! caught, by Jupiter! And did my dear Harriot think me in earnest?

HARRIOT. And was you not in earnest?

LUCKLESS. What, to part with thee? A pretty woman will be sooner in earnest to part with her beauty, or a great man with his power.

HARRIOT. I wish I were assured of the sincerity of your love.

AIR. *Buttered Pease.*

LUCKLESS. Does my dearest Harriot ask
 What for love I would pursue?
 Would you, charmer, know what task
 I would undertake for you?

Ask the bold ambitious, what
 He for honours would achieve?
 Or the gay voluptuous, that
 Which he'd not for pleasure give?

Ask the miser what he'd do
 To amass excessive gain;
 Or the saint, what he'd pursue,
 His wished Heaven to obtain.

These I would attempt, and more:
 For oh! my Harriot is to me,
 All ambition, pleasure, store,
 Or what Heaven itself can be.

HARRIOT. Would my dearest Luckless know
 What his constant Harriot can,
 Her tender love and faith to show,
 For her dear, her only man?

Ask the vain coquette, what she
 For men's adoration would;
 Or, from censure to be free,
 Ask the vile censorious prude.

In a coach and six to ride,
 What the mercenary jade,
 Or the widow to be bride
 To a brisk broad-shouldered blade.

All these I would attempt for thee,
Could I but thy passion fix;
Thy will, my sole commander be,
And thy arms my coach and six.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. [*Within.*] Harriot, Harriot!

HARRIOT. Hear the dreadful summons, adieu. I will take the first opportunity of seeing you again.

LUCKLESS. Adieu, my pretty charmer; go thy ways for the first of thy sex.

SCENE IV.

LUCKLESS, JACK.

LUCKLESS. So! what news bring you?

JACK. An't please your honour I have been at my lord's; and his lordship thanks you for the favour you have offered of reading your play to him; but he has such a prodigious deal of business, he begs to be excused. I have been with Mr. Keyber too: he made me no answer at all. Mr. Book-weight will be here immediately.

LUCKLESS. Jack.

JACK. Sir.

LUCKLESS. Fetch my other hat hither. Carry it to the pawnbroker's.

JACK. To your honour's own pawnbroker!

LUCKLESS. Ay—and, in thy way home, call at the cook's shop. So, one way or other, I find my head must always provide for my belly.

SCENE V.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE.

LUCKLESS. I am surprised! dear Witmore!

WITMORE. Dear Harry!

LUCKLESS. This is kind, indeed; but I do not more wonder at finding a man in this age, who can be a friend to adversity, than that fortune should be so much my friend as to direct you to me; for she is a lady I have not been much indebted to lately.

WITMORE. She, who told me, I assure you, is one you have been indebted to a long while.

LUCKLESS. Whom do you mean?

WITMORE. One who complains of your unkindness in not visiting her; Mrs. Lovewood.

LUCKLESS. Dost thou visit there still, then?

WITMORE. I throw an idle hour away there sometimes. When I am in an ill-humour I am sure of feeding it there with all the scandal in town; for no bawd is half so diligent in looking after girls with an uncracked maidenhead as she is in searching out women with cracked reputations.

LUCKLESS. The much more infamous office of the two.

WITMORE. Thou art still a favourer of the women, I find.

LUCKLESS. Ay, the women and the muses; the high roads to beggary.

WITMORE. What, art thou not cured of scribbling yet?

LUCKLESS. No, scribbling is as impossible to cure as the gout.

WITMORE. And as sure a sign of poverty as the gout of riches. 'Sdeath! in an age of learning and true politeness, where a man might succeed by his merit, there would be some encouragement. But now, when party and prejudice carry all before them; when learning is decried, wit not understood; when the theatres are puppet-shows, and the comedians ballad-singers; when fools lead the town, would a man think to thrive by his wit? If thou must write, write nonsense, write operas, write Hurlothrumbos, set up an oratory and preach nonsense, and you may meet with encouragement enough. Be profane, be scurrilous, be immodest; if you would receive applause, deserve to receive sentence at the Old Bailey; and if you would ride in a coach, deserve to ride in a cart.

LUCKLESS. You are warm, my friend.

WITMORE. It is because I am your friend. I cannot bear to hear the man I love ridiculed by fools, by idiots.—To hear a fellow, who, had he been born a Chinese, had starved for want of genius to have been even the lowest mechanic, toss up his empty noddle with an affected disdain of what he has not understood; and women abusing what they have neither seen nor read, from an unreasonable prejudice to an honest fellow, whom they have not known. If thou wilt, write against all these reasons, get a patron, be pimp to some worthless man of quality, write panegyrics on him, flatter him with as many virtues as he has vices. Then, perhaps, you will engage his lordship, his lordship engages the town on your side, and then write till your arms ache, sense or nonsense, it will all go down.

LUCKLESS. Thou art too satirical on mankind. It is possible to thrive in the world by justifiable means.

WITMORE. Ay, justifiable, and so they are justifiable by custom. What does the soldier or physician thrive by, but slaughter? The lawyer, but by quarrels? The courtier, but by taxes? The poet, but by flattery? I know none that thrive by profiting mankind, but the husbandman and the merchant: the one gives you the fruit of your own soil, the other brings you those from abroad; and yet these are represented as mean and mechanical, and the others as honourable and glorious.

LUCKLESS. Well, but prithee leave railing, and tell me what you would advise me to do.

WITMORE. Do! why thou art a vigorous young fellow, and there are rich widows in town.

LUCKLESS. But I am already engaged.

WITMORE. Why don't you marry then—for I suppose you are not mad enough to have any engagements with a poor mistress?

LUCKLESS. Even so, faith, and so heartily that I would not change her for the widow of a Cræsus.

WITMORE. Now thou art undone, indeed. Matrimony clenches ruin beyond retrieval. What unfortunate stars wert thou born under! Was it not enough to follow those nine

ragged jades the Muses, but you must fasten on some earth-born mistress as poor as them?

MARPLAY, JUN. [*Within.*] Order my chairman to call on me at St. James's.—No, let them stay.

WITMORE. Heyday, whom the devil have we here?

LUCKLESS. The young captain, sir; no less a person, I assure you.

SCENE VI.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, MARPLAY, JUN.

MARPLAY, JUN. Mr. Luckless, I kiss your hands—sir, I am your most obedient humble servant; you see, Mr. Luckless, what power you have over me. I attend your commands, though several persons of quality have stayed at court for me above this hour.

LUCKLESS. I am obliged to you—I have a tragedy for your house, Mr. Marplay.

MARPLAY, JUN. Ha! if you will send it to me, I will give you my opinion of it; and if I can make any alterations in it that will be for its advantage, I will do it freely.

WITMORE. Alterations, sir?

MARPLAY, JUN. Yes, sir, alterations—I will maintain it, let a play be never so good, without alteration it will do nothing.

WITMORE. Very odd, indeed.

MARPLAY, JUN. Did you ever write, sir?

WITMORE. No, sir, I thank heaven.

MARPLAY, JUN. Oh! your humble servant—your very humble servant, sir. When you write yourself, you will find the necessity of alterations. Why, sir, would you guess that I had altered Shakespeare?

WITMORE. Yes, faith, sir, no one sooner.

MARPLAY, JUN. Alack-a-day! Was you to see the plays when they are brought to us, a parcel of crude undigested stuff. We are the persons, sir, who lick them into form,

that mould them into shape—The poet make the play indeed! the colourman might as well be said to make the picture, or the weaver the coat: my father and I, sir, are a couple of poetical tailors: when a play is brought us, we consider it as a tailor does his coat; we cut it, sir, we cut it; and let me tell you, we have the exact measure of the town; we know how to fit their taste. The poets, between you and me, are a pack of ignorant——

WITMORE. Hold, hold, sir. This is not quite so civil to Mr. Luckless; besides, as I take it, you have done the town the honour of writing yourself.

MARPLAY, JUN. Sir, you are a man of sense, and express yourself well. I did, as you say, once make a small sally into Parnassus, took a sort of flying leap over Helicon: but if ever they catch me there again—sir, the town have a prejudice to my family; for if any play could have made them ashamed to damn it, mine must. It was all over plot. It would have made half a dozen novels: nor was it crammed with a pack of wit-traps, like Congreve and Wycherly, where every one knows when the joke was coming. I defy the sharpest critic of them all to have known when any jokes of mine were coming. The dialogue was plain, easy, and natural, and not one single joke in it from the beginning to the end: besides, sir, there was one scene of tender melancholy conversation, enough to have melted a heart of stone: and yet they damned it: and they damned themselves; for they shall have no more of mine.

WITMORE. Take pity on the town, sir.

MARPLAY, JUN. I! no, sir, no. I'll write no more. No more; unless I am forced to it.

LUCKLESS. That's no easy thing, Marplay.

MARPLAY, JUN. Yes, sir. Odes, odes, a man may be obliged to write those, you know.

LUCKLESS and WITMORE. Ha, ha, ha! that's true indeed.

LUCKLESS. But about my tragedy, Mr. Marplay?

MARPLAY, JUN. I believe my father is at the playhouse: if you please we will read it now; but I must call on a young lady first——Hey, who's there? Is my footman there?

Order my chair to the door—Your servant, gentlemen—
Caro vien. [Exit singing.]

WITMORE. This is the most finished gentleman I ever saw, and has not, I dare swear, his equal.

LUCKLESS. If he has; here he comes.

SCENE VII.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, BOOKWEIGHT.

LUCKLESS. Mr. Bookweight, your very humble servant.

BOOKWEIGHT. I was told, sir, that you had particular business with me.

LUCKLESS. Yes, Mr. Bookweight; I have something to put into your hands. I have a play for you, Mr. Bookweight.

BOOKWEIGHT. Is it accepted, sir?

LUCKLESS. Not yet.

BOOKWEIGHT. Oh! sir, when it is, it will be then time enough to talk about it. A play, like a bill, is of no value till it is accepted: nor indeed when it is, very often. Besides, sir, our playhouses are grown so plenty, and our actors so scarce, that really plays are become very bad commodities. But pray, sir, do you offer it to the players or the patentees?

LUCKLESS. Oh! to the players, certainly.

BOOKWEIGHT. You are in the right of that: but a play which will do on the stage, will not always do for us; there are your acting plays, and your reading plays.

WITMORE. I do not understand that distinction.

BOOKWEIGHT. Why, sir, your acting play is entirely supported by the merit of the actor; in which case, it signifies very little whether there be any sense in it or no. Now, your reading play is of a different stamp, and must have wit and meaning in it. These latter I call your substantive, as being able to support themselves. The former are

your adjective, as what require the buffoonery and gestures of an actor to be joined with them, to show their signification.

WITMORE. Very learnedly defined truly.

LUCKLESS. Well, but, Mr. Bookweight, will you advance fifty guineas on my play?

BOOKWEIGHT. Fifty guineas! Yes, sir. You shall have them with all my heart, if you will give me security for them. Fifty guineas for a play! Sir, I would not give fifty shillings.

LUCKLESS. 'Sdeath, sir! do you beat me down at this rate?

BOOKWEIGHT. No, nor fifty farthings. Fifty guineas! Indeed your name is well worth that.

LUCKLESS. Jack, take this worthy gentleman, and kick him down stairs.

BOOKWEIGHT. Sir, I shall make you repent this.

JACK. Come, sir, will you please to brush?

BOOKWEIGHT. Help! murder! I'll have the law of you, sir.

LUCKLESS. Ha, ha, ha!

SCENE VIII.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, MRS. MONEYWOOD.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. What noise is this? It is a very fine thing truly, Mr. Luckless, that you will make these uproars in my house.

LUCKLESS. If you dislike it, it is in your power to drown a much greater. Do you but speak, madam, and I am sure no one will be heard but yourself.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Very well, indeed! fine reflections on my character! Sir, sir, all the neighbours know that I have been as quiet a woman as ever lived in the parish. I had no noises in my house till you came. We were the family

of love. But you have been a nuisance to the whole neighbourhood. While you had money, my doors were thundered at every morning at four and five by coachmen and chairmen; and, since you have had none, my house has been besieged all day by creditors and bailiffs: then there's the rascal your man; but I will pay the dog, I will scour him. —Sir, I am glad you are a witness of his abuses of me.

WITMORE. I am indeed, madam, a witness how unjustly he has abused you. [Jack *whispers* Luckless.

LUCKLESS. Witmore, excuse me a moment.

SCENE IX.

MRS. MONEYWOOD, WITMORE.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Yes, sir; and, sir, a man that has never shown one the colour of his money.

WITMORE. Very hard, truly: how much may he be in your debt, pray? Because he has ordered me to pay you.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Ay! sir, I wish he had.

WITMORE. I am serious, I assure you.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. I am very glad to hear it, sir. Here is the bill as we settled it this very morning. I always thought, indeed, Mr. Luckless had a great deal of honesty in his principles; any man may be unfortunate: but I knew when he had money I should have it; and what signifies dunning a man when he hath it not? Now that is the way with some people which I could never come into.

WITMORE. There, madam, is your money. You may give Mr. Luckless the receipt.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Sir, I give you both a great many thanks. I am sure it is almost as charitable as if you gave it me; for I am to make up a sum to-morrow morning. Well, if Mr. Luckless was but a little soberer I should like him for a lodger exceedingly; for I must say, I think him a very pleasant, good-humoured man.

SCENE X.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, MRS. MONEYWOOD.

LUCKLESS. Those are words I never heard out of that mouth before.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Ha, ha, ha! you are pleased to be merry, ha, ha!

LUCKLESS. Why, Witmore, thou hast the faculty opposite to that of a witch, and canst lay a tempest. I should as soon have imagined one man could have stopt a cannon-ball in its full force as her tongue.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Ha, ha, ha! he is the best company in the world, sir, and so full of his similitudes.

WITMORE. Luckless, good morrow: I shall see you soon again.

LUCKLESS. Let it be soon, I beseech you; for thou hast brought a calm into this house that was scarce ever in it before.

SCENE XI.

LUCKLESS, MRS. MONEYWOOD, JACK.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Well, Mr. Luckless, you are a comical man, to give one such a character to a stranger.

LUCKLESS. The company is gone, madam: and now, like true man and wife, we may fall to abusing one another as fast as we please.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Abuse me as you please, so you pay me, sir.

LUCKLESS. 'Sdeath! madam, I will pay you.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Nay, sir, I do not ask it before it is due. I don't question your payment at all: if you was to stay in my house this quarter of a year, as I hope you will, I should not ask you for a farthing.

LUCKLESS. Toll, loll, loll. But I shall have her begin with her passion immediately; and I had rather be the object of her rage for a year than of her love for half an hour.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. But why did you choose to surprise me with my money? Why did you not tell me you would pay me?

LUCKLESS. Why, have I not told you?

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Yes, you told me of a play, and stuff: but you never told me you would order a gentleman to pay me. A sweet, pretty, good-humoured gentleman he is, heaven bless him. Well, you have comical ways with you: but you have honesty at the bottom, and I'm sure the gentleman himself will own I gave you that character.

LUCKLESS. Oh! I smell you now.—You see, madam, I am better than my word to you: did he pay it you in gold or silver?

MRS. MONEYWOOD. All pure gold.

LUCKLESS. I have a vast deal of silver, which he brought me, within; will you do me the favour of taking it in silver? that will be of use to you in the shop too.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Any thing to oblige you, sir.

LUCKLESS. Jack, bring out the great bag, number One. Please to tell the money, madam, on that table.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. It's easily told; heaven knows there's not so much on't.

JACK. Sir, the bag is so heavy, I cannot bring it in.

LUCKLESS. Why, then, come and help to thrust a heavier bag out.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. What do you mean?

LUCKLESS. Only to pay you in my bed-chamber.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Villain, dog, I'll swear a robbery, and have you hanged: rogues! villains!

LUCKLESS. Be as noisy as you please—[*Shuts the door.*] Jack, call a coach; and d'ye hear, get up behind it and attend me.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Playhouse.*

LUCKLESS, MARPLAY, SEN., MARPLAY, JUN.

LUCKLESS. [*Reads*] "Then hence my sorrow, hence my every fear;

No matter where, so we are blessed together.

With thee, the barren rocks, where not one step

Of human race lies printed in the snow,

Look lovely as the smiling infant spring."

MARPLAY, SEN. Augh! will you please to read that again, sir?

LUCKLESS. "Then hence my sorrow, hence my every fear."

MARPLAY, SEN. "Then hence my sorrow"—Horror is a much better word.—And then in the second line—"No matter where, so we are blessed together"—Undoubtedly, it should be, No matter where, so somewhere we're together. Where is the question, somewhere is the answer?—Read on, sir.

LUCKLESS. "With thee," &c.

MARPLAY, SEN. No, no, I could alter those lines to a much better idea.

"With thee, the barren blocks, where not a bit

Of human face is painted on the bark,

Look green as Covent Garden in the spring."

LUCKLESS. Green as Covent Garden?

MARPLAY, JUN. Yes, yes; Covent Garden market, where they sell greens.

LUCKLESS. Monstrous!

MARPLAY, SEN. Pray, sir, read on.

LUCKLESS. "Leandra! Oh, my Harmonio, I could hear thee still;

The nightingale to thee sings out of tune,

While on thy faithful breast my head reclines,

The downy pillow's hard; while from thy lips

I drink delicious draughts of nectar down,
Falernian wines seem bitter to my taste."

MARPLAY, JUN. Here's meat, drink, singing, and lodging,
egad.

LUCKLESS. He answers.

MARPLAY, JUN. But, sir——

LUCKLESS. "Oh, let me pull thee, press thee to my heart,
Thou rising spring of everlasting sweets;
Take notice, Fortune, I forgive thee all,
Thou'st made Leandra mine; thou flood of joy
Mix with my soul, and rush through every vein."

MARPLAY, SEN. Those two last lines, again, if you please.

LUCKLESS. "Thou'st made," &c.

MARPLAY, JUN. "————— Thou flood of joy
Mix with my soul, and rush through every vein."

Those are two excellent lines indeed: I never writ better
myself: but, sar——

LUCKLESS. "Leandra's mine, go bid the tongue of fate
Pronounce another word of bliss like that;
Search through the eastern mines and golden shores,
Where lavish nature pours forth all her stores;
For to my lot could all her treasures fall,
I would not change Leandra for them all."

There ends act the first, and such an act as, I believe, never
was on this stage yet.

MARPLAY, JUN. Nor never will, I hope.

MARPLAY, SEN. Pray, sir, let me look at one thing.

"Falernian wines seem bitter to my taste."

Pray, sir, what sort of wines may your Falernian be? for I
never heard of them before; and I am sure, as I keep the best
company, if there had been such sort of wines, I should have
tasted them. Tokay I have drank, and Lacrimæ I have drank,
but what your Falernian is, the devil take me if I can tell.

MARPLAY, JUN. I fancy, father, these wines grow at the
top of Parnassus.

LUCKLESS. Do they so, Mr. Pert? why then I fancy you
have never tasted them.

MARPLAY, SEN. Suppose you should say, The wines of Cape are bitter to my taste.

LUCKLESS. Sir, I cannot alter it.

MARPLAY, SEN. Nor we cannot act it. It won't do, sir, and so you need give yourself no farther trouble about it.

LUCKLESS. What particular fault do you find?

MARPLAY, JUN. Sar, there's nothing that touches me, nothing that is coercive to my passions.

LUCKLESS. Fare you well, sir: may another play be coercive to your passions.

SCENE II.

MARPLAY, SEN., MARPLAY, JUN.

MARPLAY, SEN. Ha, ha, ha!

MARPLAY, JUN. What do you think of the play?

MARPLAY, SEN. It may be a very good one, for aught I know: but I am resolved since the town will not receive any of mine, they shall have none from any other. I'll keep them to their old diet.

MARPLAY, JUN. But suppose they won't feed on't?

MARPLAY, SEN. Then it shall be crammed down their throats.

MARPLAY, JUN. I wish, father, you would leave me that art for a legacy, since I am afraid I am like to have no other from you.

MARPLAY, SEN. 'Tis buff, child, 'tis buff—true Corinthian brass; and heaven be praised, though I have given thee no gold, I have given thee enough of that, which is the better inheritance of the two. Gold thou mightst have spent, but this is a lasting estate that will stick by thee all thy life.

MARPLAY, JUN. What shall be done with that farce which was damned last night?

MARPLAY, SEN. Give it them again to-morrow. I have told some persons of quality that it is a good thing, and I am resolved not to be in the wrong: let us see which will be weary first, the town of damning, or we of being damned.

MARPLAY, JUN. Rat the town, I say!

MARPLAY, SEN. That's a good boy; and so say I: but prithee, what didst thou do with the comedy, which I gave thee t'other day, that I thought a good one?

MARPLAY, JUN. Did as you ordered me, returned it to the author, and told him it would not do.

MARPLAY, SEN. You did well. If thou writest thyself, and that I know thou art very qualified to do, it is thy interest to keep back all other authors of any merit, and be as forward to advance those of none.

MARPLAY, JUN. But I am a little afraid of writing; for my writings, you know, have fared but ill hitherto.

MARPLAY, SEN. That is because thou hast a little mistaken the method of writing. The art of writing, boy, is the art of stealing old plays, by changing the name of the play, and new ones, by changing the name of the author.

MARPLAY, JUN. If it was not for these cursed hisses and catcalls.

MARPLAY, SEN. Harmless music, child, very harmless music, and what, when one is well seasoned to it, has no effect at all: for my part, I have been used to them.

MARPLAY, JUN. Ay, and I have been used to them too, for that matter.

MARPLAY, SEN. And stood them bravely too. Idle young actors are fond of applause, but, take my word for it, a clap is a mighty silly, empty thing, and does no more good than a hiss; and therefore, if any man loves hissing, he may have his three shillings' worth at me whenever he pleases. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in BOOKWEIGHT'S House.*

DASH, BLOTPAGE, QUIBBLE, *writing at several Tables.*

DASH. Pox on't, I'm as dull as an ox, though I have not a bit of one within me. I have not dined these two days, and yet my head is as heavy as any alderman's or lord's.

I carry about me smybols of all the elements; my head is as heavy as water, my pockets are as light as air, my appetite is as hot as fire, and my coat is as dirty as earth.

BLOTPAGE. Lend me your Bysse, Mr. Dash, I want a rhyme for wind.

DASH. Why there's blind, and kind, and behind, and find, and mind: it is of the easiest termination imaginable; I have had it four times in a page.

BLOTPAGE. None of those words will do.

DASH. Why then you may use any that end in ond, or and, or end. I am never so exact, if the two last letters are alike, it will do very well. Read the verse.

BLOTPAGE. "Inconstant as the seas, or as the wind."

DASH. What would you express in the next line?

BLOTPAGE. Nay, that I don't know, for the sense is out already. I would say something about inconstancy.

DASH. I can lend you a verse, and it will do very well too.

"Inconstancy will never have an end."

End rhymes very well with wind.

BLOTPAGE. It will do well enough for the middle of a poem.

DASH. Ay, ay, any thing will do well enough for the middle of a poem. If you can but get twenty good lines to place at the beginning for a taste, it will sell very well.

QUIBBLE. So that, according to you, Mr. Dash, a poet acts pretty much on the same principles with an oyster-woman.

DASH. Pox take your simile, it has set my chaps a watering: but come, let us leave off work for a while, and hear Mr. Quibble's song.

QUIBBLE. My pipes are pure and clear, and my stomach is as hollow as any trumpet in Europe.

DASH. Come, the song.

SONG.

AIR. *Ye Commons and Peers.*

How unhappy's the fate
 To live by one's pate,
 And be forced to write hackney for bread!
 An author's a joke,
 To all manner of folk,
 Wherever he pops up his head, his head,
 Wherever he pops up his head.

Though he mount on that hack,
 Old Pegasus' back,
 And of Helicon drink till he burst,
 Yet a curse of those streams,
 Poetical dreams,
 They never can quench one's thirst, &c.

Ah! how should he fly
 On fancy so high,
 When his limbs are in durance and hold?
 Or how should he charm,
 With genius so warm,
 When his poor naked body's a cold, &c.

SCENE IV.

BOOKWEIGHT, DASH, QUIBBLE, BLOTPAGE.

BOOKWEIGHT. Fie upon it, gentlemen! What, not at your pens? Do you consider, Mr. Quibble, that it is a fortnight since your letter to a friend in the country was published? Is it not high time for an answer to come out? At this rate, before your answer is printed, your letter will be forgot.

I love to keep a controversy up warm. I have had authors who have writ a pamphlet in the morning, answered it in the afternoon, and answered that again at night.

QUIBBLE. Sir, I will be as expeditious as possible: but it is harder to write on this side the question, because it is the wrong side.

BOOKWEIGHT. Not a jot. So far on the contrary, that I have known some authors choose it as the properest to show their genius. But let me see what you have produced,—"With all deference to what that very learned and most ingenious person, in his Letter to a Friend in the Country, hath advanced." Very well, sir; for besides that it may sell more of the Letter, all controversial writers should begin with complimenting their adversaries, as prize-fighters kiss before they engage. Let it be finished with all speed. Well, Mr. Dash, have you done that Murder yet?

DASH. Yes, sir, the murder is done; I am only about a few moral reflections to place before it.

BOOKWEIGHT. Very well; then let me have the ghost finished by this day se'nnight.

DASH. What sort of a ghost would you have this? sir, the last was a pale one.

BOOKWEIGHT. Then let this be a bloody one. Mr. Quibble, you may lay by that life which you are about; for I hear the person is recovered; and write me out proposals for delivering five sheets of Mr. Bailey's English Dictionary every week, till the whole be finished. If you do not know the form, you may copy the proposals for printing Bayle's Dictionary in the same manner. The same words will do for both.

Enter INDEX.

So, Mr. Index, what news with you?

INDEX. I have brought my bill, sir.

BOOKWEIGHT. What's here? For fitting the motto of *Risum teneatis Amici* to a dozen pamphlets, at sixpence

per each, six shillings—For *Omnia vincit Amor, et nos cedamus Amori*, sixpence—For *Difficile est Satyram non Scribere*, sixpence—Hum! hum! hum! Sum total, for thirty-six Latin mottos, eighteen shillings; ditto English, one shilling and ninepence; ditto Greek, four, four shillings. These Greek mottos are excessively dear.

INDEX. If you have them cheaper at either of the universities, I will give you mine for nothing.

BOOKWEIGHT. You shall have your money immediately; and pray remember that I must have two Latin seditious mottos, and one Greek moral motto for pamphlets, by to-morrow morning.

QUIBBLE. I want two Latin sentences, sir, one for page the fourth, in the praise of loyalty, and another for page the tenth, in praise of liberty and property.

DASH. The ghost would become a motto very well, if you would bestow one on him.

BOOKWEIGHT. Let me have them all.

INDEX. Sir, I shall provide them. Be pleased to look on that, sir, and print me five hundred proposals, and as many receipts.

BOOKWEIGHT. "Proposals for printing by subscription a New Translation of Cicero's *Of the Nature of the Gods*, and his *Tusculan Questions*, by Jeremy Index, Esq." I am sorry you have undertaken this, for it prevents a design of mine.

INDEX. Indeed, sir, it does not; for you see all of the book that I ever intend to publish. It is only a handsome way of asking one's friends for a guinea.

BOOKWEIGHT. Then you have not translated a word of it, perhaps?

INDEX. Not a single syllable.

BOOKWEIGHT. Well, you shall have your proposals forthwith; but I desire you would be a little more reasonable in your bills for the future or I shall deal with you no longer; for I have a certain fellow of a college, who offers to furnish me with second-hand mottos out of the *Spectator* for twopence each.

INDEX. Sir, I only desire to live by my goods, and I hope you will be pleased to allow some difference between a neat fresh piece, piping hot out of the classics, and old thread-bare, worn-out stuff, that has passed through every pedant's mouth, and been as common at the universities as their whores.

SCENE V.

BOOKWEIGHT, DASH, QUIBBLE, BLOTPAGE, SCARECROW.

SCARECROW. Sir, I have brought you a libel against the ministry.

BOOKWEIGHT. Sir, I shall not take any thing against them;—for I have two in the press already. [*Aside.*]

SCARECROW. Then, sir, I have an apology in defence of them.

BOOKWEIGHT. That I shall not meddle with neither; they don't sell so well.

SCARECROW. I have a translation of Virgil's *Æneid*, with notes on it, if we can agree about the price.

BOOKWEIGHT. Why, what price would you have?

SCARECROW. You shall read it first, otherwise how will you know the value?

BOOKWEIGHT. No, no, sir, I never deal that way: a poem is a poem, and a pamphlet a pamphlet with me. Give me a good handsome large volume, with a full promising title-page at the head of it, printed on a good paper and letter, the whole well bound and gilt, and I'll warrant its selling—You have the common error of authors, who think people buy books to read—No, no, books are only bought to furnish libraries, as pictures and glasses, and beds and chairs, are for other rooms. Look-ye, sir, I don't like your title-page; however, to oblige a young beginner, I don't care if I do print it at my own expense.

SCARECROW. But pray, sir, at whose expense shall I eat?

BOOKWEIGHT. At whose? Why at mine, sir, at mine. I

am as great a friend to learning, as the Dutch are to trade: no one can want bread with me who will earn it; therefore, sir, if you please to take your seat at my table, here will be every thing necessary provided for you: good milk-porridge, very often twice a day, which is good wholesome food, and proper for students: a translator too is what I want at present; my last being in Newgate for shop-lifting. The rogue had a trick of translating out of the shops, as well as the languages.

SCARECROW. But I am afraid I am not qualified for a translator, for I understand no language but my own.

BOOKWEIGHT. What, and translate Virgil?

SCARECROW. Alas! I translated him out of Dryden.

BOOKWEIGHT. Lay by your hat, sir, lay by your hat, and take your seat immediately. Not qualified! thou art as well versed in thy trade, as if thou hadst laboured in my garret these ten years. Let me tell you, friend, you will have more occasion for invention than learning here. You will be obliged to translate books out of all languages, especially French, that were never printed in any language whatsoever.

SCARECROW. Your trade abounds in mysteries.

BOOKWEIGHT. The study of bookselling is as difficult as the law: and there are as many tricks in the one as the other. Sometimes we give a foreign name to our own labours, and sometimes we put our names to the labours of others. Then as the lawyers have John-a-Nokes and Tom-a-Stiles, so we have Messieurs Moore near St. Paul's, and Smith near the Royal Exchange.

SCENE VI.

To them, LUCKLESS.

LUCKLESS. Mr. Bookweight, your servant. Who can form to himself an idea more amiable than of a man at the head of so many patriots working for the benefit of their country?

BOOKWEIGHT. Truly, sir, I believe it is an idea more agreeable to you than that of a gentleman in the Crown-office paying thirty or forty guineas for abusing an honest tradesman.

LUCKLESS. Pshaw! that was only jocosely done, and a man, who lives by wit, must not be angry at a jest.

BOOKWEIGHT. Look ye, sir, if you have a mind to compromise the matter, and have brought me any money——

LUCKLESS. Hast thou been in thy trade so long, and talk of money to a modern author? You might as well have talked Latin or Greek to him. I have brought you paper, sir.

BOOKWEIGHT. That is not bringing me money, I own. Have you brought me an opera?

LUCKLESS. You may call it an opera if you will, but I call it a puppet-show.

BOOKWEIGHT. A puppet-show!

LUCKLESS. Ay, a puppet-show, and is to be played this night at Drury Lane playhouse.

BOOKWEIGHT. A puppet-show in a playhouse!

LUCKLESS. Ah, why what have been all the playhouses a long while but puppet-shows?

BOOKWEIGHT. Why, I don't know but it may succeed; at least if we can make out a tolerable good title-page; so, if you will walk in, if I can make a bargain with you I will: gentlemen, you may go to dinner.

SCENE VII.

Enter JACK-PUDDING, DRUMMER, MOB.

JACK-PUDDING. This is to give notice to all gentlemen, ladies, and others, that at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, this evening, will be performed the whole puppet-show called the Pleasures of the Town; in which will be shown the whole court of nonsense, with abundance of singing, dancing and several other entertainments:—Also the comical and divert-

ing humours of Somebody and Nobody: Punch and his wife Joan, to be performed by figures; some of them six foot high. God save the king. [Drum beats.]

SCENE VIII.

WITMORE *with a paper, meeting* LUCKLESS.

WITMORE. Oh! Luckless, I am overjoyed to meet you: here, take this paper, and you will be discouraged from writing, I warrant you.

LUCKLESS. What is it?—Oh; one of my play-bills.

WITMORE. One of thy play-bills!

LUCKLESS. Even so—I have taken the advice you gave me this morning.

WITMORE. Explain.

LUCKLESS. Why, I had some time since given this performance of mine to be rehearsed, and the actors were all perfect in their parts; but we happened to differ about some particulars, and I had a design to have given it over; till having my play refused by Marplay, I sent for the managers of the other house in a passion, joined issue with them, and this very evening it is to be acted.

WITMORE. Well, I wish you success.

LUCKLESS. Where are you going?

WITMORE. Any where but to hear you damned, which I must, was I to go to your puppet-show.

LUCKLESS. Indulge me in this trial; and I assure thee, if it be successful, it shall be the last.

WITMORE. On that condition I will: but, should the torrent run against you, I shall be a fashionable friend, and hiss with the rest.

LUCKLESS. No, a man who could do so unfashionable and so generous a thing as Mr. Whitmore did this morning—

WITMORE. Then I hope you will return it by never mentioning it to me more. I will now to the pit.

LUCKLESS. And I behind the scenes.

SCENE IX.

LUCKLESS, HARRIOT.

LUCKLESS. Dear Harriot!

HARRIOT. I was going to the playhouse to look after you. I am frightened out of my wits; I have left my mother at home with the strangest sort of man, who is inquiring after you: he has raised a mob before the door by the oddity of his appearance; his dress is like nothing I ever saw, and he talks of kings, and Bantam, and the strangest stuff.

LUCKLESS. What the devil can he be?

HARRIOT. One of your old acquaintance, I suppose, in disguise; one of his majesty's officers with his commission in his pocket, I warrant him.

LUCKLESS. Well, but have you your part perfect?

HARRIOT. I had, unless this fellow hath frightened it out of my head again: but I am afraid I shall play it wretchedly.

LUCKLESS. Why so?

HARRIOT. I shall never have assurance enough to go through with it, especially if they should hiss me.

LUCKLESS. O! your mask will keep you in countenance, and as for hissing, you need not fear it. The audience are generally so favourable to young beginners: but hist, here is your mother, and she has seen us. Adieu, my dear, make what haste you can to the playhouse. *[Exit.]*

SCENE X.

HARRIOT, MRS. MONEYWOOD.

HARRIOT. I wish I could avoid her, for I suppose we shall have an alarm.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. So, so, very fine: always together, always caterwauling. How like a hangdog he stole off; and

it's well for him he did, for I should have rung such a peal in his ears—There's a friend of his at my house would be very glad of his company, and I wish it was in my power to bring them together.

HARRIOT. You would not surely be so barbarous.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Barbarous, ugh! You whining, puling fool! Hussy, you have not a drop of my blood in you. What, you are in love, I suppose?

HARRIOT. If I was, madam, it would be no crime.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Yes, madam, but it would, and a folly too. No woman of sense was ever in love with any thing but a man's pocket. What, I suppose he has filled your head with a pack of romantic stuff of streams and dreams, and charms and arms. I know this is the stuff they all run on with, and so run into our debts, and run away with our daughters.—Come, confess, are not you two to live in a wilderness together in love? Ah! thou fool! thou wilt find he will pay thee in love, just as he has paid me in money. If thou wert resolved to go a begging, why did you not follow the camp? There, indeed, you might have carried a knapsack; but here you will have no knapsack to carry. There, indeed, you might have had a chance of burying half a score husbands in a campaign; whereas a poet is a long-lived animal: you have but one chance of burying him, and that is starving him.

HARRIOT. Well, madam, and I would sooner starve with the man I love than ride in a coach and six with him I hate: and as for his passion, you will not make me suspect that, for he hath given me such proofs on't.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Proofs! I shall die. Has he given you proofs of love?

HARRIOT. All that any modest woman can require.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. If he has given you all a modest woman can require, I am afraid he has given you more than a modest woman should take: because he has been so good a lodger, I suppose I shall have some more of the family to keep. It is probable I shall live to see half a dozen grandsons of mine in Grub Street.

SCENE XI.

MRS. MONEYWOOD, HARRIOT, JACK.

JACK. Oh, madam! the man whom you took for a bailiff is certainly some great man; he has a vast many jewels and other fine things about him; he offered me twenty guineas to show him my master, and has given away so much money among the chairmen that some folks believe he intends to stand member of parliament for Westminster.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Nay, then I am sure he is worth inquiring into. So, d'ye hear, sirrah, make as much haste as you can before me, and desire him to part with no more money till I come.

HARRIOT. So, now my mother is in pursuit of money, I may securely go in pursuit of my lover: and I am mistaken, good mamma, if e'en you would not think that the better pursuit of the two.

In generous love transporting raptures lie,
Which age, with all its treasures, cannot buy.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Playhouse.*

Enter LUCKLESS *as Master of the Show, and* MANAGER.

LUCKLESS. It's very surprising, that after I have been at all this expense and trouble in setting my things up in your house, you should desire me to recant; and now too,

when the spectators are all assembled, and will either have the show or their money.

MANAGER. Nay, sir, I am very ready to perform my covenant with you; but I am told that some of the players do not like their parts, and threaten to leave the house: some to the Haymarket, some to Goodman's Fields, and others to set up two or three more new playhouses in several parts of the town.

LUCKLESS. I have quieted all that, and believe there is not one engaged in the performance but who is now very well satisfied.

MANAGER. Well, sir, then so am I: but pray what is the design or plot? for I could make neither head nor tail on't.

LUCKLESS. Why, sir, the chief business is the election of an arch-poet, or, as others call him, a poet laureate, to the Goddess of Nonsense. I have introduced, indeed, several other characters, not entirely necessary to the main design; for I was assured by a very eminent critic that in the way of writing great latitude might be allowed; and that a writer of puppet-shows might take as much more liberty than a writer of operas, as an opera-writer might be allowed beyond a writer of plays. As for the scene, it lies on the other side the river Styx, and all the people in my play are dead.

MANAGER. I wish they may not be damned too, with all my heart.

LUCKLESS. Sir, I depend much on the good-nature of the audience; but they are impatient, I hear them knock with their canes. Let us begin immediately: I think we will have an overture played on this occasion. Mr. Seedo, have you not provided a new overture on this occasion?

SEEDO. I have composed one.

LUCKLESS. Then pray let us have it. Come, sir, be pleased to sit down by me.

Gentlemen, the first thing I present you with is Punchinello.

[The curtain draws, and discovers Punch in a great chair.]

AIR I. *Whilst the town's brimful of folly.*

PUNCH. [*Sings*]. Whilst the town's brimful of farces,
 Flocking whilst we see her asses
 Thick as grapes upon a bunch,
 Critics, whilst you smile on madness,
 And more stupid, solemn sadness;
 Sure you will not frown on Punch.

LUCKLESS. The next is Punch's wife Joan.

Enter JOAN.

JOAN. What can ail my husband? he is continually humming tunes, though his voice be only fit to warble at Hog's Norton, where the pigs would accompany it with organs. I was in hopes death would have stopped his mouth at last. But he keeps his old harmonious humour even in the shades.

PUNCH. Be not angry, dear Joan; Orpheus obtained his wife from the shades by charming Pluto with his music.

JOAN. Sirrah, sirrah, should Pluto hear you sing, you could expect no less punishment than Tantalus has:—nay, the waters would be brought above your mouth to stop it.

PUNCH. Truly, madam, I don't wish the same success Orpheus met with: could I gain my own liberty, the devil might have you with all my heart.

AIR II.

Joan, Joan, Joan, has a thundering tongue,
 And Joan, Joan, Joan, is a bold one.
 How happy is he,
 Who from wedlock is free;
 For who'd have a wife to scold one?

JOAN. Punch, Punch, Punch, pr'ythee think of your
hunch,
Pr'ythee look to your great strutting belly:
Sirrah, if you dare
War with me declare,
I will beat your fat guts to a jelly. [*They dance.*]

AIR III. *Bobbing Joan.*

PUNCH. Joan, you are the plague of my life,
A rope would be welcomer than such a wife.
JOAN. Punch, your merits had you but shared,
Your neck had been longer by half a yard:
PUNCH. Ugly witch,
JOAN. Son of a bitch,
BOTH. Would you were hanged or drowned in a ditch.
PUNCH. Since we hate like people in vogue,
Let us call not bitch and rogue:
Gentler titles let us use,
Hate each other, but not abuse.
JOAN. Pretty dear!
PUNCH. Ah! Ma Chere!
BOTH. Joy of my life, and only care.

[*Dance again.*]

LUCKLESS. Gentlemen, the next is Charon and a Poet;
they are disputing about an affair pretty common with poets
—going off without paying.

Enter CHARON and a POET.

CHARON. Never tell me, sir, I expect my fare. I wonder
what trade these authors drive in the other world: I would
with as good a will see a soldier aboard my boat. A tattered
red coat and a tattered black one have bilked me so often,

that I am resolved never to take either of them up again—unless I am paid beforehand.

POET. What a wretched thing it is to be poor! My body lay a fortnight in the other world before it was buried. And this fellow has kept my spirit a month, sunning himself on the other side the river, because my pockets were empty. Wilt thou be so kind as to show me the way to the Court of Nonsense?

CHARON. Ha, ha! the Court of Nonsense! Why, pray, sir, what have you to do there? these rags look more like the dress of one of Apollo's people, than of Nonsense's.

POET. Why, fellow, didst thou never carry rags to Nonsense?

CHARON. Truly, sir, I cannot say but I have: but it is a long time ago, I assure you. But if you are really bound thither, and are a poet, as I presume from your outward appearance, you should have brought a certificate from the goddess's agent, Mr. What d'ye-call-him, the gentleman that writes odes—so finely! However, that I may not hear any more of your verses on the river-side, I'll e'en carry you over on her account; she pays for all her insolvent votaries. Look at that account, sir. She is the best deity to me in the shades.

POET. Spirits imported for the Goddess of Nonsense—

Five people of great quality,
 Seven ordinary courtiers,
 Nineteen attorneys,
 Eleven counsellors,
 One hundred poets, players, doctors, and apothecaries,
 fellows of the colleges, and members of
 the Royal Society.

LUCKLESS. Gentlemen, the next is one of Charon's men with a prisoner.

Enter SAILOR and a SEXTON.

CHARON. How now?

SAILOR. We have caught him at last. This is Mr. Robgrave, the sexton, who has plundered so many spirits.

CHARON. Are you come at last, sir? What have you to say for yourself? Ha! Where are all the jewels and other valuable things you have stolen? Where are they, sirrah? ha!

SEXTON. Alack, sir, I am but a poor rogue; the parish officers and others have had them all: I had only a small reward for stealing them.

CHARON. Then you shall have another reward here, sir. Carry him before Justice Minos: the moment he gets on the other side the water, let him be shackled, and put aboard.

[*Exeunt Sailor and Sexton.*]

POET. Who knows whether this rogue has not robbed me too. I forgot to look in upon my body before I came away.

CHARON. Had you any things of value buried with you?

POET. Things of inestimable value; six folios of my own works.

LUCKLESS. Most poets of this age will have their works buried with them. [*The next is a ghost of a Director.*]

Enter DIRECTOR.

DIRECTOR. Mr. Charon, I want a boat to cross the river.

CHARON. You shall have a place, sir; I believe I have just room for you, unless you are a lawyer, and I have strict orders to carry no more over yet: hell is too full of them already.

DIRECTOR. Sir, I am a director.

CHARON. A director! what's that?

DIRECTOR. A director of a company, sir. I am surprised you should not know what that is: I thought our names had been famous enough on this road.

CHARON. Oh, sir, I ask your honour's pardon; will you be pleased to go aboard.

DIRECTOR. I must have a whole boat by myself: for I have two waggon-loads of treasure that will be here immediately.

CHARON. It is as much as my place is worth to take any thing of that nature aboard.

DIRECTOR. Pshaw, pshaw! you shall go snacks with me, and I warrant we cheat the devil. I have been already too hard for him in the other world.—Do you understand what security on bottomry is? I'll make your fortune.

CHARON. Here, take the gentleman, let him be well fettered, and carried aboard; away with him.

SAILOR. Sir, here are a waggon-load of ghosts arrived from England, that were knocked on the head at a late election.

CHARON. Fit out another boat immediately: but be sure to search their pockets, that they carry nothing over with them. I found a bank-bill of fifty pounds t'other day in the pocket of a cobbler's ghost, who came hither on the same account.

2 SAILOR. Sir, a great number of passengers arrived from London, all bound to the Court of Nonsense.

CHARON. Some plague, I suppose, or a fresh cargo of physicians come to town from the universities.

LUCKLESS. Now, gentlemen, I shall produce such a set of figures, as I defy all Europe, except our own playhouses, to equal.—Come, put away; pray mind these figures.

Enter DON TRAGEDIO, SIR FARCICAL COMIC, DR. ORATOR, SIGNIOR OPERA, MONSIEUR PANTOMIME, *and* MRS. NOVEL.

POET. Ha! Don Tragedio, your most obedient servant. Sir Farcical! Dr. Orator! I am heartily glad to see you. Dear Signior Opera! Monsieur Pantomime! Ah! Mynheer Van-treble! Mrs. Novel in the shades too! What lucky distemper could have sent so much good company hither?

DON TRAGEDIO. A tragedy occasioned me to die;
That perishing the first day, so did I.

SIR FARCICAL COMIC. A pastoral sent me out of the world. My life went in with a hiss; stap my vitals.

DR. ORATOR. A Muggletonian dog stabbed me.

AIR IV. *Silvia, my dearest.*

SIGNIOR OPERA. Claps universal,
 Applauses resounding;
 Hisses confounding
 Attending my song:
 My senses drowned,
 And I fell down dead;
 Whilst I was singing, ding, dang, dong.

POET. Well, Monsieur Pantomime, how came you by your fate?

MONSIEUR PANTOMIME. [*Makes signs to his neck.*]

POET. Broke his neck. Alas, poor gentleman!—And you, Mynheer Van-treble, what sent you hither? And you, Madam Novel?

AIR V. *'Twas when the seas were roaring.*

MRS. NOVEL. Oh! pity all a maiden,
 Condemned hard fates to prove;
 I rather would have laid-in
 Than thus have died for love!
 'Twas hard to encounter death-a
 Before the bridal bed;
 Ah! would I kept my breath-a
 And lost my maidenhead.

POET. Poor lady!

CHARON. Come, my masters, it is a rare fresh gale; if you please, I'll show you aboard.

LUCKLESS. Observe, gentlemen, how these figures walk off. The next, gentlemen, is a Blackamore lady, who comes to present you with a saraband and castanets. [*A dance*]. Now, gentlemen and ladies, I shall produce a Bookseller who is the prime minister of Nonsense, and the Poet.

Enter BOOKSELLER and POET.

POET. 'Tis strange, 'tis wondrous strange.

BOOKSELLER. And yet 'tis true. Did you observe her eyes?

POET. Her ears, rather, for there she took the infection. She saw the Signior's visage in his voice.

BOOKSELLER. Did you not mark how she melted when he sung?

POET. I saw her like another Dido. I saw her heart rise up to her eyes, and drop again to her ears.

BOOKSELLER. That a woman of so much sense as the Goddess of Nonsense should be taken thus at first sight! I have served her faithfully these thirty years as a bookseller in the upper world, and never knew her guilty of one folly before.

POET. Nay, certainly, Mr. Curry, you know as much of her as any man.

BOOKSELLER. I think I ought; I am sure I have made as large oblations to her as all Warwick Lane and Paternoster Row.

POET. But is she, this night, to be married to Signior Opera?

BOOKSELLER. This is to be the bridal night. Well, this will be the strangest thing that has happened in the shades since the rape of Proserpine.—But now I think on't, what news bring you from the other world?

POET. Why affairs go much in the same road there as when you were alive; authors starve, and booksellers grow fat. Grub Street harbours as many pirates as ever Algiers did. They have more theatres than are at Paris, and just as much wit as there is at Amsterdam; they have ransacked all Italy for singers, and all France for dancers.

BOOKSELLER. And all hell for conjurors.

POET. My lord mayor has shortened the time of Bartholomew Fair in Smithfield, and so they are resolved to keep it all the year round at the other end of the town.

BOOKSELLER. I find matters go swimmingly; but I fancy I am wanted. If you please, sir, I will show you the way.

POET. Sir, I follow you. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PUNCH.

PUNCH. You, fiddler.

LUCKLESS. Well, Punch, what's the matter now?

PUNCH. What do you think my wife Joan is about?

LUCKLESS. Faith, I can't tell.

PUNCH. Odsbobs, she is got with three women of quality at quadrille.

LUCKLESS. Quadrille? Ha, ha!

PUNCH. I have taken a resolution to run away from her, and set up a trade.

LUCKLESS. A trade? why, you have no stock.

PUNCH. Oh, but I intend to break, cheat my creditors, and so get one.

LUCKLESS. That bite is too stale, master Punch.

PUNCH. Is it? Then I'll e'en turn lawyer. There is no stock required there, but a stock of impudence.

LUCKLESS. Yes, there is a stock of law, without which you will starve at the bar.

PUNCH. Ay, but I'll get upon the bench, then I shall soon have law enough; for then I can make any thing I say to be law.

LUCKLESS. Hush, you scurrilous rascal.

PUNCH. Odsbobs, I have hit it now.

LUCKLESS. What now?

PUNCH. I have it at last; the rarest trade! Punch, thou art made for ever.

LUCKLESS. What conceit has the fool got in his head now?

PUNCH. I'll e'en turn parliament-man.

LUCKLESS. Ha, ha, ha! Why, sirrah, thou hast neither interest nor qualification.

PUNCH. How! not interest? Yes, sir, Punch is very well known to have a very considerable interest in all the corporations in England; and for qualification, if I have no estate of my own, I can borrow one.

LUCKLESS. This will never do, master Punch——You must think of some thing you have a better qualification for.

PUNCH. Ay, why then I'll turn great man, that requires no qualification whatsoever.

LUCKLESS. Get you gone, you impudent rogue.——Gentlemen, the next figures are Somebody and Nobody, come to present you with a song and a dance.

Enter SOMEBODY and NOBODY.

AIR VII. *Black Joke.* ..

SOMEBODY. Of all the men in London town,
Or knaves or fools, in coat or gown,
The representative am I.

NOBODY. Go through the world, and you will find,
In all the classes of human-kind,
Many a jolly Nobody.
For him a Nobody sure we may call,
Who during his life does nothing at all,
But eat and snore,
And drink, and roar,
From whore to the tavern, from tavern to whore,
With a laced coat, and that is all.

LUCKLESS. Gentlemen, this is the end of the first interlude.

LUCKLESS. Now, gentlemen, I shall present you with the most glorious scene that has ever appeared on the stage; it is the COURT OF NONSENSE. Play away, soft music, and draw up the curtain.

[The curtain drawn up to soft music, discovers the GODDESS OF NONSENSE on a throne; the ORATOR in a tub; DON TRAGEDIO, &c., attending.]

NONSENSE. Let all my votaries prepare
To celebrate this joyful day.

LUCKLESS. Gentlemen, observe what a lover of recitativo Nonsense is.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. Monsieur Pantomime! you are welcome.

MONSIEUR PANTOMIME. [*Cuts a paper.*]

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. Alas! poor gentleman! he is modest: you may speak: no words offend that have no wit in them.

MASTER. Why, Madam Nonsense, don't you know that Monsieur Pantomime is dumb? and yet, let me tell you, he has been of great service to you; he is the only one of your votaries that sets people asleep without talking. But here's Don Tragedio will make noise enough.

DON TRAGEDIO. Yes, Tragedio is indeed my name,
Long since recorded in the rolls of fame,
At Lincoln's Inn, and eke at Drury Lane.
Let everlasting thunder sound my praise,
And forked lightning in my scutcheon blaze;
To Shakespeare, Johnson, Dryden, Lee, or Rowe,
I not a line, no, not a thought, do owe.
Me, for my novelty, let all adore,
For, as I wrote, none ever wrote before.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. Thou art doubly welcome, welcome.

DON TRAGEDIO. That welcome, yes, that welcome is my due,
Two tragedies I wrote, and wrote for you;
And had not hisses, hisses me dismayed,
By this, I'd writ two-score, two-score, by jayed!

LUCKLESS. By jayed! Ay, that's another excellence of the Don's; he does not only glean up all the bad words of other authors, but makes new bad words of his own.

SIR FARCICAL COMIC. Nay, egad, I have made new words, and spoiled old ones too, if you talk of that; I have made foreigners break English, and Englishmen break Latin. I have as great a confusion of languages in my play as was at the building of Babel.

LUCKLESS. And so much the more extraordinary, because the author understands no language at all.

SIR FARCICAL COMIC. No language at all!—Stap my vitals.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. Dr. Orator, I have heard of you.

DR. ORATOR. Ay, and you might have heard me too; I bawled loud enough, I'm sure.

MASTER. She might have heard you: but, if she had understood your advertisements, I will believe Nonsense to have more understanding than Apollo.

DR. ORATOR. Have understood me, sir? What has understanding to do? My hearers would be diverted, and they are so; which could not be if understanding were necessary, because very few of them have any.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. You've all deserved my hearty thanks—but here my treasure I bestow.

[To Signior Opera.

SIGNIOR OPERA. Your highness knows what reward I prize.

AIR VIII. *Lillibolera.*

OPERA. Let the foolish philosopher strive in his cell,
 By wisdom, or virtue, to merit true praise;
 The soldier in hardship and danger still dwell,
 That glory and honour may crown his last days:
 The patriot sweat,
 To be thought great;
 Or beauty all day at the looking-glass toil;
 That popular voices
 May ring their applauses,
 While a breath is the only reward of their coil.

But would you a wise man to action incite,
 Be riches proposed the reward of his pain:
 In riches is centred all human delight;
 No joy is on earth but what gold can obtain.
 If women, wine,
 Or grandeur fine,
 Be most your delight, all these riches can;
 Would you have men to flatter?
 To be rich is the matter;
 When you cry he is rich, you cry a great man.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. [*Repeating in an ecstasy.*]

“When you cry he is rich, you cry a great man.”

Bravissimo! I long to be your wife.

LUCKLESS. Gentlemen, observe and take notice how the Goddess of Nonsense is smitten by music, and falls in love with the ghost of Signior Opera.

MRS. NOVEL. If all my romances ever pleased the ear of my goddess—if I ever found favour in her sight—Oh, do not rob me thus!

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. What means my daughter?

MRS. NOVEL. Alas, he is my husband!

CURRY. But though he were your husband in the other world, death solves that tie, and he is at liberty now to take another; and I never knew any one instance of a husband here, who would take the same wife again.

AIR IX. *Whilst I gazed on Chloe trembling.*

NOVEL. May all maids from me take warning,
 How a lover's arms they fly:
 Lest the first kind offer scorning,
 They, without a second, die.

How unhappy is my passion!
 How tormenting is my pain!
 If you thwart my inclination,
 Let me die for love again.

CURRY. Again! What, did you die for love of your husband?

MRS. NOVEL. He knows he ought to have been so.—He swore he would be so.—Yes, he knows I died for love; for I died in childbed.

DR. ORATOR. Why, madam, did you not tell me all the road hither that you was a virgin?

AIR X. *Highland Laddie.*

OPERA. I was told, in my life,
 Death for ever
 Did dissever
 Men from every mortal strife,
 And that greatest plague, a wife.

 For had the priests possess men,
 That to Tartarus
 Wives came after us,
 Their devil would be a jest then,
 And our devil a wife.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. Avaunt, polluted wretch! begone!
 Think not I'll take pollution to my arms,
 No, no,—no, no,—no, no, no.

SIGNIOR OPERA. Well, since I can't have a goddess, I'll e'en prove a man of honour.—I was always in love with thee, my angel; but ambition is a dreadful thing. However, my ghost shall pay the debts of my body.

MRS. NOVEL. Now I am happy, verily.

SIGNIOR OPERA. My long-lost dear!

MRS. NOVEL. My new-found bud!

AIR XI. *Dusty Miller.*

OPERA. Will my charming creature
Once again receive me?
Though I proved a traitor,
Will she still believe me?

I will well repay thee
For past faults of roving,
Nor shall any day be
Without proofs of loving.

On that tender lily breast
Whilst I lie panting,
Both together blest,
Both with transports fainting.

BOTH. Sure no human hearts
Were ever so delighted!
Death, which others parts,
Hath our souls united.

AIR XII. *Over the Hills and far away.*

OPERA. Were I laid on Scotland's coast,
And in my arms embraced my dear,
Let scrubbado do its most,
I would know no grief or fear.

NOVEL. Were we cast on Ireland's soil,
There confined in bogs to dwell,
For thee potatoes I would boil,
No Irish spouse should feast so well.

OPERA. And though we scrubbed it all the day,
NOVEL. We'd kiss and hug the night away;
OPERA. Scotch and Irish both should say,
BOTH. Oh! how blest, how blest are they!

DR. ORATOR. Since my goddess is disengaged from one lover, may the humblest, yet not the least diligent, of her servants hope she would smile on him!

LUCKLESS. Master Orator, you had best try to charm the goddess with an oration.

DR. ORATOR. The history of a fiddle and a fiddlestick is going to be held forth; being particularly desired in a letter from a certain querist on that point.

A fiddle is a statesman: Why? Because it's hollow. A fiddlestick is a drunkard: Why? Because it loves ros'ning.

LUCKLESS. Gentlemen, observe how he balances his hands; his left hand is the fiddle, and his right hand is the fiddlestick.

DR. ORATOR. A fiddle is like a beau's nose, because the bridge is often down; a fiddlestick is like a mountebank, because it plays upon a crowd.—A fiddle is like a stockjobber's tongue, because it sounds different notes; and a fiddlestick is like a stockjobber's wig, because it has a great deal of horsehair in it.

LUCKLESS. And your oration is like yourself, because it has a great deal of nonsense in it.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. In vain you try to charm my ears, unless by music.

DR. ORATOR. Have at you then.

MASTER. Gentlemen, observe how the Doctor sings in his tub. Here are no wires; all alive, alive, oh!

DR. ORATOR. Chimes of the times, to the tune of Moll Pately.

AIR XIII. *Moll Pately.*

All men are birds by nature, sir,
 Though they have not wings to fly;
 On earth a soldier's a creature, sir,
 Much resembling a kite in the sky;
 The physician is a fowl, sir,
 Whom most men call an owl, sir,
 Who by his hooting,
 Hooting, hooting,
 Hooting, hooting,
 Hooting, hooting,
 Tells us that death is nigh.

The usurer is a swallow, sir,
 That can swallow gold by the jorum;
 A woodcock is 'Squire Shallow, sir;
 And a goose is oft of the quorum;
 The gamester is a rook, sir,
 The lawyer, with his Coke, sir,
 Is but a raven,
 Croaking, croaking,
 Croaking, croaking,
 Croaking, croaking,
 After the ready Rhinorum.

Young virgins are scarce as rails, sir;
 Plenty as bats the night-walkers go;
 Soft Italians are nightingales, sir;
 And a cock-sparrow mimics a beau;
 Like birds men are to be caught, sir;
 Like birds men are to be bought, sir;
 Men of a side,
 Like birds of a feather,
 Will flock together,
 Will flock together,
 Both sexes like birds will—too.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. 'Tis all in vain.

DON TRAGEDIO. Is Nonsense of me then forgetful grown,
And must the Signior be preferred alone?
Is it for this, for this, ye gods, that I
Have in one scene made some folks laugh, some cry?
For this does my low blust'ring language creep?
At once to wake you, and to make you sleep?

SIR FARCICAL COMIC. And so all my puns, and quibbles,
and conundrums, are quite forgotten, stap my vitals!

DR. ORATOR. More chimes of the times, to the tune of
Rogues, rogues, rogues.

AIR XIV. *There was a jovial Beggar.*

The stone that all things turns at will
To gold, the chemist craves;
But gold without the chemist's skill
Turns all men into knaves.
For a cheating they will go, &c.

The merchant would the courtier cheat,
When on his goods he lays
Too high a price—but faith he's bit,
For a courtier never pays.
For a cheating, &c.

The lawyer, with a face demure,
Hangs him who steals your pelf;
Because the good man can endure
No robber but himself.
For a cheating, &c.

Betwixt the quack and highwayman
What difference can there be?
Though this wild pistol, that with pen,
Both kill you for a fee.
For a cheating, &c.

The husband cheats his loving wife,
 And to a mistress goes;
 While she at home to ease her life,
 Carouses with the beaus.

For a cheating, &c.

That some directors cheats were,
 Some have made bold to doubt;
 Did not the supercargo's care
 Prevent their finding out.

For a cheating, &c.

The tenant doth the steward nick
 (So low this art we find),
 The steward doth his lordship trick,
 My lord tricks all mankind.

For a cheating, &c.

One sect there are, to whose fair lot
 No cheating arts do fall;
 And those are parsons called, God wot;
 And so I cheat you all.

For a cheating, &c

Enter CHARON.

CHARON. An't please your majesty, there is an odd sort of a man on t'other side the water says he's recommended to you by some people of quality.—Egad, I don't care to take him aboard, not I.—He says his name is Hurloborumbo—rumbo—Hurloborumbolo, I think he calls himself; he looks like one of Apollo's people, in my opinion; he seems to be mad enough to be a real poet.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. Take him aboard.

CHARON. I had forgot to tell your ladyship I hear rare news; they say you are to be declared Goddess of Wit.

CURRY. That's no news, Mr. Charon.

CHARON. Well, I'll take Hurloborumbo aboard.

[*Exit* Charon.]

DR. ORATOR. I must win the goddess before he arrives, or else I shall lose her for ever.—A rap at the times.

AIR XV. *When I was a dame of honour.*

Come all who've heard my cushion beat,
 Confess me as full of dulness
 As any egg is full meat,
 Or full moon is of fulness;
 Let the justice and his clerk both own
 Than theirs my dulness greater;
 And tell how I've harangued the town
 When I was a bold orator.

The lawyer wrangling at the bar,
 While the reverend bench is dozing,
 The scribbler in a pamphlet war,
 Or Grub Street bard composing:
 The trudging quack in scarlet cloak,
 Or coffee-house politic prater;
 Can none come up to what I have spoke
 When I was a bold orator.

The well-bred courtier telling lies,
 Or levée hunter believing;
 The vain coquette that rolls her eyes,
 More empty fops deceiving;
 The parson of dissenting gang,
 Or flattering dedicator,
 Could none of them like me harangue,
 When I was a bold orator.

Enter PUNCH.

PUNCH. You, you, you.

LUCKLESS. What's the matter, Punch?

PUNCH. Who is that?

LUCKLESS. That's an orator, master Punch.

PUNCH. An orator——What's that?

LUCKLESS. Why an orator is——egad, I can't tell what;——he is a man that nobody dares dispute with.

PUNCH. Say you so? I'll be with him presently. Bring out my tub there. I'll dispute with you, I'll warrant. I am a Muggletonian.

DR. ORATOR. I am not.

PUNCH. Then you are not of my opinion.

DR. ORATOR. Sirrah, I know that you and your whole tribe would be the death of me; but I am resolved to proceed to confute you as I have done hitherto, and as long as I have breath you shall hear me: and I hope I have breath enough to blow you all out of the world.

PUNCH. If noise will.

DR. ORATOR. Sir, I——

PUNCH. Hear me, sir.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. Hear him; hear him; hear him!

AIR XVI. *Hey, Barnaby, take it for warning.*

PUNCH. No tricks shall save your bacon,
Orator, Orator, you are mistaken;
Punch will not be thus confuted,
Bring forth your reasons, or you are non-suited.
Heigh, ho.

No tricks shall save your bacon,
Orator, Orator, you are mistaken.
ORATOR. Instead of reasons advancing,
Let the dispute be concluded by dancing.
Ti, to. [*They dance.*]

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. 'Tis all in vain: a virgin I will live; and oh, great Signior, pr'ythee take this chaplet, and still wear it for my sake.

LUCKLESS. Gentlemen, observe how Signior Opera is created archpoet to the Goddess of Nonsense.

TRAGEDIO. And does great Nonsense then at length determine

To give the chaplet to that singing vermin!

NONSENSE. I do.

TRAGEDIO. Then Opera come on, and let us try,
Whether shall wear the chaplet, you or I.

AIR XVII. *Be kind, and love.*

NOVEL. Oh, spare to take his precious life away;
So sweet a voice must sure your passion lay;
O hear his gentle murmurs first, and then,
If you can kill him, I will cry Amen.

TRAGEDIO. Since but a song you ask, a song I'll hear;
But tell him, that last song is his last prayer.

AIR XVIII.

OPERA. Barbarous cruel man,
I'll sing thus while I'm dying; I'm dying like a swan,
A swan,
A swan,
With my face all pale and wan.
More fierce art thou than pirates,
Than pirates,
Whom the sirens' music charms,
Alarms,
Disarms;
More fierce than men on the high roads,
On the high - - - roads,
On the high - - - roads,

More fierce than men on the high roads,
When Polly Peachum warms.

The devil
Was made civil,
By Orpheus's tuneful charms;
And can ---
----- n,
He gentler prove than man?

TRAG. I cannot do it—— [Sheathes his sword.
Methinks I feel my flesh congealed to bone,
And know not if I'm flesh and blood, or stone.

MONSIEUR PANTOMIME. [Runs several times round the stage.]

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. Alas! what means Monsieur Pantomime?

CURRY. By his pointing to his head, I suppose he would have the chaplet.

GODDESS OF NONSENSE. Pretty youth.

MRS. NOVEL. Oh, my dear, how shall I express the trouble of my soul.

SIGNIOR OPERA. If there be sympathy in love, I'm sure I felt it; for I was in a damnable fright too.

MRS. NOVEL. Give me a buss then!

AIR XIX. *Under the greenwood tree.*

In vain a thousand heroes and kings
Should court me to their arms,
In vain should give a thousand fine things,
For thee I'd reserve my charms:
On that dear breast, intranced in joy,
O, let me ever be.

OPERA. Oh, how I will kiss thee,
How I'll embliss thee,
When thou art a-bed with me!

NONS. [*Repeats.*] Oh, how I will kiss thee, &c.
Alas! what mighty noise?

LUCKLESS. Gentlemen, the next is a messenger.

Enter MESSENGER.

MES. Stay, goddess, nor with haste the prize bequeath,
A mighty sprite now hastens here beneath,
Long in the world your noble cause he fought,
Your laureat there, your precepts still he taught;
To his great son he leaves that laurel now,
And hastens to receive one here below.

NONS. I can't revoke my grant, but he
Shall manager of our players be.

LUCKLESS. The next is Count Ugly, from the Opera
House in the Haymarket.

Enter COUNT UGLY.

NONS. Too late, O mighty Count, you came.

COUNT. I ask not for myself, for I disdain
O'er the poor ragged tribe of bards to reign.
Me did my stars to happier fates prefer,
Sur-intendant des plaisirs d'Angleterre;
If masquerades you have, let those be mine,
But on the Signior let the laurel shine.

TRAG. What is thy plea? Has't written?

COUNT. No, nor read.
But if from dulness any may succeed,
To that and nonsense I good title plead.
Nought else was ever in my masquerade.

NONS. No more, by Styx I swear
That Opera the crown shall wear.

AIR.

NOVEL. ' Away each meek pretender flies,
 Opera thou hast gained the prize.
 Nonsense grateful still must own,
 That thou best support'st her throne.
 For her subscriptions thou didst gain
 By thy soft alluring strain,
 When Shakespeare's thought
 And Congreve's brought
 Their aids to sense in vain.
 Beauties, who subdue mankind,
 Thy soft chains alone can bind;
 See within their lovely eyes
 The melting wish arise:
 While thy sounds enchant the ear,
 Lovers think the nymph sincere;
 And projectors,
 And directors,
 Lose a while their fear.

Enter CHARON.

LUCKLESS. How now, Charon? you are not to enter yet.
 CHARON. To enter, sir? Alack-a-day: we are all un-
 done: here are Sir John Bindover and a constable coming in,

Enter SIR JOHN BINDOVER *and* CONSTABLE.

CONSTABLE. Are you the master of the puppet-show?
 LUCKLESS. Yes, sir.
 CONSTABLE. Then you must along with me, sir; I have
 a warrant for you, sir.
 LUCKLESS. For what?
 SIR JOHN BINDOVER. For abusing Nonsense, sirrah.

CONSTABLE. People of quality are not to have their diversions libelled at this rate.

LUCKLESS. Of what do you accuse me, gentlemen?

SIR JOHN BINDOVER. Shall you abuse Nonsense, when the whole town supports it?

LUCKLESS. Pox on't, had this fellow stayed a few moments longer, till the dance had been over, I had been easy. Harkye, Mr. Constable, shall I only beg your patience for one dance, and then I'll wait on you?

SIR JOHN BINDOVER. Sirrah, don't try to corrupt the magistrate with your bribes: here shall be no dancing.

MRS. NOVEL. What does this fellow of a constable mean by interrupting our play?

AIR XXI. *Fair Dorinda.*

Oh, Mr. Constable,
 Drunken rascal,
 Would I had thee at the Rose.
 Mayst thou be beaten,
 Hanged up and eaten,
 Eaten by the carrion crows.
 The filth that lies in common shores,
 May it ever lie in thy nose.
 May it ever
 Lie in thy nose.
 O may it lie in thy nose.

LUCKLESS. Mollify yourself, madam.

SIR JOHN BINDOVER. That is really a pretty creature; it were a piece of charity to take her to myself for a handmaid. [*Aside.*

CONSTABLE. Very pretty, very pretty truly:—If magistrates are to be abused at this rate, the devil may be a constable for me. Hark'ee, madam, do you know who we are?

MRS. NOVEL. A rogue, sir.

CONSTABLE. Madam, I'm a constable by day, and a justice of peace by night.

MRS. NOVEL. That is a buzzard by day, and an owl by night.

AIR XXII. *Newmarket.*

CONST. Why, madam, do you give such words as these
 To a constable and a justice of peace?
 I fancy you'll better know how to speak
 By that time you've been in Bridewell a week;
 Have beaten good hemp, and been
 Whipt at a post;
 I hope you'll repent, when some skin
 You have lost.
 But if this makes you tremble, I'll not be severe:
 Come down a good guinea, and you shall be clear.

MRS. NOVEL. Oh, Sir John, you, I am sure, are the commander in this enterprise. If you will prevent the rest of our show, let me beg you will permit the dance.

AIR XXIII. *Charming Betty.*

Sweetest honey,
 Good Sir Johnny,
 Pr'ythee let us take a dance;
 Leave your canting,
 Zealous ranting,
 Come and shake a merry haunch.
 Motions firing,
 Sounds inspiring,
 We are led to softer joys
 Where in trances
 Each soul dances,
 Music then seems only noise.

SIR JOHN BINDOVER. Verily I am conquered. Pity prevaileth over severity, and the flesh hath subdued the spirit. I feel a motion in me, and whether it be of grace or no I am not certain. Pretty maid, I cannot be deaf any longer to your prayers; I will abide the performing a dance, and will myself, being thereto moved by an inward working, accompany you therein, taking for my partner that reverend gentleman.

MASTER. Then strike up.

Enter WITMORE, MRS. MONEYWOOD, HARRIOT, BANTAMITE.

WITMORE. Long live his Majesty of Bantam!

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Heaven preserve him!

BANTAMITE. Your gracious father, sir, greets you well.

LUCKLESS. What, in the devil's name, is the meaning of this?

BANTAMITE. I find he is entirely ignorant of his father.

WITMORE. Ay, sir, it is very common in this country for a man not to know his father.

LUCKLESS. What do you mean?

BANTAMITE. His features are much altered.

LUCKLESS. Sir, I shall alter your features, if you proceed.

BANTAMITE. Give me leave to explain myself. I was your tutor in your earliest days, sent by your father, his present Majesty Francis IV. king of Bantam, to show you the world. We arrived at London; when one day, among other frolics, our ship's-crew shooting the bridge, the boat upset, and of all our company, I and your royal self were only saved by swimming to Billingsgate: but though I saved my life, I lost for some time my senses, and you, as I then feared, for ever. When I recovered, after a long fruitless search for my royal master, I set sail for Bantam, but was driven by the winds on far distant coasts, and wandered several years, till at last I arrived once more at Bantam.—Guess how I was received—The king ordered me to be imprisoned for life. At last some lucky chance brought thither a merchant, who offered this jewel as a present to the king of Bantam.

LUCKLESS. Ha! it is the same which was tied upon my arm, which by good luck I preserved from every other accident, till want of money forced me to pawn it.

BANTAMITE. The merchant, being strictly examined, said he had it of a pawnbroker; upon which I was immediately despatched to England, and the merchant kept close prisoner till my return, then to be punished with death, or rewarded with the government of an island.

LUCKLESS. Know then, that at that time when you lost your senses, I also lost mine. I was taken up half dead by a waterman, and conveyed to his wife, who sold oysters, by whose assistance I recovered. But the waters of the Thames, like those of Lethe, had caused an entire oblivion of my former fortune.—But now it breaks in like light upon me, and I begin to recollect it all. Is not your name Gonsalvo?

BANTAMITE. It is.

LUCKLESS. Oh, my Gonsalvo!

BANTAMITE. Oh, my dearest lord! [*They embrace.*]

LUCKLESS. But say by what lucky accident you discovered me?

BANTAMITE. I did intend to have advertised you in the Evening Post, with a reward; but being directed by the merchant to the pawnbroker, I was accidentally there inquiring after you when your boy brought your nab. (Oh, sad remembrance, that the son of a king should pawn a hat!) The woman told me that was the boy that pawned the jewel, and of him I learnt where you lodged.

LUCKLESS. Prodigious fortune! [*A wind-horn without.*]

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER. An express is arrived from Bantam with the news of his majesty's death.

BANTAMITE. Then, sir, you are king. Long live Henry I., king of Bantam!

OMNES. Long live Henry I., king of Bantam!

LUCKLESS. Witmore, I now may repay your generosity.

WITMORE. Fortune has repaid me, I am sure, more than she owed, by conferring this blessing on you.

LUCKLESS. My friend.—But here I am indebted to the golden goddess for having given me an opportunity to aggrandise the mistress of my soul, and set her on the throne of Bantam. Come, madam, now you may lay aside your mask: so once repeat your acclamations: Long live Henry and Harriot, king and queen of Bantam!

OMNES Huza!

AIR XXIV. *Gently touch the warbling lyre.*

HARRIOT. Let others fondly court a throne,
All my joy's in you alone;
Let me find a crown in you,
Let me find a sceptre too;
Equal in the court or grove,
I am blest, do you but love.

LUCKLESS. Were I not with you to live,
Bantam would no pleasure give.
Happier in some forest I
Could upon that bosom lie.
I would guard you from all harms,
While you slept within my arms.

HARRIOT. Would an Alexander rise,
Him I'd view with scornful eyes.

LUCKLESS. Would Helen with thy charms compare,
Her I'd think not half so fair:
Dearest shalt thou ever be.

HARRIOT. Thou alone shalt reign in me.

CONSTABLE. I hope your majesty will pardon a poor ignorant constable: I did not know your worship, I assure you.

LUCKLESS. Pardon you——Ay, more——You shall be chief constable of Bantam.—You, Sir John, shall be chief justice of peace; you, sir, my orator; you my poet-laureat; you my bookseller; you, Don Tragedio, Sir Farcical; Signior Opera, and Count Ugly, shall entertain the city of Bantam with your performances; Mrs. Novel, you shall be a romance-writer; and to show my generosity, Monsieur Marplay, you shall superintend my theatres.—All proper servants for the king of Bantam.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. I always thought he had something more than ordinary in him.

LUCKLESS. This gentlewoman is the queen's mother.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. For want of a better, gentlemen.

AIR XXV. *O ponder well.*

MONEY. Alack how altered is my fate!
 What changes have I seen!
 For I, who lodgings let of late,
 Am now again a queen.

PUNCH. And I, who in this puppet-show
 Have played Punchinello,
 Will now let all the audience know
 I am no common fellow.

PUNCH. If his majesty of Bantam will give me leave, I can make a discovery which will be to his satisfaction. You have chose for a wife Henrietta, princess of Old Brentford.

OMNES. How!

PUNCH. When the king of Old Brentford was expelled by the king of the New, the queen flew away with her little daughter, then about two years old, and was never heard of since. But I sufficiently recollect the phiz of my mother; and thus I ask her blessing.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. Oh, my son!

HARRIOT. Oh, my brother!

PUNCH. Oh, my sister!

MRS. MONEYWOOD. I am sorry in this pickle to remember who I am. But alas! too true is all you've said. Though I have been reduced to let lodgings, I was the queen of Brentford; and this, though a player, is a king's son.

Enter JOAN.

JOAN. Then I am a king's daughter, for this gentleman is my husband.

MRS. MONEYWOOD. My daughter!

HARRIOT and LUCKLESS. My sister!

PUNCH. My wife!

LUCKLESS. Strike up kettle-drums and trumpets.—Punch, I will restore you into your kingdom at the expense of my own. I will send an express to Bantam for my army.

PUNCH. Brother, I thank you.—And now, if you please, we will celebrate these happy discoveries with a dance.

A DANCE.

LUCK. Taught by my fate, let never bard despair,
Though long he drudge, and feed on Grub
Street air:

Since him (at last) 'tis possible to see
As happy and as great a king as me.

EPILOGUE

1	POET	<i>Mr. Jones.</i>
2	POET	<i>Mr. Dove.</i>
3	POET	<i>Mr. Marshal.</i>
4	POET	<i>Mr. Wells, Jun.</i>
	PLAYER	<i>Miss Palms.</i>
	CAT	<i>Mrs. Martin.</i>

Four POETS sitting at a Table.

- 1 Po. BRETHREN, we are assembled here to write
An Epilogue, which must be spoke to-night.
- 2 Po. Let the first lines be to the pit addressed.
- 3 Po. If critics too were mention'd, it were best;
With fulsome flattery let them be crammed,
But if they damn the play——
- 1 Po. Let them be damned.
- 2 Po. Supposing, therefore brother, we should lay
Some very great encomiums on the play?
- 3 Po. It cannot be amiss——
- 1 Po. Now mount the boxes,
Abuse the beaus, and compliment the doxies.
- 4 Po. Abuse the beaus——but how?
Oh! never mind;
- 1 Po. In every modern Epilogue you'll find
Enough which we may borrow of that kind.
- 3 Po. What will the name of imitation soften?
- 1 Po. Oh! sir, you cannot say good things too often;
And sure those thoughts, which in another shine,
Become not duller, by becoming mine.
- 3 Po. I'm satisfied.
- 1 Po. The audience is already
Divided into critic, beau, and lady;

Nor box, nor pit, nor gallery can show
One, who's not lady, critic, or beau.

3 Po. It must be very difficult to please
Fancies so odd, so opposite as these.

1 Po. The task is not so difficult, as put;
There's one thing pleases all.

2 Po. What is that?

1 Po. Smut.

For as a whore is liked for being tawdry,
So is an Epilogue for—

3 Po. [*In a passion.*] I order you,
On pain of my departure, not to chatter,
One word so very sav'ry of the creature;
For, by my pen, might I Parnassus share,
~~I'd not, to gain it all, offend the fair.~~

1 Po. You are too nice—for say whate'er we can,
Their modesty is safe behind a fan.

4 Po. Well, let us now begin.

3 Po. But we omit
An Epilogue's chief decoration, wit.

1 Po. It hath been so; but that stale custom's broken;
Though dull to read, 'twill please you when 'tis
spoken.

Enter the AUTHOR.

AUTH. Fie, gentlemen, the audience now hath stayed
This half hour for the Epilogue.

ALL Po. 'Tis not made.

AUTH. How! then I value not your aid of that,
I'll have the Epilogue spoken by a Cat.
Puss, puss, puss, puss, puss, puss, puss.

Enter CAT.

1 Po. I'm in a rage!
When cats come on, Poets should leave the stage.
[*Exeunt Poets.*]

CAT. Mew, mew.

AUTH. Poor puss, come hither, pretty rogue,
Who knows but you may come to be in vogue?
Some ladies like a cat, and some a dog.

Enter a PLAYER.

PLAY. Cass! cass! cass! cass! Fie, Mr. Luckless, what
Can you be doing with that filthy cat?

[Exit CAT.

AUTH. Oh! curst misfortune—what can I be doing?
This devil's coming in has proved my ruin.
She's driven the cat and Epilogue away.

PLAY. Sure you are mad and know not what you say.

AUTH. Mad you may call me, madam; but you'll own,
I hope I am not madder than the town.

PLAY. A cat to speak an Epilogue

AUTH. Speak!—no,
Only to act the Epilogue in dumb-show.

PLAY. Dumb-show!

AUTH. Why, pray, is that so strange in comedy?
And have you not seen Perseus and Andromeda?
Where you may find strange incidents intended,
And regular intrigues begun and ended,
Though not a word doth from an actor fall;
As 'tis polite to speak in murmurs small,
Sure, 'tis politer not to speak at all.

PLAY. But who is this?

Enter CAT as a WOMAN.

AUTH. I know her not——

CAT. I that
Am now a woman, lately was a cat.

[Turns to the audience.

Gallants, you seem to think this transformation
As strange as was the rabbit's procreation;
That 'tis as odd a cat should take the habit
Of breeding us, as we should breed a rabbit.

I'll warrant eating one of them would be
As easy to a beau, as——kissing me.
I would not for the world that thing should catch us,
Cries sacred Sir Plume——Fore gad, my lord, she'd
scratch us.

Yet let not that deter you from your sport,
You'll find my nails are pared exceeding short.
But—Ha!—what murmurs through the benches roam!
The husbands cry—We've cat enough at home,
This transformation can be strange to no man,
There's a great likeness 'twixt a cat and woman.
Changed by her lover's earnest prayers, we're told,
A cat was to a beauteous maid of old.
Could modern husbands thus the gods prevail on,
O Gemini! what wife would have no tail on.
Puss would be seen where madam lately sat,
And every Lady Townley be a cat.

Say, all of you, whose honeymoon is over,
What would you give such changes to discover;
And waking in the morn, instead of bride,
To find poor pussy purring by your side?
Say, gentle husbands, which of you would curse,
And cry, My wife is altered for the worse?

Should to our sex the gods like justice show,
And at our prayers transform our husbands too,
Many a lord, who now his fellow scorns,
Would then exceed a cat by nothing—but his horns.
So plenty then would be those foes to rats,
Henley might prove that all mankind are cats.

THE
LOTTERY.
A
FARCE.

As it is Acted at the

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane,

BY.

His MAJESTY's Servants.

With the MUSICK prefix'd to each SONG.

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Printed for J. WATTS at the Printing-Office in
Wild-Court near Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

MDCCLXXXII.

[Price One Shilling.]

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. CIBBER, JUN.

As Tragedy prescribes to passion rules,
So Comedy delights to punish fools;
And while at nobler games she boldly flies,
Farce challenges the vulgar as her prize.
Some follies scarce perceptible appear
In that just glass which shows you as you are.
But Farce still claims a magnifying right
To raise the object larger to the sight,
And show her insect fools in stronger light.
Implicit faith is to her poets due,
And all her laughing legends still are true.
Thus when some conjurer does wives translate,
What dull, affected critic damns the cheat?
Or should we see credulity profound,
Give to ten thousand fools, Ten Thousand Pound;
Should we behold poor wretches horse away
The labour of a twelvemonth in a day;
Nay, should our poet, with his muse agog,
Show you an Alley-broker for a rogue,
Though 'tis a most impossible suggestion,
Faith! think it all but Farce, and grant the question.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

MR. STOCKS	<i>Mr. Harper.</i>
JACK STOCKS	<i>Mr. Cibber, Jun.</i>
FIRST BUYER	<i>Mr. Berry.</i>
SECOND BUYER, a Hackney Coachman	<i>Mr. Mullart.</i>
LOVEMORE	<i>Mr. Stoppelaer.</i>
WHISK	<i>Mr. R. Wetherilt.</i>

WOMEN

CHLOE	<i>Miss Raftor.</i>
MRS. STOCKS, Sister in-law to Stocks	<i>Mrs. Wetherilt.</i>
JENNY	<i>Miss Williams.</i>
LADY	<i>Mrs. Oates.</i>

Servants, &c.

SCENE.—LONDON

THE LOTTERY

SCENE I.

AIR I.

MR. STOCKS. [*Alone.*] A Lottery is a taxation
Upon all the fools in creation;
And Heaven be praised
It is easily raised,
Credulity's always in fashion:
For Folly's a fund
Will never lose ground,
While fools are so rife in the nation.

[*Knocking without.*]

Enter 1 BUYER.

1 BUYER. Is not this a house where people buy lottery-tickets?

MR. STOCKS. Yes, sir—I believe I can furnish you with as good tickets as any one.

1 BUYER. I suppose, sir, 'tis all one to you what number a man fixes on?

MR. STOCKS. Any of my numbers.

1 BUYER. Because I would be glad to have it, sir, the number of my own years, or my wife's; or if I could not have either of those, I would be glad to have it the number of my mother's.

MR. STOCKS. Ay, or suppose, now, it was the number of your grandmother's?

1 BUYER. No, no! she has no luck in lotteries: she had a whole ticket once, and got but fifty pounds by it.

MR. STOCKS. A very unfortunate person, truly. Sir, my clerk will furnish you, if you'll walk that way up to the office. Ha, ha, ha!—There's one 10,000*l.* got.—What an abundance of imaginary rich men will one month reduce to their former poverty. [*Knocking without.*] Come in.

Enter 2 BUYER.

2 BUYER. Does not your worship let horses, sir?

MR. STOCKS. Ay, friend.

2 BUYER. I have got a little money by driving a hackney coach, and I intend to ride it out in the lottery.

MR. STOCKS. You are in the right; it is the way to drive your own coach.

2 BUYER. I don't know, sir, that;—but I am willing to be in Fortune's way, as the saying is.

MR. STOCKS. You are a wise man, and it is not impossible but you may be a rich one.—'Tis not above—no matter how many to one, but that you are this night worth ten thousand pounds.

AIR II. *Freemason's tune.*

Here are the best horses
That ever ran courses,
Here is the best pad for your wife, sir;
Who rides one a-day,
If luck's in his way,
May ride in a coach all his life, sir.

The Sportsman esteems
The horse more than gems,
That leaps o'er a pitiful gate, sir;
But here is the hack,
If you sit but his back,
Will leap you into an estate, sir.

2 BUYER. How long a man may labour to get that at work, which he can get in a minute at play!

AIR III. *Black Joke.*

The soldier, in a hard campaign,
 Gets less than the gamester by throwing a main,
 Or dealing to bubbles, and all, all that:
 The stoutest sailor, every one knows,
 Gets less than the courtier, with cringing bows,
 And sir, I'm your vassal, and all, all that:
 And town-bred ladies too, they say,
 Get less by virtue than by play:
 And dowdy Joan
 Had ne'er been known,
 Nor coach had been her ladyship's lot,
 But for the black ace, and all, all that.

And belike you, sir, I would willingly ride upon the number of my coach.

MR. STOCKS. Mr. Trick, let that gentleman have the number of his coach—[*Aside.*] No matter whether we have it or no. As the gentleman is riding to a castle in the air, an airy horse is the properest to carry him. [*Knocking hard without.*] Heyday! this is some person of quality, by the impudence of the footman.

Enter LADY.

LADY. Your servant, Mr. Stocks.

MR. STOCKS. I am your ladyship's most obedient servant.

LADY. I am come to buy some tickets, and hire some horses, Mr. Stocks.—I intend to have twenty tickets and ten horses every day.

MR. STOCKS. By which, if your ladyship has any luck, you may very easily get 30,000*l.* or 40,000*l.*

LADY. Please to look at these jewels, sir—they cost my lord upwards of 6,000*l.*—I intend to lay out what you will lend upon 'em.

MR. STOCKS. If your ladyship pleases to walk up into the dining-room, I'll wait on you in a moment.

Enter PORTER.

Well, friend, what's your business?

PORTER. Here's a letter for you, an't please you.

MR. STOCKS. [*Reading.*]

“BROTHER STOCKS,—Here is a young lady, come to lodge at my house from the country, has desired me to find out some one who may instruct her how to dispose of 10,000*l.* to the best advantage.—I believe you will find her worth your acquaintance. She seems a mere novice, and I suppose has just received her fortune; which is all that's needful from

“Your affectionate brother,

“TIM. STOCKS.”

Very well.—It requires no other answer than that I will come.

[*Knocking hard without.*

Heyday! more people of quality—

[*Opens the door.*

Enter JACK STOCKS.

Ha!

JACK STOCKS. Your servant, brother.

MR. STOCKS. Your servant, brother.—Why, I have not seen you this age.

JACK STOCKS. I have been a man of great business lately.

MR. STOCKS. I hope your business has turned to a good account.—I hope you have cleared handsomely.

JACK STOCKS. Ay, it has turned to a very good account.—I have cleared my pockets, faith!—

MR. STOCKS. I am sorry for that—but I hope you will excuse me at present, dear brother.—Here is a lady of quality stays for me; but as soon as this hurry of business

is over, I should be very glad to—drink a dish with you at any coffee-house you will appoint.

JACK STOCKS. Oh! I shall not detain you long; and so, to cut the affair as short as possible, I desire you would lend me a brace of hundreds.

MR. STOCKS. Brother!

JACK STOCKS. A brace of hundreds! Two hundred pounds in your own language.

MR. STOCKS. Dear Jack, you know I would as soon lend you two hundred pounds as one; but I am at present so out of cash, that—

JACK STOCKS. Come, come, brother, no equivocation: two hundred pounds I must have, and will.

MR. STOCKS. Must have and will!—Ay, and shall have too, if you can get 'em.

JACK STOCKS. 'Sdeath, you fat rascal! What title had you to come into the world before me?

MR. STOCKS. You need not mention that, brother; you know my riches, if I have any, are owing to my industry; as your poverty is to your laziness and extravagance—and I have raised myself by the multiplication-table, as you have undone yourself at the hazard-table.

JACK STOCKS. That is as much as to say, I have undone myself like a gentleman, and you have raised yourself like a pickpocket—Sirrah, you are a scandal to the family; you are the first tradesman that has been in it.

MR. STOCKS. Ay, and the first that has been worth a groat in it, and, though you don't deserve it, I have thought of a method to put you in a way to make you the second. There, read that letter. [Jack Stocks reads it to himself.] Well, sir, what say you to 10,000*l.* and a wife?

JACK STOCKS. Say, that I only want to know how to get them.

MR. STOCKS. Nothing so easy.—As she is certainly very silly, you may depend upon it she will be very fond of a laced coat and a lord.—Now, I will make over both those to you in an instant. My Lord Lace hath pawned his last suit of birth-night clothes to me; and as I intend to break

before he can redeem 'em—the clothes and the title are both at your service—So, if your lordship pleases to walk in, I will but just despatch my lady, and be with you.

JACK STOCKS. If I can but nick this time, ame's-ace, I defy thee. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Enter LOVEMORE.

LOVEMORE. What a chase has this girl led me! However, I have tracked her all the way, till within a few miles of this town. If I start her again, let her look to't. I am mistaken, or she began to find her passion growing too violent, before she attempted this flight, and when once a woman is fairly wounded, let her fly where she will, the arrow still sticks in her side.

AIR IV. *Chloe is false, but still she is charming.*

Women in vain love's powerful torrent
 With unequal strength oppose;
 Reason, a while, may stem the strong current,
 Love still at last her soul o'erflows.
 Pleasures inviting,
 Passions exciting,
 Her lover charms her,
 Of pride disarms her;
 Down, down she goes.

Enter WHISK.

So Whisk, have you heard any news?

WHISK. News, sir! ay, I have heard news, and such as will surprise you.

LOVEMORE. What! no rival, I hope.

WHISK. You will have rivals enough now, I suppose.—

Why, your mistress has got into fine lodgings in Pall Mall. —I found her out by meeting that baggage her maid, in the street, who would scarce speak to me. I followed her to the door; where, in a very few minutes, came out such a procession of milliners, mantua-makers, dancing-masters, fiddlers, and the devil knows what; as I once remember at the equipping a parliament man's country lady to pay her first visit.

LOVEMORE. Ha! by all that's infamous, she is in keeping already; some bawd has made prize of her as she alighted from the stage-coach.—While she has been flying from my arms, she has fallen into the colonel's.

AIR V.

How hapless is the virgin's fate,
 Whom all mankind's pursuing;
 For while she flies this treach'rous bait,
 From that she meets her ruin.
 So the poor hare, when out of breath,
 From hound to man is prest,
 Then she encounters certain death,
 And 'scapes the gentler beast. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CHLOE and JENNY.

CHLOE. Oh Jenny! mention not the country, I faint at the sound of it—there is more pleasure in the rattling of one hackney coach than in all the music that romances tell us of in singing birds and falling waters.

AIR VI.

Farewell, ye hills and valleys;
 Farewell, ye verdant shades;
 I'll make more pleasant sallies
 To plays and masquerades.

With joy, for town I barter
 Those banks where flowers grow;
 What are roses to a garter?
 What lilies to a beau?

JENNY. Ay, madam—would the 10,000*l.* prize were once come up.

CHLOE. Oh Jenny! be under no apprehension. It is not only from what the fortune-teller told me, but I saw it in a coffee-dish, and I have dreamt of it every night these three weeks.—Indeed, I am so sure of it, that I think of nothing but how I shall lay it out.

JENNY. Oh, madam! there is nothing so easy in nature, in this town, as laying it out.

CHLOE. First of all, Jenny, I will buy one of the best houses in town, and furnish it.—Then I intend to set up my coach and six, and have six fine tall footmen.—Then I will buy me as many jewels as I can wear.—All sorts of fine clothes I'll have too.—These I intend to purchase immediately: and then for the rest, I shall make a shift, you know, to spend it in housekeeping, cards, plays, and masquerades, and other diversions.

JENNY. It is possible you may.—She has laid out twenty thousand of her ten already.

CHLOE. Well, I shall be a happy creature.—I long to begin, methinks.

AIR VII. *In Perseus and Andromeda.*

Oh what pleasures will abound,
 When I've got ten thousand pound!
 Oh how courted I shall be!
 Oh what lords will kneel to me!
 Who'll dispute my
 Wit and beauty,

When my golden charms are found!
O what flattery,
In the lottery,
When I've got ten thousand pound!

An't I strangely altered in one week, Jenny? Don't I begin to look as if I was born and bred in London already? Eh! does not the nasty red colour go down out of my face? An't I a good deal of pale quality in me?

JENNY. Oh, madam, you come on gloriously!

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT. Madam! here's one Mr. Spadille at the door!

CHLOE. Mr. Spadille! who is that?

JENNY. It is your ladyship's quadrille-master, madam.

CHLOE. Bid him come another time.—I an't in a humour to learn any thing more this morning.—I'll take two lessons to-morrow though—for they tell me one is not qualified for any company till one can play at quadrille.

SERVANT. Mr. Stocks the broker too, madam, is below.

CHLOE. Oh! that's the gentleman who is to dispose of my ten thousand pound for me—desire him to walk up. Is it not pretty now to have so many visitants? Is not this better than staying at home for whole weeks, and seeing none but the curate and his wife, or the squire?

JENNY. It may be better for you than seeing the squire; for, if I mistake not, had you stayed many weeks longer, he had been a dangerous visitant.

CHLOE. I am afraid so too—for I began to be in love with him, and when once a woman's in love, Jenny——

JENNY. Lud have mercy upon her!

AIR VIII.

CHLOE. When love is lodged within the heart
 Poor virtue to the outworks flies;
 The tongue in thunder takes her part,
 She darts in lightning from the eyes.
 From lips and eyes with gifted grace
 In vain we keep out charming sin;
 For love will find some weaker place
 To let the dear invader in.

Enter MR. STOCKS

MR. STOCKS. I had the honour of receiving your commands, madam.

CHLOE. Sir, your humble servant—Your name is Mr. Stocks, I suppose.

MR. STOCKS. So I am called in the Alley, madam; a name, though I say it, which would be as well received at the bottom of a piece of paper as any He's in the kingdom. But if I mistake not, madam, you would be instructed how to dispose of 10,000*l*.

CHLOE. I would so, sir.

MR. STOCKS. Why, madam, you know, at present, public interest is very low, and private securities very difficult to get—and I am sorry to say it, I am afraid there are some in the Alley who are not the honestest men in the kingdom. In short, there is one way to dispose of money with safety and advantage, and that is—to put it into the charitable corporation.

CHLOE. The charitable corporation! pray, what is that?

MR. STOCKS. That is, madam, a method, invented by some very wise men, by which the rich may be charitable to the poor, and be money in pocket by it.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT. Madam, here is one my Lord Lace desires to know if you are at home.

CHLOE. Lord Lace! Oh Gemini! who's that?

MR. STOCKS. He is a man of the first quality, and one of the best estates in the kingdom: why, he's as rich as a supercargo.

Enter JACK STOCKS, as Lord Lace.

JACK STOCKS. Bid the chair return again an hour hence, and give orders that the chariot be not used this evening.—Madam, I am your most obedient humble servant.—Ha! egad, madam, I ask ten thousand pardons, I expected to have met another lady.

MR. STOCKS. I suppose your lordship means the Countess of—

JACK STOCKS. Ay, the Countess of Seven Dials.

MR. STOCKS. She left these lodgings this day se'nnight, my lord, which was the day this lady came into 'em.

JACK STOCKS. I shall never forgive myself being guilty of so great an error; and unless the breath of my submission can blow up the redundancy of your good nature, till it raise the wind of compassion, I shall never be able to get into the harbour of quiet.

MR. STOCKS. Well said, faith—(the boy has got something by following plays, I see.)

[*Aside.*]

CHLOE. Is this one of your proud lords? Why, he is ten times more humble than the parson of our parish.

JACK STOCKS. Ha! and are you then resolved not to pardon me! Oh! it is now too late; you may pronounce my pardon with your tongue, when you have executed me with your eyes.

AIR IX.

CHLOE. Alas! my lord, you're too severe,
 Upon so slight a thing;
 And since I dare not speak for fear,
 Oh give me leave to sing.
 A rural maid you find in me,
 That fate I've oft deplored;
 Yet think not I can angry be
 With such a noble lord.

JACK STOCKS. Oh! ravishing! exquisite! ecstasy! joy!
 transport! misery! flames! ice! How shall I thank this
 goodness that undoes me!

CHLOE. Undoes you, my lord!

JACK STOCKS. Oh, madam! there is a hidden poison in
 those eyes for which nature has no antidote.

JENNY. My lord has the same designs as the squire, I
 fear; he makes love too violent for it to be honour-
 able. [*Aside.*

CHLOE. Alas, my lord! I am young and ignorant—
 though you shall find I have sense enough to make a good
 market. [*Aside.*

JACK STOCKS. Oh madam! you wrong your own charms.
 —Mr. Stocks, do you send to this lady the diamond ring
 you have of mine to set—shall I beg you would honour it
 with wearing! It is a trifle, not worth above 3,000*l.*—You
 shall have it again the day after we are married, upon
 honour. [*Aside to Mr. Stocks.*

MR. STOCKS. It shall be sent to your lordship's order in
 three days' time—(which will be after you are married, if
 you are married at all.) [*Aside to him.*

CHLOE. Indeed, my lord, I know not what to say.

JACK STOCKS. Nor I neither, rat me! [*Aside.*] Say but
 you will be mine.

CHLOE. You are too hasty, sir. Do you think I can give my consent at first sight?

JACK STOCKS. Oh! it is the town way of wooing; people of fashion never see one another above twice before marriage

MR. STOCKS. Which may be the reason why some of 'em scarce see one another above twice after they are married.

JACK STOCKS. I would not presume to ask such a thing, if I were not pressed by necessity. For if I am not married in a day or two, I shall be obliged to marry another whom I have promised already.

CHLOE. Nay, if you have been once false, you will always be so.

AIR X.

I've often heard
 Two things averred
 By my dear grandmamma,
 To be as sure,
 As light is pure,
 As knavery in law.
 The man who'll prove
 Once false to love,
 Will still make truth his scoff;
 And woman that
 Has—you know what,
 Will never leave it off.

MR. STOCKS. I see, madam, this is a very improper time for business, so I'll wait on your ladyship in the afternoon.

JACK STOCKS. Let me beg leave, madam, to give you a little advice. I know something of this town.—Have nothing to do with that fellow, he is one of the greatest rogues that ever was hanged.

CHLOE. I thought, my lord, you had spoke just now as if you had employed him too.

JACK STOCKS. Yes, madam, yes,—the fellow has some 40,000*l.* or 50,000*l.* of mine in his hands, which if ever I get out, I give you my honour, if I can help it, I'll never see his face again. But as for your money, don't trouble yourself about it, leave the disposal of that to me.—I'll warrant I find ways to lay it out.

Enter LOVEMORE.

LOVEMORE. My Chloe! Ha! can you turn thus disdainful from me?

CHLOE. Sir, I know you not.

LOVEMORE. Not know me! And is this the fellow for whom I am unknown? This powderpuff!—Have you surrendered to him, in one week, what I have been ages in soliciting.

JACK STOCKS. Harkye, sir,—whoever you are, I would not have you think, because I am a beau, and a lord, that I won't fight.

LOVEMORE. A lord! Oh! there it is! the charms are in the title.—What else can you see in this walking perfume shop that can charm you? Is this the virtue, and the virtue, that you have been thundering in my ears? 'Sdeath! I am distracted! that ever a woman should be proof against the arts of mankind, and fall a sacrifice to a monkey.

AIR XI. *Son Confuso.*

Some confounded planet reigning
 Must have moved you to these airs;
 Or could your inclination
 Stoop so low,
 From my passion,
 To a beau?
 Blood and thunder!
 Wounds and wonder;
 Can you under-rate me so?

But since I, to each pretender
 My pretensions must surrender,
 Farewell all your frowns and scorns;
 Rot me, madam, I
 Wish my rival joy!
 Much joy! much joy of his horns.
 Zounds! and furies! can I bear it?
 Can I tamely stand the shock?
 Sure——ten thousand devils
 Cannot prove
 Half such evils,
 As to love.
 Blood and thunder!
 Wounds and wonder!
 Who'd be under
 Woman's love?

AIR XII.

- CHLOE. Dear sir, be not in such a passion,
 There's never a maid in the nation
 Who would not forego
 A dull squire for a beau;
 Love is not your proper vocation.
- LOVEM. Dear madam, be not in such a fury,
 For from St. James's to Drury,
 No widow you'll find,
 No wife of your mind.
- CHLOE. Ah, hideous! I cannot endure you.
 Ah! see him——how neat!
 Ah! smell him——how sweet!
 Ah! hear but his honey words flow!
 What maid in her senses,
 But must fall into trances,
 At the sight of so lovely a beau!

JACK STOCKS. Ha, ha, ha! we are very much obliged to you madam—Ha, ha!—squire Noodle, faith, you make a very odd sort of a ridiculous figure—Ha, ha!

CHLOE. Not worth your lordship's notice.

LOVEMORE. I would advise you, my lord, as you love the safety of that pretty person of yours, not to let me find it at my return; for, if I come within the smell of your pulvilio, I will so metamorphose your beauship—

JACK STOCKS. Impudent scoundrel!

CHLOE. I am frightened out of my wits, for I know he is very desperate.

JACK STOCKS. Oh, madam! leave me to deal with him; I'll let a little light through his body.

CHLOE. Ah! but, my lord! what will be the consequence of that?

JACK STOCKS. Nothing at all, madam—I have killed half a dozen such dirty fellows, and no notice taken of it.

CHLOE. For my sake, my lord, have a care of yourself.

AIR XIII.

Ah think, my lord! how I should grieve
 To see your lordship banged;
 But greater still my fears, believe,
 Lest I should see you hanged.
 Ah! who could see,
 On Tyburn-tree,
 You swinging in the air!
 A halter round
 Your white neck bound,
 Instead of solitaire.

JACK STOCKS. To prevent all danger, then, let us be married this instant.

CHLOE. Oh fie! my lord; the world will say I am a strange forward creature.

JACK STOCKS. The world, madam, might be saucy enough to talk of you, if you were married to a private gentleman—but as you will be a woman of quality, they won't be surprised at any thing you do.

CHLOE. People of quality have indeed privileges, they say, beyond other people; and I long to be one of them.

AIR XIV. *White Joke.*

O how charming my life will be
 When marriage has made me a fine lady!
 In chariot, six horses, and diamonds bright,
 In Flanders lace, and 'broidery clothes,
 O how I'll flame it among the beaux!
 In bed all the day, at cards all the night,
 O! how I'll revel the hours away!
 Sing it, and dance it, coquette it, and play;
 With feasting, toasting,
 Jestng, roasting,
 Rantum scantum, flantng, jantng,
 Laughng at all the world can say. [*Exeunt.*

JENNY. This is something like—there is some mettle in these London lords.—Our poor country squires will always put us to the blush of consenting—the sparks know a woman's mind before she speaks it. Well, it is certainly a great comfort to a woman, who has done what she should not do, that she did it without her own consent.

Enter LOVEMORE.

LOVEMORE. Ha! flown? Mrs. Jenny, where's your mistress?

JENNY. My mistress, sir, is with my master.

LOVEMORE. Damnation! Where? Show me this instant, and——

JENNY. And what? It is surprising to me how a man of Mr. Lovemore's sense should pursue a woman who uses him so ill; when, to my certain knowledge, there is a woman in the world has a much juster notion of his merit.

LOVEMORE. Harkye, Mrs. Minx, tell me where your mistress is, or I'll squeeze your little soul out.

JENNY. Oh, murder! murder! help! murder!

Enter Mrs. STOCKS.

MRS. STOCKS. Heyday! what's the matter? Who is this committing murder in my house? Who are you, sir? What rascal, what thief are you, sir? Hey!

LOVEMORE. This must be the bawd, by the politeness of her language. [*Aside.*]—Dear madam, be not in such a passion; I am no bilking younger brother; and though I'm no lord, you may find me a good customer, and as good a paymaster as any laced fop in Christendom.

MRS. STOCKS. Sir, I keep no shop, nor want any of your custom.—What has he done to you, child? [*To Jenny.*

JENNY. He has done nothing to me, indeed madam, only squeezed me by the arm, to tell him where my mistress was.

MRS. STOCKS. And what have you to do with her mistress?

LOVEMORE. Why faith, I am like to have nothing to do with her mistress, without your good offices.—Lookye, mother, let me have the first of her, and here are 500*l.* at your service.

MRS. STOCKS. What does the saucebox mean?

LOVEMORE. Ha, ha, ha!

AIR XV.

When the candidate offers his purse,
 What voter requires what he meant?
 When a great man attempts to disburse,
 What little man asks his intent?



Sir, I desire you would omit any farther solicitations to this lady.

From an original painting by E. J. Read.

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AIR XV.

When the scoundrel offers his purse,
 What voter requires what he meant?
 When a great man attempts to disburse,
 What little man asks his intent?

Sir, I desire you would omit any farther solicitations to this lady.

From an original painting by E. A. Reed



E. J. READ
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Are you not then ashamed,
 When my mistress I've named,
 And my purse I've pulled out,
 Any longer to doubt
 My meaning, good mother?

MRS. STOCKS. Mother!—O that ever I should live to see this day!—I that have escaped the name of a whore in my youth, to be called a bawd in my old age.—Sirrah, sirrah, the mother that bore you was not an honest woman.

Enter JACK STOCKS, and CHLOE.

JACK STOCKS. What's the matter, Mrs. Stocks?

MRS. STOCKS. Oh, madam! had you heard how I've been abused upon your account—Here's a filthy fellow has offered me money to—

CHLOE. What, dear madam?

MRS. STOCKS. To procure your ladyship—dear madam—

JACK STOCKS. Sir, I desire you would omit any farther solicitations to this lady, and on that condition I forgive the past. This lady is now my wife.

LOVEMORE. How! Is this true, Chloe?

CHLOE. Even as you've heard, sir.

JACK STOCKS. Here's a fellow won't take a lord's word for a wife.

LOVEMORE. Henceforth, I will never take a woman's word for any thing.

JACK STOCKS. Then I wish you'd take yourself away, sir.

LOVEMORE. Sir, I shall take the liberty of staying here, because I believe my company is disagreeable to you.

JACK STOCKS. Very civil, faith!—Come, my dear, let us leave this sullen gentleman to enjoy his spleen by himself.

CHLOE. Oh, my dear lord! let's go to the Hall to see the lottery drawn.

JACK STOCKS. If your ladyship pleases.—So, dear squire, adieu.
 [*Exeunt Jack Stocks and Chloe.*]

LOVEMORE. I'll follow her still; for such a coxcomb of a husband will but give her a better relish for a gallant.

[*Exit.*

JENNY. And I'll follow you still; for such usage from one mistress, will give you the better relish for another.

SCENE III.—*Guildhall.*

COMMISSIONERS, CLERKS, SPECTATORS, MOB, &c.

1 MOB. What, are they not drawing yet?

MR. STOCKS. No, but they'll begin presently.

AIR XVI. *South Sea ballad.*

MR. STOCKS.

The lottery just is beginning,
 'Twill soon be too late to get an estate,
 For Fortune, like dames fond of sinning,
 Does the tardy adventurer hate.
 Then if you've a mind to have her,
 To-day with vigour pursue her,
 Or else to-morrow,
 You'll find to your sorrow,
 She's granted another the favour,
 Which to-day she intended for you.

1 MOB. Never tell me, Thomas, it is all a cheat; what do those people do behind the curtain? There's never any honesty behind a curtain.

2 MOB. Harkye, neighbour, I fancy there is somebody in the wheels that gives out what tickets he pleases; for if you mind, sometimes there are twenty blanks drawn together, and then two or three prizes.

1 MOB. Nay, if there be twenty blanks drawn together, it must be a cheat; for you know the man where I hired my horses told me there was not quite ten blanks to a prize.

2 MOB. Pox take their horses! I am sure they have run away with all the money I have brought to town with me.

1 MOB. And yet it can't be all a cheat, neither; for you know Mrs. Sugarsops of our town got twenty pound.

2 MOB. Ay, you fool; but does not her brother live with a parliament-man?

1 MOB. But he has nothing to do with the lottery, has he?

2 MOB. Ah, Laud help thee!—Who can tell what he has to do with it?

1 MOB. But here's Mrs. Sugarsops herself.

Enter MRS. SUGARSOPS.

MRS. SUGARSOPS. How do you, neighbour Harrow?

2 MOB. Ah! Mrs. Sugarsops! you are a lucky woman.

MRS. SUGARSOPS. I wish you would make your words good.

2 MOB. Why, have not you got twenty pound in the lottery?

MRS. SUGARSOPS. Ah Lud! that's all rid away, and twenty pounds more to it.—Oh! 'tis all a cheat; they let one get a little at first, only to draw one in, that's all. I have hired a horse to-day; and, if I get nothing by that, I'll go down into the country to-morrow.

1 MOB. I intend to ride no longer, nor neighbour Graze here neither.—He and I go halves in a ticket to-day.—See, here is the number.

MRS. SUGARSOPS. As I live, the very ticket I have hired myself!

2 MOB. Nay, that cannot be. It may be the same number, perhaps, but it cannot be the same ticket, for we have the whole ticket for ourselves.

MRS. SUGARSOPS. I tell you, we are both cheated.

IRISHMAN. Upon my shoul, it is very brave luck, indeed; the deel take me but this will be brave news to carry back to Ireland.

1 MOB. Ay, there's he that has got the five thousand pound which came up to-day.

2 MOB. I give you joy of the five thousand pound, sir.

IRISHMAN. Ah, honey! fait I have not got it as yet—but, upon my shoul, I was within a ticket of it, joy.

3 MOB. I hope your worship will take care that my horse be drawn to-day, or to-morrow, because I shall go out of town next day.

MR. STOCKS. Never fear, friend.

MRS. SUGARSOPS. You are a fine gentleman, to let me the same ticket you had let before to these men here.

MR. STOCKS. Pshaw! madam, it's impossible; it's a mistake!

MRS. SUGARSOPS. Here is the number, sir; it is the same on both papers.

MR. STOCKS. Ha! why Mr. Trick has made a little blunder here indeed! However, madam, if it comes up a prize, you shall both receive it.—(Ha, ha, ha! d'ye think my horses won't carry double, madam?—This number is a sure card, for it was drawn a blank five days ago.) [*Aside.*]

Enter COACHMAN.

COACHMAN. Oh, sir! your worship has let me a very lucky horse: it is come up twenty pound already. So if your worship would let me have the money—

MR. STOCKS. Let me see, tickets are this day nineteen pound; and your prize is worth eighteen pound eighteen shillings; so if you give me two shillings, which are the difference, we shall be quit.

COACHMAN. How, sir! how!

MR. STOCKS. Upon my word, friend, I state the account right,

COACHMAN. Oh, the devil! and have I given three pound for the chance of losing two shillings more?

MR. STOCKS. Alas, sir! I cannot help ill fortune.—You have had ill luck; it might have come up a hundred, or a thousand, or ten thousand.

COACHMAN. Ten thousand!—ten thousand devils take you all. Oons! if I can but once get a stock-jobber into my coach, if I don't break his neck!—

AIR XVII. *Buff Coat.*

In all trades we've had
Some good, and some bad,
But a stock-jobber has no fellow;
To hell who would sally,
Let him go to Change alley,
There are fiends who will make his soul bellow.

The lawyer who's been
In the pillory seen,
While eggs his complexion made yellow;
Nay, the devil's to blame,
Or he'll own to his shame,
That a stock-jobber has no fellow.

Enter JACK STOCKS and CHLOE. Commissioners advance to open the wheels.

JACK STOCKS. Well, my dear, this is one of the most unaccountable rambles, just after matrimony!—but you shall always find me the most complaisant of husbands.

CHLOE. Oh! my lord, I must see all the curiosities; the Tower, and the lions, and Bedlam, and the court, and the opera.

JACK STOCKS. Yes, yes, my dear, you shall see every thing—but the devil take me if I accompany your ladyship. (I think I will not talk to her of her fortune before to-morrow morning.) *[Aside.*

CHLOE. I will not mention the ten thousand pounds before it comes up: it will be the prettiest surprise! *[Aside.*

JACK STOCKS. So, the lottery is going to begin drawing.

AIR XVIII. *Now ponder well, ye parents dear.*

- 1 PROCL. Number one hundred thirty-two!
 2 PROCL. That number is a blank.
 1 PROCL. Number one hundred ninety-nine!
 2 PROCL. And that's another blank.
 1 PROCL. Number six thousand seventy-one!
 2 PROCL. That number blank is found.
 1 PROCL. Number six thousand eighty-two;
 2 PROCL. Oh! that is twenty pound.

1 MOB. Oh! oh! are you come? I am glad to find there are some prizes here.

AIR XIX. *Dutch skipper. Second part.*

- 1 PROCL. Number six thousand eighty-two,
 2 PROCL. Is twenty pound, is twenty pound.
 1 PROCL. Number six thousand eighty-two!
 2 PROCL. Oh! that is twenty pound.
 You see 'tis all fair,
 See nothing is there.
 [*Pointing to the boys, who hold up their hands.*
 The hammer goes down,
 Hey Presto! be gone!
 And up comes the twenty pound.

CHORUS. You see 'tis all fair, &c.

- 1 PROCL. Forty-five thousand three hundred and ten.
 2 PROCL. Blank.
 1 PROCL. Sixty-one thousand ninety-seven.
 4 MOB. Stand clear! stand clear! that's my ticket.
 2 PROCL. Blank.
 4 MOB. Oh Lud! oh Lud! [*Exit, crying.*

1 PROCL. Number four thousand nine hundred sixty.

2 PROCL. Blank. [Chloe faints.]

JACK STOCKS. Help! help!

MRS. SUGARSOPS. Here, here are some hartshorn and sal-volatile drops.

1 MOB. Poor lady! I suppose her ticket is come up blank.

2 MOB. May be, her horse has thrown her, neighbour.
[The lottery continues drawing in dumb show.]

Enter LOVEMORE and JENNY.

JACK STOCKS. What's the matter, my angel?

CHLOE. Oh!—that last blank was my ticket.

JACK STOCKS. Ha, ha! and could that give you any pain?

CHLOE. Does it not you?

JACK STOCKS. Not a moment's, my dear, indeed.

CHLOE. And can you bear the disappointment, without upbraiding me?

JACK STOCKS. Upbraiding you! Ha, ha, ha! With what?

CHLOE. Why, did you not marry me for my fortune?

JACK STOCKS. No, no, my dear—I married you for your person; I was in love with that only, my angel.

CHLOE. Then the loss of my fortune shall give me no longer uneasiness.

JACK STOCKS. Loss of your fortune? Ha! How! What! What!

CHLOE. O my dear! I had no fortune, but what I promised myself from the lottery.

JACK STOCKS. Ha!

CHLOE. So, the devil take all lotteries, dreams, and conjurers.

JACK STOCKS. The devil take them, indeed—and am I married to a lottery-ticket, to an imaginary ten thousand pound? Death! hell! and furies! blood! blunders! blanks!

CHLOE. Is this your love for me, my lord?

JACK STOCKS. Love for you! Dem you, fool, idiot!

JENNY. This it is to marry a lord—he can't be civil to his wife the first day.

Enter MR. STOCKS.

MR. STOCKS. Madam, the subscriptions are ready—and if my lord—

JACK STOCKS. Brother, this is a trick of yours to ruin me.

MR. STOCKS. Heyday! what's the matter now?

JACK STOCKS. Matter! why, I have had a Levant thrown upon me.

LOVEMORE. The ten thousand pound is come up a blank, that's all.

MR. STOCKS. A blank!

JACK STOCKS. Ay, a blank! do you pretend to be ignorant of it? However, madam, you are bit as well as I am; for I am no more a lord than you are a fortune.

CHLOE. Now I'm undone, indeed.

AIR XX. *Virgins, beware.*

LOVEM. Now, my dear Chloe, behold a true lover,
 Whom, though your cruelty seemed to disdain,
 Now your doubts and fears may discover,
 One kind look's a reward for his pain.
 Thus to fold thee,
 How blest is life!
 Love shall hold thee
 Dearer than wife.
 What joys in chains of dull marriage can be,
 Love's only happy, when liking is free.

As you seem, sir, to have no overbearing fondness for your wife, I'll take her off your hands.—As you have missed a fortune with her, what say you to a fortune without her?—Resign over all pretensions in her to me, and I'll give you a thousand pounds this instant.

JACK STOCKS. Ha! pox! I suppose they are a thousand pounds you are to get in the lottery.

LOVEMORE. Sir, you shall receive 'em this moment.

JACK STOCKS. Shall I? Then, sir, to show you I'll be beforehand with you, here she is—take her—and if ever I ask her back of you again, may I lose the whole thousand at the first sitting.

CHLOE. And can you part with me so easily?

JACK STOCKS. Part with you? If I was married to the whole sex, I'd part with 'em all for half the money.

LOVEMORE. Come, my dear Chloe, had you been married, as you imagined, you should have lost nothing by the change.

CHLOE. A lord! faugh! I begin to despise the name now as heartily as I liked it before.

[Commissioners, &c., close the wheels and come forward.]

AIR XXI.

Since you whom I loved,
 So cruel have proved;
 And you whom I slighted so true;
 From my delicate fine powdered spouse,
 I retract all my thrown-away vows,
 And give them with a pleasure to you.
 Hence all women learn,
 When your husbands grow stern,
 And leave you in conjugal want;
 Ne'er whimper and weep out your eyes,
 While what the dull husband denies
 Is better supplied by gallant.

MR. STOCKS. Well, Jack, I hope you'll forgive me; or if I intended you any harm, may tickets fall, and all the horses I have let to-day be drawn blanks to-morrow.

JACK STOCKS. Brother, I believe you; for as I do not ap-

prehend you could have got a shilling by being a rogue, it is possible you may have been honest.

LOVEMORE. Come, my dear Chloe, don't let your luck grieve you—you are not the only person who has been deceived in a lottery.

AIR XXII.

That the world is a lottery, what man can doubt?
 When born, we're put in, when dead, we're drawn out;
 And though tickets are bought by the fool and the wise,
 Yet 'tis plain there are more than ten blanks to a prize.
 Sing tantararara, fools all, fools all.

STOCKS. The court has itself a bad lottery's face,
 Where ten draw a blank, before one draws a place;
 For a ticket in law who would give you thanks?
 For that wheel contains scarce any but blanks.
 Sing tantararara, keep out, keep out.

LOVEM. 'Mongst doctors and lawyers some good ones are
 found;
 But, alas! they are rare as the ten thousand
 pound.
 How scarce is a prize, if with women you deal,
 Take care how you marry—for, oh! in that wheel,
 Sing tantararara, blanks all, blanks all.

STOCKS. That the stage is a lottery, by all 'tis agreed;
 Where ten plays are damned, ere one can succeed;
 The blanks are so many, the prizes so few,
 We all are undone, unless kindly you,
 Sing tantararara, clap all, clap all.

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY MISS RAFTOR

LUD! I'm almost ashamed to show my face!
Was ever woman like my Lady Lace?
Maids have been often wives, and widows soon,
But I'm maid, wife, and widow, all in one.
Who'd trust to Fortune, if she plays such pranks?
Ten thousand—and a lord! and both prove blanks?
Piteous case! and what is still more madding,
To lose so fine a lord before I had him.
Had all been well till honeymoon was over,
It had been then no wonder to discover,
I a new mistress, he a rival lover.
To wake so soon from such delicious dreams,
Such pure, polite, extravagant fine schemes,
Of plays, and operas, and masquerades,
Of equipage, quadrille, and powdered blades,
And all blown up at once—Oh! horrid sentence!
Forced to take up at last—with—faugh! an old acquaintance.
But hold——when my misfortunes I recall,
Agad! 'tis well I've any man at all.
Yet since discarded once at such short warning,
This too may turn me off to-morrow morning.
If that should happen, I were finely slurred;
What should I then do? What! why get a third.
Well, if he does, as I have cause to fear,
To-morrow night, gallants, you'll find me here.

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END OF VOL. I

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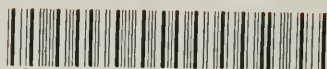
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