New Dialogues and Plays

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS, AGES TEN TO FIFTEEN

ADAPTED FROM THE POPULAR WORKS OF
WELL-KNOWN AUTHORS

BY

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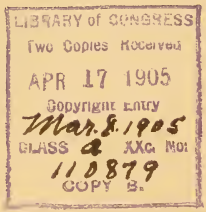

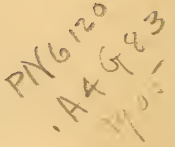

PREFACE

A collection of Dialogues for the intermediate grades of the public school should of necessity be so prepared as to give the pupil as well as the teacher sufficient direction and suggestion to enable him to get into the spirit of the play. In the preparation of this book that end has been kept in view.

The introduction to each dialogue gives at a glance a view of the external surroundings, the characters, the costumes, and the situations in the play. By a careful reading of this introduction the pupil is put in relation to the plot and finds himself a part of it.

It is the duty and the privilege of the manager to select the characters for the play, and this he is always better able to do when he has noticed the interest with which the play is studied by those who are expected to take part. The tone of voice, the gait, the physical appearance, the likes and dislikes of the pupils are all to be considered in selecting the characters for the play, and the suggestions made in connection with this collection are such as to insure the highest success in the working out of each on the stage.

It should be noticed also that many of the plays are specially adapted for particular occasions which are observed by organizations not directly connected with the school work. This is one of the valuable features of the book, and we respectfully submit it for such purposes as well as for the regular school literary society.

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HUMOROUS.

SERIOUS.

THE SCHOOLMASTER.

CHARACTERS.

Timothy Tullyhorn, Dr. Pellet, *members of the School Committee.*

Samuel Simpson, (*alias* WINTHROP GETCHELL PEABODY), *schoolmaster.*

Situation.—*This scene takes place in an ordinary room or parlor, fitted with chairs, tables, pens, paper and ink. The furniture should be arranged for a hearing of candidates,* DR. PELLET *on one side of room by a table,* TULLYHORN *near centre, and the schoolmaster on the other side.* SIMPSON *should come in opposite* DR. PELLET.

Enter SAMUEL SIMPSON, *a well-dressed young man, with cane and carpet-bag.*

SIMPSON.—Well, here I am! No more college studies for three months. Old Dartmouth left behind for the season, and a fine prospect of a pleasant winter teaching school in this village, and boarding, I suppose, at old Tullyhorn's, my father's friend; curious old fellow, rough, but likes a good joke; is "well-off," as they say here, and has a daughter who will divide my attention with the school. On the whole an agreeable prospect for the winter. Only I should have been here two days ago to have met the committee, and now it's Saturday. A joke, if my sore throat has cost me the school! But what's this? (*Sees a written*

notice on the door and reads it aloud.) "The school committee will meet in this room on Saturday afternoon at three o'clock to examine candidates for teaching the school in District No. 5." Well, well, (*Consults his watch.*) here it is half-past two and more, and they are to meet in this old tavern-parlor. (*Meditates.*) Don't understand it!—Yes, I do; old "Tully" is afraid I won't come, and this notice is to catch somebody else. I'll play a joke on him. (*Looks out of the window*), and pretty quick, too, for I see him coming. (*He goes out.*)

Enter TULLYHORN *and* PELLET, *both in an anxious state of mind, and sit down by the table.*

TULLYHORN.—Singular! I say, doctor, never knew the young man to fail before; always prompt, like his father; he has made many an appointment to come to my house and never was behind an hour. It's strange! and school *must* begin on Monday. (*Walks about.*)

PELLET.—Some one may turn up by three o'clock, and if so, we'll examine him, and may be find a teacher just as good as this Sim Sampson.

TULLYHORN.—*Samuel Simpson.*

PELLET.—Well, Sam Simpson, then; whatever his name is don't matter, unless he puts in an appearance. (*Glances out of the window.*) But there's a queer-looking man coming into the yard; perhaps—but it can't be! Well, I wish——

Enter SAMUEL SIMPSON, *disguised in a slouch hat, long loose overcoat, large overshoes, and with an old faded umbrella. He walks up and down in a very awkward manner, and looks about with staring eyes.*

TULLYHORN (*aside to Pellet*).—What do you make of him, doctor?

PELLET.—A candidate, I guess.

TULLYHORN.—But *he* won't do. Just look at him! But I say, doctor, we'll have some fun out of him, if we can keep our faces straight. (*He speaks loudly to Simpson.*)—Good day, sir.

SIMPSON (*turns quick about and seizes Tullyhorn's hand*).—Good day, yourself, too! And I ain't well neither; bad cold, sore throat, headache, and sick! bother it!

PELLET.—Be seated, sir. (*Offers a chair.*) Take a chair.

SIMPSON.—No, thank *you;* they allers larn folks down our way to stan' up afore their betters. Be you the school committee men?

PELLET.—Yes, sir; we have that honor.

SIMPSON.—*Honor,* do you call it? I guess as how I remember the old copy-book, "Honor and fame from low perdition rise." D'ye 'member it, I say—*you!* (*Punches Tullyhorn in the ribs with his umbrella.*)

TULLYHORN (*sharply*).—Your umbrella is as much out of place as your quotation. We are members of the school committee.

SIMPSON.—I's only a-joking with this 'ere p'int of my 'breller; it's a way I have. Well, I come to be zamined.

PELLET.—Very well, sir; what might your name be?

SIMPSON.—It *might* be Balaam, but 'taint; but if you're sot on knowing, they call me, down our way, Winthrop Getchell Peabody.

TULLYHORN.—What is your place of residence?

SIMPSON.—My *what,* sir?

TULLYHORN.—I merely wish to know where you *live.*

SIMPSON.—Why didn't you say so, if that's what you want to know? I suppose I can tell you. You've heern tell of Poplin Dracut, I s'pose.

TULLYHORN. } Oh, yes, sir.
PELLET. }

SIMPSON.—Little joke, you see! Wall, 'taint there; but it's down to *Hull*, when I'm to hum.

PELLET (*tries to suppress laughter*).—Mr. Getchell, how would you govern a school? In these days of progress and reform the mind of the community has undergone a radical change in regard to the discipline of common schools, and we consider the faculty of government as one of the most important qualifications of a teacher.

SIMPSON.—Wal, 'tis. I govern a school by mortal influence. There's always some who don't care nothing for nobody nor nothing, and who don't care whether they larn nothing or not; and *sich* ones you can't get along with without licking on 'em *some*. I've never kept school afore, and I s'pose you'd like to know how I come to, *this* time. Wall, I'll tell you. I went down to Aunt Sal's house, t'other day; and Aunt Sal's got two *prime* pretty darters; and the way them gals put into me about my *larnin'* and all that, and how I ort to keep school, and all that, was a caution. So I thort I'd come up and get zamined, and get a stifercate and then I shouldn't be skeered at any on 'em. Aunt Sal's oldest darter, Betsey, is goin' to be married in the spring; she's got all her fixin's ready, and got a likely feller, too; and he's got his house built and his shed all shingled; and I shouldn't think strange if I should stood up at the weddin' with——

TULLYHORN.—Well, never mind, sir, about Aunt Sally's domestic arrangements; they have nothing to do with the examination; please to inform us to what studies you have attended.

SIMPSON.—I've studied almost everything. I've studied grammar, *ge*-ometry, *ge*-ography, 'rithmetic, Sam Watts's

hymns, and Molly Brown's *ge*-ography, bolosophy, and a good many other books I hain't never seen yet. Besides all that, I am complete master of the Latin language. I will give you a specimen : "Amo ridiculi ridiculo potatus sum "——

PELLET.—That'll do, sir. Will you inform us what *philosophy* is?

SIMPSON.—The heavenly bodies is philosophy, and the airthly bodies is philosophy; and if there's a screw loose in the heavenly bodies, that's philosophy; and if there's a a screw loose in the airthly bodies, that's philosophy. There's a good many kinds of philosophy.

TULLYHORN.—Very good, sir. What is gravitation?

SIMPSON.—It's what makes things *come down*.

TULLYHORN.—Who discovered gravitation?

SIMPSON.—Old Isaiah Newton down here. *You* know him. He was walking along under an apple-tree, one day, and a *tater* fell down and hit him on the head, and that set him to thinking. Guess 'twould a sot *me* to thinking!

PELLET.—Your knowledge of philosophy appears to be very good and extensive; therefore we will examine you no more in that branch. What's *arithmetic*, Mr. Peabody?

SIMPSON.—Why, it's a book. Should think anybody might know that!

PELLET.—Into how many parts is arithmetic divided? Or, in other words, what are the four fundamental rules?

SIMPSON.—'Rithmetic is divided into four parts: adoption, distraction, monopolization, and diversion.

TULLYHORN.—What is addition?

SIMPSON.—If I should give you ten dollars, that would be addition; and if you should give me ten dollars, that would be addition *i' other end up*.

PELLET.—What is subtraction?

SIMPSON.—Substraction—straction, distraction! Oh, it's when a feller's raging mad. Almost had me there!

PELLET.—Yes, sir. What is vulgar fractions?

SIMPSON.—Guess that wan't in my book. Let—me—see; vulgar means immodest—don't it?—and fractions means all shattered to pieces. Oh, I know now; it means when an *immodest man is shattered to pieces*.

PELLET.—What is the first thing you would do if asked to calculate an eclipse?

SIMPSON.—I'd *decline*, and that mighty sudden!

TULLYHORN.—You will now please to give your attention to grammar, as we consider that as among the most important studies, and one that has been very much neglected in our common schools. What is grammar?

SIMPSON.—It's the science as what tells boys and girls how to write letters to each other, and talk pretty talk.

TULLYHORN.—Will you name the principal parts?

SIMPSON.—Or-tho-graphy, et-y-mology, swinetax and prorosody.

PELLET.—We will now parse a few words, for the purpose of seeing whether you fully understand this branch of education. In the sentence, "And the minister said to him," parse *minister*.

SIMPSON.—Minister is a conjunction.

PELLET.—What reason can you give for that, sir?

SIMPSON.—'Cause it jines together.

PELLET.—What does it connect?

SIMPSON.—Man and woman. Should think any fool might know that!

TULLYHORN.—In the sentence, "Shall all the rest sit lingering here?" etc.—parse *shall*.

SIMPSON.—Shell's a noun, a common noun, 'cause there's

a good many kinds of shells, such as oyster shells, snail-shells, chestnut shells, and such like ; third future tense, indelible mode, nomination case to *thou* or *you* understood, according to Rule IX : Things that are equal to the same thing are equal to one another.

PELLET.—My friend and myself would like to have you spell a few words.

SIMPSON.—I know all about spells: cold spells, spells of weather, wet spells, and——

PELLET.—No matter about those. Can you spell Jacob?

SIMPSON.—I guess! J-a-k-u-p, Jacob. But they do say a leader of the choir up to our meeting got stuck with more music than he had words, and so he called it Ja—fol-de-riddle—cob.

TULLYHORN.—What did you say your full name was?

SIMPSON.—Winthrop Getchell Peabody.

TULLYHORN.—Please spell it, for it sounds unusual to us.

SIMPSON.—I ought to charge extra, for it is a hard thing to do. But here goes: We-e-in—win, throar—double-up, thrup, Winthrop; Gee-e-double-etchell, Getchell; Peabody, eabody-abody-body-ody-dy-y, Peabody; Winthrop Getchell Peabody. I guess I'll set down and rest! (*Sits down.*) Now I'll just run over it kinder fast, and I guess you'll like it. (*Spells it very rapidly, and rises.*) Say! How's that? Any more questions? It 'pears to me you are mighty particular!

TULLYHORN.—We will not detain you much longer. We are pleased—(*aside*) that's so, isn't it, doctor?—with the examination. Make yourself comfortable while we write a document for you.

SIMPSON (*to himself while the committee talk together*).—Document! That means stifercate. Well, times ain't now as they used to was to be! It used to was to be as to how

as that anybody could rise into the potent office of schoolmaster; but now 'tain't so as how as, without being zamined by this larned committee; and this is the way eddication is going to be *riz!* De-lightful task to rear the infant thought, and teach the young idee how to fire!—(*Aside.*) I do believe I have fooled old Tully! (*He walks up and down.*)

PELLET (*aside*).—Well, Mr. Tullyhorn, what do you say? Isn't he a genius? How are we going to get rid of him? We have had our fun in asking him questions, but what shall we do?

TULLYHORN.—I'm puzzled! He's evidently a keen Yankee—sharp, shrewd, but totally unfit to teach school; and yet he'll take it hard to be turned off. He little suspects how we have been making game of him; and I do feel a little guilty. I never will impose on any other person while I am on this committee. But I'll ask him a question or two, and some way may suggest itself to us to refuse him a certificate, without exciting his suspicions or rousing his anger.—(*Loud.*) Mr. Peabody!

SIMPSON (*turns quickly with his umbrella over his shoulder and knocks off an ornament from a shelf*).—Your humble servant, sir. Is my certificate ready? You've talked and writ long enough to make a dozen!

TULLYHORN.—I would like to ask one or two questions more. What has been your pursuit in life?

SIMPSON.—Well, if you urge the matter, I must tell you. My pursuit has been *old Tully's daughter Sarah!*

TULLYHORN (*jumps up in great excitement and strides toward candidate. Pellet follows*).—What do you mean, sir? No hesitation! By what right do you refer to my daughter?

SIMPSON (*slowly lays down umbrella and takes various*

disguising wraps off one by one; at last steps forth in his true character).—Well, Mr. Tullyhorn, what do you say, *now?* Who's fooled? Can I have my certificate? Or will you send me off? Hey? (*Punches his ribs with his thumb.*)

TULLYHORN.—You're a sly joker. You rather took the advantage of "old Tully." And as for friend Pellet and me, we are most ingloriously "sold." But we'll forgive you. Say, doctor?

PELLET.—Yes, Tully; but how about his *pursuit?*

TULLYHORN.—We will go straight to the *house* and see about that. (*They go out.*)

A CONFESSION OF LOVE.

CHARACTERS.

Nicholas Ball, *country gentleman with several daughters.*

Count Rosaberry, *suitor for the hand of* VIOLET.

Violet, *beautiful, eccentric daughter of* BALL.

Situation.—*The* COUNT *has the consent of* VIOLET'S *father to make love to her, but his approaches have been baffled so perfectly that he cannot tell whether she has the first impulse of affection toward him. He tries in the guise of a priest to draw a confession from her, but she unmasks him. He then secrets himself behind his own portrait, hears her confess her love and steps forth to claim her.*

The scene takes place in a reception room or parlor. One corner is curtained off and behind the curtain is the picture of the COUNT *on an easel. The picture must be placed a little to one side so that the curtain need not be wholly drawn, as the* COUNT *is concealed there.*

Enter BALL, *followed by the* COUNT, *disguised as a Friar.*

BALL.—These things premised, you have my full consent
To try my daughter's humor;
But observe me, sir!——
I will use no compulsion with my child.
If I had tendered thus her sister Zamora,
I should not now have mourned a daughter lost!

Enter VIOLET.

VIOLET.—What is your pleasure?

BALL.—Know this holy man; (*Introducing the Count to her.*)
It is the father confessor I spoke of.
Though he looks young, in all things which respect
His sacred function he is deeply learned.

VIOLET (*aside*).—It is the Count!

BALL.—I leave you to his guidance.
To his examination and free censure,
Commit your actions and your private thoughts.

VIOLET.—I shall observe, sir—(*He goes out. Aside.*)
Nay, 'tis he, I'll swear!

COUNT (*aside*).—Pray Heaven she don't suspect me! (*Aloud.*) Well, young lady, you have heard your father's commands?

VIOLET.—Yes, and now he has left us alone, what are we to do?

COUNT.—I am to listen and you are to confess.

VIOLET.—What! And then you are to confess, and I am to listen?—(*Aside.*) Oh! I'll take care you shall do penance though.

COUNT.—Pshaw!

VIOLET.—Well; but what am I to confess?

COUNT.—Your sins, daughter; your sins.

VIOLET.—What! all of them?

COUNT.—Only the great ones.

VIOLET.—The great ones! Oh, you must learn those of my neighbors, whose business it is, like yours, to confess everybody's sins but their own. If now you would be content with a few trifling peccadilloes, I would own them to you with all the frankness of an author, who gives his reader

the paltry errata of the press, but leaves him to find out all the capital blunders of the work himself.

COUNT.—Nay, lady, this is trifling: I am in haste.

VIOLET.—In haste! Then suppose I confess my virtues? You shall have the catalogue of them in a single breath.

COUNT. Nay, then, I must call your father.

VIOLET.—Why, then, to be serious:—If you will tell me of any very enormous offences which I may have lately committed, I shall have no objection in the world to acknowledge them to you.

COUNT.—It is publicly reported, daughter, you are in love.

VIOLET (*aside*).—So, so! Are you there?—That I am in love.

COUNT.—With a man—

VIOLET.—Why, what should a woman be in love with?

COUNT.—You interrupt me, lady.—A young man.

VIOLET.—I'm not in love with an old one, certainly.—But is love a crime, father?

COUNT.—Heaven forbid!

VIOLET.—Why, then, you have nothing to do with it.

COUNT.—Ay, but the concealing it is a crime.

VIOLET.—Oh, the concealing it is a crime.

COUNT.—Of the first magnitude.

VIOLET.—Why, then, I confess—

COUNT.—Well, what?

VIOLET.—That the Count Roseberry—

COUNT.—Go on!

VIOLET.—Is—

COUNT.—Proceed!

VIOLET.—Desperately in love with me.

COUNT.—Pshaw! That's not the point!

VIOLET.—Well, well, I'm coming to it: and not being

able in his own person to learn the state of my affections, has taken the benefit of clergy, and assumed the disguise of a friar.

COUNT.—Discovered!

VIOLET.—Ha! ha! ha!—You are but a young masquerader or you wouldn't have left your vizor at home. Come, come, Count, pull off your lion's apparel, and confess yourself an ass. (*Count takes off the Friar's gown.*)

COUNT.—Nay, Violet, hear me!

VIOLET.—Not a step nearer!—The snake is still dangerous, though he has cast his skin. I believe you are the first lover on record, that ever attempted to gain the affections of his mistress by discovering her faults. Now, if you had found out more virtues in my mind than there will ever be room for, and more charms in my person than ever my looking-glass can create, why, then, indeed—

COUNT.—What then?

VIOLET.—Then I might have confessed what it's now impossible I can ever confess; and so farewell, my noble count confessor! (*She goes out.*)

COUNT.—Farewell.

And when I've hit upon the longitude,
And plumbed the yet unfathomed ocean,
I'll make another venture for thy love.
Here comes her father.—I'll be fooled no longer.

Enter BALL.

BALL.—Well, sir, how thrive you?

COUNT.—E'en as I deserve:

Your daughter has discovered, mock'd at, and left me.

BALL.—Yet I've another scheme.

COUNT.—What is't?

BALL.—My daughter,

Being a lover of my art, of late

Has vehemently urged to see your portrait;
Which, now 'tis finish'd, I stand pledged she shall.
The picture's here (*He indicates with his hand the corner curtained off.*) and you must stand conceal'd.
And if, as we suspect, her heart leans tow'rds you,
In some unguarded gesture, speech or action,
Her love will suddenly break out.—Be quick!
I hear her coming.

COUNT.—There's some hope in this.

BALL.—It shall do wonders.—Hence! (*Count conceals himself.*)

Enter VIOLET.

VIOLET.—What, is he gone sir?

BALL.—Gone! D'ye think the man is made of marble? Yes, he is gone.

VIOLET.—For ever?

BALL.—Ay, for ever.

VIOLET.—Alas, poor Count!—Or has he only left you
To study some new character? Pray, tell me,
What will he next appear in?

BALL.—This is folly.
'Tis time to call your wanton spirits home—
You are too wild of speech.

VIOLET.—My thoughts are free, sir;
And those I utter——

BALL.—Far too quickly, girl;
Your shrewdness is a scarecrow to your beauty.

VIOLET.—It will fright none but fools, sir: men of sense must naturally admire in us the quality they most value in themselves; a blockhead only protests against the wit of a woman, because he cannot answer her drafts upon his understanding. But now we talk of the Count, don't you remember your promise, sir?

BALL (*aside*).—Umph!—What promise, girl?

VIOLET.—That I should see your picture of him.

BALL.—So you shall, when you can treat the original with a little more respect.

VIOLET.—Nay, sir, a promise!

BALL.—But, before I show it, tell me honestly, how do you like the Count, his person, and understanding?

VIOLET.—Why, as to his person, I don't think he's handsome enough to pine himself to death for his own shadow, like the youth in the fountain—nor yet so ugly as to be frightened to dissolution if he should look at himself in a glass. Then, as to his understanding, he has hardly wit enough to pass for a madman, nor yet so little as to be taken for a fool. In short, sir, I think the Count is very well worth any young woman's contemplation—when she has no better earthly thing to think about.

BALL.—Now I must go to other business, but the picture has been placed here. (*He draws curtain so as to conceal the Count and goes out.*)

VIOLET (*thinking herself alone*).—Confess that I love the Count!—A woman may do a more foolish thing than to fall in love with such a man, and a wiser one than to tell him of it. (*Looks at the picture.*) 'Tis very like him—the hair is a shade too dark—and rather too much complexion for a despairing enamorato. Confess that I love him!—Now there is only his picture. I'll see if I can't play the confessor a little better than he did. "Daughter, they tell me you're in love?"—"Well, father, there is no harm in speaking the truth."—"With the Count Roseberry, daughter?"—"Father, you are not a confessor, but a conjuror!"—"They add, moreover, that you have named the day for your marriage?"—"There, father, you are misinformed; for like a discreet maiden, I have left that for him

to do." (*She turns away from the picture and the Count comes forth.*) Then he should throw off his disguise—I should gaze at him with astonishment—he should open his arms, whilst I sunk gently into them—(*The Count catches her in his arms.*)—The Count!

Enter NICHOLAS BALL.

My father, too! Nay, then, I am fairly hunted into the toil. There, take my hand, Count, while I am free to give it.

TABLEAU. CURTAIN.

NOT QUITE.

Adapted from the play "Paul Pry," by John Poole, Esq.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Witherton, *an old man, somewhat feeble.*

Paul Pry, *a meddlesome inquisitive little man, in fantastic costume.*

Willis, *a young man, nephew to* MR. WITHERTON.

Grasp, *steward to* MR. WITHERTON.

Mrs. Subtle, *a middle-aged woman, of deceitful disposition and disagreeable face and manners—housekeeper to* MR. WITHERTON.

Marian, *a young woman.*

A Young Man.

Situation.—MR. WITHERTON, *a man of much property is entirely under the control of his housekeeper,* MRS. SUBTLE. *She has taken him out to walk with the distinct purpose to make him offer to marry her.* WILLIS *and* MARIAN *suspect her designs on* MR. WITHERTON'S *property and so are obnoxious to the housekeeper.* GRASP *knows other plots of* MRS. SUBTLE'S, *and on the strength of his knowledge hopes to get her hand in marriage. Everything is upset, however, by the inquisitive* PAUL PRY. MR. WITHERTON'S *proposal is never made to* MRS. SUBTLE.

The scene takes place in the sitting-room of MR. WITHERTON'S *country residence.*

Enter WILLIS *and* MARIAN, *conversing.*

WILLIS.—I have reason to believe that Mrs. Subtle's grand project is a marriage with my uncle—by the influence she would thus obtain over him, our ruin would be accomplished.

MARIAN.—And are there no means of preventing their marriage?

WILLIS.—I fear it will be difficult; when the affections of a solitary old man, a slave like him to circumstances and habit, are once entangled in the snares of a wily woman, it is no easy task to disengage them. But here she and my uncle come. We must not be seen together. Ha! 'tis too late—they are here.

Enter WITHERTON *leaning on* MRS. SUBTLE'S *arm.*

MRS. SUBTLE.—Gently, sir, gently. (*To Marian.*) What are you doing here? Why are you not in your own apartment?

MARIAN.—I—I was merely talking to Mr. Willis, ma'am.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Leave the room.

WITHERTON.—Speak mildly to her, my good Mrs. Subtle; consider—she is young and timid.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Young and timid indeed.

WITHERTON.—Go, my dear, Mrs. Subtle is a little severe in manner, but she means well. (*Marian crosses.*)

MARIAN.—I obey you, sir.

MRS. SUBTLE (*in an undertone*).—Obey me or count not on a long continuance here—begone! (*Exit Marian.*) Leave her to me, sir. (*To Witherton.*) I understand these matters best; (*To Willis, in a gentle tone.*) and you, Mr. Willis, to encourage a forward chit like that—I'm astonished at you.

WILLIS.—Indeed you mistake me.

MRS. SUBTLE. No matter, leave us.

WITHERTON.—Be within call, Willis, I would speak with you presently.

WILLIS.—I will, sir. (*Mrs. Subtle brings a chair forward for Witherton, who seats himself near Mrs. Subtle.*)

WITHERTON.—That girl is a favorite of mine, Mrs. Subtle, in her way—in her way, I mean. She was strongly recommended to me, by my friend Colonel Hardy, and I am sorry you have conceived so strange an antipathy to her.

MRS. SUBTLE.—And I am surprised you are so strongly attached to her. Do you know I am almost—I had nearly said a foolish word—jealous of her.

WITHERTON.—Jealous! Now Mrs. Subtle, you would banter me. But now we are alone, and secure from interruption, tell me what it is you would consult me upon—once while we were out, you were on the point of speaking, when we were intruded on by that meddling blockhead, Mr. Pry.

MRS. SUBTLE (*turning away*).—Oh, 'tis nothing, sir, a trifle.

WITHERTON.—You cannot deceive me; something sits heavily at your heart; explain the cause of it—you know me for your friend, your sincere friend. Come, speak freely.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Well, then, sir, since I never act in any important matter, but by your direction, I would ask your advice in this, of all others, the—most important.

WITHERTON.—Go on.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Mr. Grasp, who has long been attentive to me, at length importunes for my decision on the question of marriage.

WITHERTON.—Marriage Take a chair, Mrs. Subtle, take a chair. (*She sits.*)

MRS. SUBTLE.—Yes, sir. Hitherto I have never distinctly accepted, nor have I rejected the offer of his hand; wearied at length by my indecision, he has this morning insisted on knowing my intentions, one way or the other.

WITHERTON.—Well, well.

MRS. SUBTLE.—It is a serious question; my mind is still unsettled; my heart, alas! takes no part in the question. How would you advise me, sir?

WITHERTON.—Really, Mrs. Subtle, I was so little prepared for such a communication, that I hardly know—Grasp is an honest man—a very honest man.

MRS. SUBTLE.—He is a very honest man, yet my own experience has taught me that a very honest man may be a very—very bad husband. Then although I allow Mr. Grasp to be a very well meaning man—his temper——

WITHERTON.—That is none of the best, certainly.

MRS. SUBTLE.—His manners too—not that I believe he would willingly offend, are offensive. Even you, I fear, have observed that, for he has frequently addressed you in a mode which my affection—I would say, my respect for you, have induced me to reprove.

WITHERTON.—He does lack urbanity, I grant.

MRS. SUBTLE.—And to me, that is intolerable, for notwithstanding my situation here, I can never forget that I am the daughter of a gentleman. Then his taste and habits differ from mine.

WITHERTON.—These are important objections, Mrs. Subtle, considering that your first husband was as you have told me.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Speak not to me of him, sir, for that reminds me of one of the bitterest periods of my life; yet spite of Mr. Subtle's ill usage of me, I never once forgot the duty and obedience of a wife; but he was young, vain,

fickle, and I am too late convinced that it is not till a man is somewhat advanced in life—till his sentiments and habits are formed and fixed, that he can thoroughly appreciate the value of a wife's affection, or so regulate his conduct, as to insure her happiness, and his own.

WITHERTON.—That is a very sensible remark, Mrs. Subtle.

MRS. SUBTLE.—My father was an evidence of the truth of it, sir. My father was nearly sixty when he married.

WITHERTON.—Indeed! your own father?

MRS. SUBTLE.—Aye, sir, and he lived to the good old age of eighty-seven. But he was happy, and enjoyed a contented mind. How tenderly my poor mother loved him.

WITHERTON.—What was her age?

MRS. SUBTLE.—When she married him, about mine, sir. I believe it was the contemplation of the picture of their felicity, so constantly before my eyes, that confirmed my natural disposition for the quiet of domestic life. Ah, had I been fortunate in the selection of a partner.

WITHERTON.—Much—everything, depends on that, and I think that Grasp is not altogether—he is not at all the husband for you.

MRS. SUBTLE.—So my heart tells me, sir; yet, when I quit your house, would you have me live alone? without a protector?

WITHERTON.—How! quit my house!

MRS. SUBTLE.—Alas, that must I whether I accept his proposals or not. Yet let not that distress you, sir, for I doubt not—I hope, that when I am gone, my place may be supplied by some one equally attentive to your comforts, your happiness.

WITHERTON.—Do I hear aright? Quit my house, and wherefore?

MRS. SUBTLE.—I hardly know in what words to tell you;

and, after all, perhaps you will say I am a silly woman, to regard such idle slander, who can control the tongue of scandal? My care of you, my attentions, my unceasing assiduities, become the subject of remark; but I had resolved not to mention this to you; my unwearied attention to you, which is the result of mere duty—of friendship—perhaps of a sisterly affection, is said to spring from a deeper—a warmer source——

WITHERTON.—And were it so, dear Mrs. Subtle, are we accountable to a meddling world——

MRS. SUBTLE.—Ah, sir, you, a man, strong in the rectitude of your conduct, master of your own actions, master of your own actions, I say, and independent of the world, may set at naught its busy slanders. But I, an humble, unprotected woman—no, the path of duty lies straight before me; I must give my hand where I feel I cannot bestow my heart, and for ever quit a house where I have been but too happy.

WITHERTON.—Nay, by heaven, but you shall not; must your happiness be sacrificed? mine too? Ay, mine.

MRS. SUBTLE (*rises*).—Hold, sir, say no more. Do not prolong a delusion which I am endeavoring to dispel. If I have unwarily betrayed to you a secret, which I have scarcely dared to trust even to my own thoughts; if I have foolishly mistaken the kindness of a friend, for a more tender sentiment, forgive my presumption, and forgive her who, but for the lowliness of her station, might as an affectionate and devoted wife, have administered to your happiness; who conscious of her own unworthiness, must soon behold you for the last time.

WITHERTON.—Stay, dearest Mrs. Subtle, and listen to your friend, your best and truest friend. First promise me, that here you will remain.

MRS. SUBTLE.—But you have not yet advised me respecting Mr. Grasp's proposal, and I have promised him an immediate reply.

WITHERTON.—Attend to what I am about to say, and then, dearest Mrs. Subtle, let your own heart dictate your choice.

MRS. SUBTLE (*aside*).—'Tis done!

WITHERTON.—Were I longer to hesitate, I should be negligent of my own happiness, and unjust towards your merits; for if an attachment, long and severely tried, were not of itself sufficient to warrant me in—— (*A knock at the door.*)

MRS. SUBTLE (*as Witherton starts up*).—Curse on the interruption, when but another word had realized my hopes.

Enter PAUL PRY.

PRY.—Oh, ha, I see, billing and cooing, I hope I don't intrude?

MRS. SUBTLE.—You do, sir.

PRY.—Well, I am very sorry, but I came to show you the *Country Chronicle*; there is something in it I thought might interest you; two columns-full about a prodigious gooseberry, grown by Mrs. Nettlebed at the Priory. Most curious, shall I read it to you?

WITHERTON.—No, you are very good. (*Turns up impatiently.*)

PRY.—I perceive I am one too many. Well now, upon my life, (*Whispers her.*) if I had entertained the smallest idea——

MRS. SUBTLE.—What do you mean, sir.

PRY (*speaks mysteriously*).—Bless you, I see things with half an eye; but never fear me, I'm as close as wax.

Now, I say Mrs. Subtle, between ourselves—it shall go no farther, there *is* something in the wind, eh?

MRS. SUBTLE.—I don't understand you.

PRY.—Well, well, you are right to be cautious; only I have often thought to myself it would be a good thing for both of you, he is rich—no one to inherit his fortune, and by all accounts, you have been very kind to him, eh?

MRS. SUBTLE.—Sir!

PRY.—I mean no harm, but take my advice; service is no inheritance, as they say. Do you look to number one; take care to feather your nest. You are still a young woman, under forty, I should think, thirty-eight now—there, or thereabouts, eh?

MRS. SUBTLE.—My respect for Mr. Witherton forbids me to say that his friend is impertinent.

WITHERTON (*to himself*).—This intrusion is no longer to be borne. (*Comes down near Pry.*) Have you any particular business with me, sir?

PRY.—Yes, you must know, I've seen a young fellow lurking about your friend Hardy's house, and I suspect there is something not right going forward in his family.

WITHERTON.—That is his business, not mine, sir.

PRY.—True, but I have been thinking that as you are his friend, it would be but friendly if you were just to drop in, and talk to him about it.

WITHERTON.—That is my business, and not yours.

PRY.—I don't say the contrary, but at all events, I'm determined to keep watch over——

WITHERTON.—That is your business, therefore you may do as you please; yet let me suggest to you, that this unhappy propensity of yours to meddle in matters which do not concern you, may one day or other produce very mischievous effects.

PRY.—Now I take that unkindly; what interest have I in trying to do a good-natured thing? Am I ever a gainer by it? But I'll make a vow that from this time forward I'll never interfere. Hush! there he is again; will you do me a favor? just allow me to go out this way.

WITHERTON.—Any way *out* you please.

PRY.—I'll give the alarm, and if I let him escape me this time—Follow! follow! follow! (*He goes out.*) Now, my lively spark, I'll have you.

WITHERTON.—What can be the meaning of all this! That busy fellow's interruption has thrown all my ideas into confusion.

MRS. SUBTLE.—Be composed, sir, take a chair and let us resume——

Enter GRASP *abruptly.*

Well, what is it you want, Mr. Grasp?

GRASP (*gruffly*).—You!

WITHERTON.—Mrs. Subtle is engaged just now.

GRASP.—No matter, she must come with me, I have something to say to her.

MRS. SUBTLE.—I'll come to you presently.

GRASP.—You must come at once. I am not to be made a dupe—come.—Mr. Willis is waiting to see you in the library, sir—now, Mrs. Subtle, if you please. (*Crosses and goes out.*)

WITHERTON.—Return quickly, dear Mrs. Subtle, and promise nothing till you have again consulted me.

MRS. SUBTLE. I will obey you, sir; you see how easily we poor weak women are diverted from our better resolutions. (*Witherton goes out.*) He is almost mine. (*She follows Grasp out.*)

CAPTAIN KEMPTHORN.

Adapted from "John Endicott," by Longfellow.

CHARACTERS.

Simon Kempthorn, *Captain of the Swallow, a rough, honest man of middle age.*

Ralph Goldsmith, *another sea-captain.*

Edward Butler, *treasurer of the Commonwealth, an old man with an ear trumpet.*

Walter Merry, *tithing-man of the colony, a tall thin man, with a hooked nose.*

Two citizens and a crowd.

Situation.—*Simon Kempthorn has brought to Boston three Quakers whom the authorities have put in prison and scourged. Captain Kempthorn has been put in the pillory for swearing and has also been bound by a bond of one hundred pounds to carry the Quakers back. In the second scene he is at the tavern of the Three Mariners puzzling as to how he will get away from port.*

There are lists of rules of good behavior hung up on the tavern walls.

The events are supposed to take place in Boston in 1665.

Scene I.

A street in front of the town house. KEMPTHORN *in the pillory.* MERRY *and a crowd are looking on.*

KEMPTHORN (*sings*).—

The world is full of care,
Much like unto a bubble;
Women and care, and care and women,
And women and care and trouble.

Good Master Merry, may I say confound?

MERRY.—Ah, that you may.

KEMPTHORN.—Well, then, with your permission,
Confound the Pillory!

MERRY.—That's the very thing
The joiner said who made the Shrewsbury stocks.
He said, confound the stocks, because they put him
Into his own. He was the first man in them.

KEMPTHORN.—For swearing, was it?

MERRY.—No, it was for charging;
He charged the town too much, and so the town,
To make things square, set him in his own stocks,
And fined him five pound sterling,—just enough
To settle his own bill.

KEMPTHORN.—And served him right;
But, Master Merry, is it not eight bells?

MERRY.—Not quite.

KEMPTHORN.—For, do you see? I'm getting tired
Of being perched aloft here in this cro' nest
Like the first mate of a whaler, or a Middy
Mast-headed, looking out for land! Sail ho!
Here comes a heavy-laden merchantman.
With the lee clews eased off, and running free
Before the wind. A solid man of Boston
A comfortable man, with dividends,
And the first salmon, and the first green peas.

A gentleman passes.

He does not even turn his head to look.
He's gone without a word. Here comes another,

A different kind of craft on a taut bowline,—
Deacon Giles Firmin the apothecary,
A pious and a ponderous citizen,
Looking as rubicund and round and splendid
As the great bottle in his own shop window!

DEACON FIRMAN *passes.*

And here's my host of the Three Mariners,
My creditor and trusty taverner,
My corporal in the Great Artillery!
He's not a man to pass me without speaking.

COLE *looks away and passes.*

Don't yaw so; keep your luff, old hypocrite!
Respectable, ah, yes, respectable.
You, with your seat in the new Meeting-house,
Your cow-right on the Common! But who's this?
I did not know the Mary Ann was in!
And yet this is my old friend, Captain Goldsmith,
As sure as I stand in the bilboes here.
Why, Ralph, my bow!

RALPH GOLDSMITH *comes in.*

GOLDSMITH.—Why, Simon, is it you?
Set in the bilboes?

KEMPTHORN.—Chock-a-block, you see,
And without chafing-gear.

GOLDSMITH.—And what's it for?

KEMPTHORN.—Ask that starbowline with the boat-hook there,
That handsome man.

MERRY (*bowing*).—For swearing.

KEMPTHORN.—In this town
They put sea-captains in the stocks for swearing,
And Quakers for not swearing. So look out.

GOLDSMITH.—I pray you set him free; he meant no harm;
'Tis an old habit he picked up afloat.

MERRY.—Well, as your time is out, you may come down.
The law allows you now to go at large.
Like Elder Oliver's horse upon the Common.

KEMPTHORN.—Now, hearties, bear a hand! Let go and haul.

KEMPTHORN *is set free, and comes forward, shaking* GOLDSMITH'S *hand.*

KEMPTHORN.—Give me your hand, Ralph. Ah, how good it feels!
The hand of an old friend.

GOLDSMITH.—God bless you, Simon!

KEMPTHORN.—Now let us make a straight wake for the tavern
Of the Three Mariners, Samuel Cole commander;
Where we can take our ease, and see the shipping,
And talk about old times.

GOLDSMITH.—First I must pay
My duty to the Governor, and take him
His letters and despatches. Come with me.

KEMPTHORN.—I'd rather not. I saw him yesterday.

GOLDSMITH.—Then wait for me at the Three Nuns and Count.

KEMPTHORN.—I thank you. That's too near the town pump.
I will go with you to the Governor's.
And wait outside there, sailing off and on;
If I am wanted, you can hoist a signal.

MERRY.—Shall I go with you and point out the way?

GOLDSMITH.—Oh, no, I thank you. I am not a stranger
Here in your crooked little town.

MERRY.—How now, sir?
Do you abuse our town? (*He goes out.*)
GOLDSMITH.—Oh, no offence.
KEMPTHORN.—Ralph, I am under bonds for a hundred pound
GOLDSMITH.—Hard lines. What for?
KEMPTHORN.—To take some Quakers back
I brought here from Barbadoes in the Swallow.
And how to do it I don't clearly see,
For one of them is banished, and another
Is sentenced to be hanged! What shall I do?
GOLDSMITH.—Just slip your hawser on some cloudy night;
Sheer off, and pay it with the topsail, Simon! (*They go out.*)

Scene II.

The parlor of the Three Mariners. KEMPTHORN *comes in.*

KEMPTHORN.—A dull life this,—a dull life anyway!
Ready for sea; the cargo all aboard,
Cleared for Barbadoes, and a fair wind blowing
From nor'-nor'-west; and I, an idle lubber,
Laid neck and heels by that confounded bond!
I said to Ralph, says I, "What's to be done?"
Says he: "Just slip your hawser in the night;
Sheer off, and pay it with the topsail, Simon."
But that won't do; because, you see, the owners
Somehow or other are mixed up with it.
Here are King Charles's Twelve Good Rules, that Cole
Thinks as important as the Rule of Three. (*Reads.*)
"Make no comparisons; make no long meals."
Those are good rules and golden for a landlord
To hang in his best parlor, framed and glazed!
"Maintain no ill opinions; urge no healths."

(*He steps to the table and drinks from a tankard of ale.*)

I drink the King's, whatever he may say,
And, as to ill opinions, that depends.
Now of Ralph Goldsmith I've a good opinion,
And of the bilboes I've an ill opinion;
And both of these opinions I'll maintain
As long as there's a shot left in the locker.

EDWARD BUTLER *with an ear-trumpet comes in.*

BUTLER.—Good morning, Captain Kempthorn.

KEMPTHORN.—Sir, to you.
You've the advantage of me. I don't know you.
What may I call your name?

BUTLER.—That's not your name?

KEMPTHORN (*raises his voice*).—Yes, that's my name. What's yours?

BUTLER.—My name is Butler.
I am the treasurer of the Commonwealth.

KEMPTHORN.—Will you be seated?

BUTLER.—What say? Who's conceited?

KEMPTHORN.—Will you sit down?

BUTLER.—Oh, thank you.

KEMPTHORN (*in a lower tone*).—Spread yourself upon this chair, sweet Butler.

BUTLER (*sitting down*).—A fine morning.

KEMPTHORN.—Nothing's the matter with it that I know of.
I have seen better, and I have seen worse.
The wind's nor' west. (*Very loud*). That's fair for them that sail.

BUTLER.—You need not speak so loud; I understand you. You sail to-day.

KEMPTHORN.—No, I don't sail to-day.
So, be it fair or foul; it matters not
Say, will you smoke? There's choice tobacco here.

BUTLER.—No, thank you. It's against the law to smoke.

KEMPTHORN.—Then, will you drink? There's good ale at this inn.

BUTLER.—No thank you. It's against the law to drink.

KEMPTHORN (*not so loud*).—Well, almost everything's against the law,
In this good town. Give a wide berth to one thing,
You're sure to fetch up soon on something else.

BUTLER.—And so you sail to-day for dear Old England.
I am not one of those who think a sup
Of this New England air is better worth
Than a whole draught of our Old England's ale.

KEMPTHORN.—Nor I. Give me the ale and keep the air.
But, as I said, I do not sail to-day.

BUTLER.—Ah, yes; you sail to-day.

KEMPTHORN.—I'm under bonds
To take some Quakers back to the Barbadoes;
And one of them is banished, and another
Is sentenced to be hanged.

BUTLER.—No, all are pardoned,
All are set free, by order of the Court;
But some of them would fain return to England.
You must not take them. Upon that condition
Your bond is cancelled.

KEMPTHORN (*aside*).—Ah, the wind has shifted!
(*To Butler.*) I pray you, do you speak officially?

BUTLER.—I always speak officially. To prove it,
Here is the bond. (*He rises and gives paper.*)

KEMPTHORN. And here's my hand upon it.
And, look you when I say I'll do a thing
The thing is done. Am I now free to go?

BUTLER. What say?

KEMPTHORN (*aside*).—I say, confound the tedious man
With his strange speaking-trumpet! (*To Butler.*)—Can
I go?

BUTLER.—You're free to go, by order of the Court.
Your servant, sir. (*He goes out.*)

KEMPTHORN (*shouting from the window*).
Swallow, ahoy! Hallo!
(*To himself*). If ever a man was happy to leave Boston,
That man is Simon Kempthorn of the Swallow!

BUTLER *comes back.*

BUTLER.—Pray did you call?

KEMPTHORN.—Call? Yes, I hailed the Swallow.

BUTLER.—That's not my name. My name is Edward
Butler.
You need not speak so loud.

KEMPTHORN (*shaking hands*). Good by! Good by!

BUTLER.—Your servant, sir.

KEMPTHORN.—And yours a thousand times! (*They go out.*)

THE RESTLESS YOUTH.

CHARACTERS.

Henry Swift, *a retired tailor, small and slow.*

John Swift, *his son, flashily dressed, of shallow brain and always in great haste.*

Mr. Houghton, *a rich retired brewer.*

Miss Houghton, *his daughter.*

A waiter, a servant.

Situation.—*Young* SWIFT *a spendthrift son, returns to his father, discovers that the old man is wealthier than he supposed, and hurries him off to call on a rich brewer in the vicinity who has a pretty daughter. The fun of the dialogue centres in the restlessness of young* SWIFT.

Old SWIFT *in the second scene carries a cane just a yard long, and it has a mark or ribbon in the centre to mark the half-yard.*

The dialogue takes place in a small country town in England.

Scene I.

A poorly furnished room. Young SWIFT *enters dragging in his father who has just been roused from sleep, and wears a dressing-gown.*

SWIFT.—Come along, dad.

FATHER (*yawning half-awake*).—Yes, sir,—yes, sir—I'll measure you directly—I'll measure you directly.

SWIFT.—He's asleep. Awake!

FATHER.—What's the matter, eh? What's the matter?

SWIFT.—What's the matter? I've found fifty thousand in that letter. (*He points to a letter protruding from the pocket of his father's coat which lies on a chair.*)

FATHER.—Indeed! (*Opens the letter eagerly.*) Ah! Johnny have you found out—

SWIFT.—I have—that you are worth—how much?

FATHER.—Why, since what's past——

SWIFT.—Never mind what's past.

FATHER.—I've been a fortunate man. My old partner used to say, "Ah! you are lucky, Swift. Your needle always sticks in the right place."

SWIFT.—No, not always. (*Shrugging.*) But how much?

FATHER.—Why, as it must out, there are fifty thousand lent on mortgage. Item, fifteen thousand in the consols—item—

SWIFT.—Never mind the items. The total, my dear dad, the total.

FATHER.—What do you think of a plum?

SWIFT.—A plum! oh, sweet, agreeable, little, short word!

FATHER.—Besides seven hundred and ninety——

SWIFT.—Never mind the odd money; that will do. But how came you so rich, dad? Hang me, you must have kept moving.

FATHER.—Why, my father, forty years ago, left me five thousand pounds; which, at compound interest, if you multiply——

SWIFT.—No; you have multiplied it famously. (*Aside.*) It's my business to reduce it.—Now, my dear dad, in the first place, never call me Johnny.

FATHER.—Why, what must I call you?

SWIFT.—John—short—John.

FATHER.—John! oh, John!

SWIFT.—That will do. And in the next place, sink the tailor. Whatever you do, sink the tailor.

FATHER.—Sink the tailor! what do you mean?

SWIFT.—I've news for you. We are going to be introduced to Mr. Houghton the rich brewer.

FATHER.—You don't say so! Huzzah! it will be the making of us.

SWIFT.—To be sure. Such fashion! such style!

FATHER.—Ah, and such a quantity of liveries, and—oh, dear me. (*With great dejection.*)

SWIFT.—What's the matter?

FATHER (*sighing*).—I forgot I had left off business.

SWIFT.—Business! confound it! Now, pray keep the tailor under, will you? I'll—I'll send a telegram to London. (*Runs to the table.*)

FATHER.—A telegram! for what?

SWIFT.—I don't know.

WAITER *enters.*

WAITER.—The bill of fare, gentlemen.

SWIFT.—Bring it here. (*Reads.*) "Turbots—salmon—soles—haddock—beef — mutton—veal — lamb — pork—chickens—ducks—turkeys—puddings—pies. Serve it all; that's the short way.

WAITER.—All!

SWIFT.—Every bit.

FATHER.—No, no, nonsense. The short way, indeed! Come here, sir. Let me see—(*reads.*) "um—um. Ribs of beef." That's a good thing; I'll have that.

SWIFT.—What?

WAITER.—Ribs of beef, sir.

SWIFT.—Are they the short ribs?

WAITER.—Yes, sir.

SWIFT.—That's right.

WAITER.—What liquor would your honor like?

SWIFT (*jumping up.*)—Spruce beer.

WAITER.—Very well, sir.

SWIFT.—I must have some clothes.

FATHER.—I'm sure, that's a very good coat.

SWIFT.—Waiter! I must have a dashing coat, for the nabob. Is there a rascally tailor anywhere near you?

WAITER.—Yes, sir; there are two close by. (*They look at each other.*)

SWIFT.—Umph! then tell one of them to send me some clothes.

WAITER.—Sir, he must take your measure.

FATHER.—To be sure he must.

SWIFT.—Oh, true! I remember the fellows do measure you somehow with long bits of—well send for the scoundrel. (*Exit Waiter.*)

FATHER.—Oh, for shame of yourself! I've no patience.

SWIFT.—Like you the better; hate patience as much as you do; ha, ha! must swagger a little.

FATHER.—Ah! I'm too fond of you, I am, John. Take my fortune, but only remember this—by the faith of a man, I came by it honestly—and all I ask is, that it may go as it came.

SWIFT.—Certainly. But we must keep moving, you know.

FATHER.—Well, I don't care if I do take a bit of a walk with you.

SWIFT.—Bit of a walk! hang it! we'll have a gallop together. Come along, dad. Push on, dad. (*Swift grabs the coat from the chair and pushes his father before him out of the room. His father tries in vain to take off his dressing gown.*)

Scene II.

A finely furnished apartment in the mansion of MR. HOUGHTON. *Enter* SWIFT *and his father,* MR. HOUGHTON *and daughter.*

MISS HOUGHTON.—Welcome to Houghtonham Hall, gentlemen.

SWIFT.—Charming house! plenty of room! (*Runs about and looks at everything.*)

FATHER.—A very spacious apartment indeed.

HOUGHTON.—Yes, sir; but, I declare, I forget the dimensions of this room.

FATHER.—Sir, if you please, I'll measure it—my cane is exactly a yard, good, honest measure; 'tis handy—and that mark is the half-yard——

SWIFT (*overhears and snatches the cane from him*).—Confound it! the pictures, father—look at the pictures; (*pointing with the cane*) did you ever see such charming——

MISS HOUGHTON.—Do you like pictures?

SWIFT.—Exceedingly, ma'am; but I should like them a great deal better, if they just moved a little.

MISS HOUGHTON.—Ha! ha! I must retire to dress; till dinner, gentlemen, adieu. (*She goes out.*)

SWIFT (*to his father*).—Father! you'll ruin everything! can't you keep the tailor under?

HOUGHTON.—Your son seems rather impatient.

FATHER.—Very, sir,—always was. I remember a certain duke——

SWIFT.—That's right, lay the scene high; push the duke; push him as far as he'll go.

FATHER.—I will, I will. I remember a certain duke used to say, "Mr. Swift, your son is as sharp as a needle."

SWIFT.—At it again!

FATHER.—As a needle——

SWIFT (*interrupting him*).—Is true to the pole. As a needle is true to the pole, says the duke, so will your son, says the duke be to everything spirited and fashionable, says the duke. (*Aside to his father.*) Am I always to be tortured with your infernal needles?

HOUGHTON (*aside*).—Now to sound them.—I hear gentlemen, your business in this part of the country is with Sir Hubert Stanley, respecting some money transactions.

FATHER.—'Tis a secret, sir.

HOUGHTON.—Oh! no—the baronet avows his wish to sell his estate.

FATHER.—Oh, that alters the case.

HOUGHTON.—I think that it would be a desirable purchase for you—I should be happy in such neighbors—and if you should want forty or fifty thousand, ready money, I'll supply it with pleasure.

FATHER.—Oh, sir, how kind! If my son wishes to purchase it, I would rather leave it entirely with him.

SWIFT.—And I would rather leave it entirely to you.

HOUGHTON.—Very well, I'll propose for it. There is a very desirable borough interest; then you could sit in parliament.

SWIFT.—I in parliament? ha! ha!

FATHER.—No! that would be a botch.

SWIFT.—No, no; I was once in the gallery—crammed in—no moving—expected to hear the great guns—up got a little fellow, nobody knew who, gave us a three hours' speech—I got deuced fidgetty—the house called for the question, I joined in the cry—"the question, the question!" says I—a member spied me—cleared the gallery—got hustled by my brother spectators—obliged to scud—oh! it would never do for me.

HOUGHTON.—But you must learn patience.

SWIFT.—Then make me speaker—if that wouldn't teach me patience, nothing would.

HOUGHTON.—Do you dislike, sir, parliamentary eloquence?

FATHER.—Sir, I never heard one of your real, downright parliamentary speeches in my life—never. (*Yawns.*)

SWIFT.—By your yawning, I should think you had heard a great many.

HOUGHTON.—Oh, how lucky! at last I shall get my dear speech spoken. Sir, I am a member, and I mean to——

SWIFT.—Keep moving.

HOUGHTON.—Why, I mean to speak, I assure you; and——

SWIFT.—Push on, then.

HOUGHTON.—What, speak my speech? That I will—I'll speak it.

SWIFT (*to his father*).—Oh, the mischief! don't yawn so.

FATHER (*to his son*).—I never get a comfortable nap, never!

SWIFT (*to his father*).—You have a very good chance now—confound all speeches—oh!

HOUGHTON.—Pray be seated. (*They sit one on each side of Houghton.*) Now we will suppose that the chair. (*He points to a chair.*)

FATHER.—Suppose it the chair! Why, it is a chair, isn't it?

HOUGHTON.—Pshaw! I mean——

SWIFT.—He knows what you mean—'tis his humor.

HOUGHTON.—Oh, he's witty!

SWIFT.—Oh, remarkably brilliant indeed. (*He looks significantly at his father.*)

HOUGHTON (*to the father*).—What, are you a wit, sir?

FATHER.—A what? Yes, I am—I am a wit.

HOUGHTON.—Well, now I will begin. Oh, what a delicious moment! The house when they approve, cry "Hear him, hear him!" I only give you a hint in case anything should strike you.

SWIFT.—Push on.—(*Aside.*) I can never stand it.

HOUGHTON.—Now shall I charm them. (*He addresses the chair.*) "Sir, had I met your eye at an earlier hour, I should not have blinked the present question, but having caught what has fallen from the opposite side, I shall scout the idea of going over the usual ground"—(*Aside.*) What? no applause yet? (*Old Swift has fallen asleep and young Swift has risen and gone to the back of the platform and is presumably looking out of the window.*) "But I shall proceed, and I trust without interruption." (*He looks round and discovers the father asleep.*) Upon my soul, this is—what do you mean, sir?

FATHER (*waking up*).—What's the matter?—Hear him! hear him!

HOUGHTON.—Pray, sir, do you not blush at this—(*He catches sight of young Swift at the window.*) What the devil!

SWIFT (*looking round*).—Hear him! hear him!

HOUGHTON (*in despair*).—By the soul of Cicero, 'tis too much!

FATHER.—Oh, Johnny, for shame to fall asleep!—I mean, to look out of the window. I am very sorry, sir, anything should go across the grain—(*Aside.*) I say, John, smooth him down.

SWIFT (*to his father*).—I will, I will; but what shall I say?—(*Aloud.*) The fact is, sir, I heard a cry of fire—upon—the—the—the water, and,——

HOUGHTON.—Well, but do you wish to hear the end of my speech?

SWIFT.—Upon my honor, I do.

HOUGHTON.—Then we will only suppose this little interruption a message from the Lords, or something of that sort. (*The Swifts sit; young Swift twists about uneasily.*) Where did I leave off?

SWIFT.—Oh! I recollect; at "I therefore briefly conclude with moving an adjournment." (*He rises.*)

HOUGHTON.—Nonsense! no such thing! (*He puts the young man down in the chair.*) Oh! I remember! "I shall therefore proceed, and I trust without interruption"

SERVANT *enters.*

Get out of the room, you villain!—"Without interruption"——

SERVANT.—I say, sir——

SWIFT.—Hear him! hear him!

SERVANT.—Dinner is waiting.

SWIFT (*jumping up*).—Dinner waiting! Come along, sir.

HOUGHTON.—Never mind the dinner.

SWIFT.—But I like it smoking.

FATHER.—So do I. Be it ever so little, let me have it hot.

HOUGHTON.—Won't you hear my speech?

SWIFT.—To be sure we will—but now to dinner. Come, we'll move together. Capital speech! Push on, sir. Come along, dad. Push him on, dad. (*They force Houghton out.*)

TESTING THE SUITORS.

CHARACTERS.

Squire Penniman, *a kind, but shrewd gentleman of middle life.*

Colonel Harrington, *a self-confident, fine-appearing young man of great wealth and aristocracy.*

Mr. Carter, *a modest, honest young man, of no great fortune or family.*

A Servant.

Situation.—Squire Penniman *is the guardian of a fair young lady,* Ada Denton, *who has innumerable suitors. Two in particular claim her hand. The Squire takes advantage of the failure of Brown and Company to find out by stratagem the real worth of the two suitors and the sincerity of their affections.*

The value of the dialogue depends on showing the great devotion of the Colonel at first and his vain attempts to explain himself later.

The scene is laid in the elegant library of Squire Penniman. *There are books, a desk, table, etc., in the room.*

Enter Squire Penniman, *followed by a servant.*

Squire Penniman (*speaking to servant*).—Not at home to any one, excepting Colonel Harrington and Mr. Carter.—(*Servant goes out.*) This failure of Brown's great house,

however deplorable in itself, at least bids fair to put an end to my troubles as a guardian. Ever since Ada Denton has been under my care, she has been besieged by as many suitors as Penelope. We shall see whether the poor destitute girl will prove as attractive as the rich heiress. Harrington is an ardent lover, Carter a modest one; Harrington is enormously rich, Carter comparatively poor; but whether either——

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.—Colonel Harrington, sir.

Enter COLONEL HARRINGTON.

SQUIRE.—My dear Colonel, good morning! I took the liberty of sending for you. (*Servant goes out.*)

COLONEL HARRINGTON (*bows*).—Most proud and happy to obey your summons. I believe that I am before my time; but where the heart is, you know, Squire Penniman—how is the fair Ada Denton? I hope she caught no cold in the Park yesterday?

SQUIRE.—None that I have heard of.

COLONEL.—And that she has recovered the fatigue of Tuesday's ball?

SQUIRE.—She does not complain.

COLONEL.—But there is a delicacy, a fragility in her loveliness, that mingles fear of her health, with admiration of her beauty.

SQUIRE.—She is a pretty girl, and a good girl; and a very good girl, considering that, in her quality of an heiress, she has been spoilt by the adulation of every one that has approached her ever since she was born.

COLONEL (*with great apparent devotion*).—Oh, my dear sir, you know not how often I have wished that Miss Denton were not an heiress, that I might have an opportunity of

proving to her and to you the sincerity and disinterestedness of my passion.

SQUIRE.—I am glad to hear you say so.

COLONEL.—I may hope, then, for your approbation and your influence with your fair ward? You know my fortune and family?

SQUIRE.—Both are unexceptionable.

COLONEL.—The estate which I inherited from my father is large and unencumbered; that which will devolve to me from the maternal side, is still more considerable. I am the last of my race, Squire Penniman; and my mother and aunts are, as you may imagine, very desirous to see me settled. They are most anxious to be introduced to Miss Denton; my aunt, Lady Lucy, more particularly so. Ada Denton, even were she portionless, is the very creature whom they would desire as a relative; the very being to enchant them.

SQUIRE.—I am extremely glad to hear you say so.

Enter MR. CARTER.

Mr. Carter! pray be seated. I sent for you both, gentlemen, as the declared lovers of my ward, Miss Denton, in order to make to you an important communication.

MR. CARTER.—I am afraid that I can guess its import.

COLONEL.—Speak, Squire Penniman—pray speak!

SQUIRE.—Have you heard of the failure of the great firm of Brown and Co.?

COLONEL.—Yes. But what has that to do with Ada Denton?—To the point, my good sir; to the point.

SQUIRE.—Well, then, to come at once to the point,—did you never hear that, though not an ostensible partner, Mr. Denton's large property was lodged in the firm?

MR. CARTER.—I had heard such a report.

COLONEL.—Mr. Denton's property in Brown's house! the house of a notorious speculator! What incredible imprudence!—all?

SQUIRE.—The whole.

COLONEL.—What miraculous volly! (*He starts to his feet.*) Then Miss Denton is a beggar.

SQUIRE.—Whilst I live, Ada Denton can never want a home. But she is now a portionless orphan; and she desired that you, gentlemen, might be apprised of the change of her fortunes, with all convenient speed, and assured that no advantage would be taken of proposals made under circumstances so different.

MR. CARTER (*with sincerity*).—Oh, how needless an assurance!

COLONEL (*with hesitation*).—Miss Denton displays a judicious consideration.

SQUIRE (*with a little sarcasm*).—I am, however, happy to find, Colonel Harrington, that your affection is so entirely centered on the lovely young woman apart from her riches, that you will feel nothing but pleasure in an opportunity of proving the disinterestedness of your love.

COLONEL (*hesitatingly*).—Why, it must be confessed, Squire Penniman——

SQUIRE.—Your paternal estate is so splendid as to render you quite independent of fortune in a wife.

COLONEL (*he walks back and forth*).—Why, y-e-s. But really, my estate; what with the times and one drawback and another. Nobody knows what I pay in annuities to my father's old servants. In fact, Squire Penniman, I am not a rich man; not by any means a rich man.

SQUIRE.—Then your great expectations from your mother, Lady Sarah, and your aunt, Lady Lucy.

COLONEL.—Yes. But, my dear sir, you have no notion

of the aversion which Lady Lucy entertains for unequal matches—matches where all the money is on one side. They never turn out well, she says; and Lady Lucy is a sensible woman—a very sensible woman. As far as my observation goes, I must say that I think her right.

SQUIRE.—In short, then, Colonel Harrington, you no longer wish to marry my ward?

COLONEL.—Why really, my good sir, it is with great regret that I relinquish my pretensions; and if I thought that the lady's affections were engaged—but I am not vain enough to imagine that, with a rival of so much merit——

MR. CARTER (*aside*).—Contemptible coxcomb!

COLONEL.—Pray, assure Miss Denton of my earnest wishes for her happiness, and of the sincere interest I shall always feel in her welfare. I have the honor to wish you a good morning. (*Going.*)

SQUIRE.—A moment, sir, if you please. What say you, Mr. Carter? Have these tidings wrought an equal change in your feelings?

MR. CARTER:—They have indeed wrought a change, sir, and a most pleasant change; since they have given hope such as I never dared to feel before. God forgive me for being so glad of what has grieved her! Tell Ada Denton that for her sake, I wish that I were richer but that never shall I wish she was rich for mine. Tell her that if a fortune adequate to the comforts, though not to the splendors of life, a pleasant country-house, a welcoming family, and an adoring husband, can make her happy, I lay them at her feet. Tell her——

SQUIRE.—My dear fellow, you had far better tell her yourself. I have no doubt but she will accept your disinterested offers, and I shall heartily advise her to do so; but you must make up your mind to a little disappointment.

MR. CARTER (*puzzled*).—How! what! How can I be disappointed, so that Miss Denton will be mine?

SQUIRE.—Disappointment is not quite the word. But you will have to encounter a little derangement of your generous schemes. When you take my pretty ward, you must e'en take the burden of her riches along with her.

COLONEL (*astonished*).—She is not ruined, then?

SQUIRE.—No, sir; Mr. Denton did at one time place a considerable sum in the firm of Messrs. Brown; but finding the senior partner to be, as you observed, Colonel, a notorious speculator, he prudently withdrew it.

COLONEL (*indignantly*).—And this was a mere stratagem?

SQUIRE.—Really, sir, I was willing to prove the sincerity of your professions before confiding to you such a treasure as Ada Denton, and I think that the result has fully justified the experiment. But for your comfort, I don't think she would have had you, even if you had happened to behave better. My young friend here had made himself a lodgment in her heart, of which his present conduct proves him to be fully worthy. I have the honor to wish you a very good morning. (*Colonel Harrington goes out.*)—Come, Carter, Ada's in the music-room. (*They go out.*)

THE EMPEROR AND THE DESERTER.

CHARACTERS.

Frederick the Great, *Emperor of Prussia.*

Fritz Schmidt, *a young shipcarpenter who deserted from the army.*

Mrs. Schmidt, *mother to Fritz.*

An Imperial Officer, *in uniform.*

Situation. SCHMIDT *has deserted from the German army, gone to Holland to become a carpenter. Young* FREDERICK, *seeing the throne to be his in the near future, goes to the same place under an assumed family name and works with* FRITZ, *whose character is so pleasing to the youth that when he becomes Emperor he seeks him out for the superintendency of his shipping interests.*

There should be marked contrast in the dress of FREDERICK AND FRITZ.

Enter MRS. SCHMIDT *and* FRITZ.

FRITZ.—Well, mother, I mustn't be skulking about here in Leipzig any longer. I must leave you and go back to Holland, to my shipbuilding. At the risk of my life I came here and at the risk of my life I must go back.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—Ah! Fritz, Fritz! if it hadn't been for your turning deserter, you might have been a corporal by this time.

FRITZ.—Look you, mother! I was made a soldier against my will, and the more I saw of a soldier's life the more I

hated it. As a poor journeyman carpenter I am at least free and independent; and if you will go with me to Holland, you shall keep house for me and take care of my wages.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—I should be a drag on you, Fritz! You will be wanting to get married by and by; moreover, it will be hard for me to leave the old home at my time of life. (*A knock is heard at the door.*)

FRITZ.—Some one is knocking at the door. Wait, mother, till I have concealed myself. (*Hurries about.*)

Enter FREDERICK *in citizen's dress.*

FREDERICK.—What ho! comrade! No dodging; Don't try to get out of the room. Didn't I see you through the window as I stood in the street?

FRITZ.—Frederick! My old fellow-workman in the shipyard at Saardam! Give me your hand, my hearty! (*They shake hands.*) How came you to be here in Leipzig? No shipbuilding going on in this part of the country, surely?

FREDERICK.—No; but a plenty of it at Hamburg, under the Emperor.

FRITZ.—They say that the Emperor is in Leipzig at this present time?

FREDERICK.—Yes; he passed through your street this morning.

FRITZ.—So I heard. But I was afraid to look out at him. I say, Frederick, how did you find me out?

FREDERICK.—Why, happening to see the name of Mrs. Schmidt over the door, it occurred to me, after I returned to the palace——

FRITZ.—To the palace?

FREDERICK.—Yes; I always call the place at which I put up a palace. It's a way I have.

FRITZ.—You always *were* a funny fellow, Frederick!

FREDERICK.—As I was saying, it occurred to me that Mrs.

Schmidt might be the mother or aunt of my old messmate; and so I put on this simple disguise, and——

FRITZ.—Ha, ha, ha! Sure enough, it *is* a disguise for you,—a disguise, Frederick, you're not much used to,—the disguise of a gentleman. Where did you get such fine clothes?

FREDERICK (*sternly*).—How dare you, sir, interrupt me in my story?

FRITZ.—Eh? Don't joke in that way again, Frederick, if you love me. Do you know, you half frightened me out of my boots by the tone in which you said "How dare you, sir?" If you had been a corporal of marines, you couldn't have done it better.

FREDERICK.—Well, well, you see how it was I happened to drop in. Ah, Fritz! Many's the big log we've chopped at together, through the long summer day, in old Von Block's shipyard.

FRITZ.—That we have, Frederick! Why not go back with me to Saardam?

FREDERICK.—I can get better wages at Hamburg.

FRITZ.—If it weren't that I'm afraid of being overhauled for taking that long walk away from my post, when I was a soldier, I would go with you to Hamburg.

FREDERICK.—How happened you to venture back here? The laws, you know, are pretty severe against deserters. What if I should inform against you?

FRITZ.—You couldn't; for, when I made you my confidant, you promised you'd never blab. Ah! I told you *my* secret, but you didn't tell me *yours*,—though you confessed that you had one. How happened I to venture back? Well, you must know that this old mother of mine wanted badly to see me; and then I had left behind me here a sweetheart.

FREDERICK.—A sweetheart! Ah! I see, now, what brought you back.

FRITZ.—Don't laugh, Frederick! She has waited for me, faithful creature that she is, these five years.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—Yes; and had no lack of offers, and good ones, too, during that time.

FRITZ.—And the misery of it is, that I am still too poor to take her back with me to Holland. But next year, if my luck continues, I mean to return and marry her.

FREDERICK.—Do you know that a fellow can make a pretty little sum by exposing a deserter?

FRITZ.—Don't joke on that subject, Frederick. You'll frighten the old woman. Frederick, old boy, I'm so glad to see you—(*Shakes hands, but his attention is suddenly arrested as he looks out the window over Frederick's shoulders.*) Hallo! Soldiers at the door? What does this mean? An officer? Frederick, excuse me, but I'm particular about the company I keep.

FREDERICK.—Stay! I give you my word it is not you they want. They are friends of mine.

FRITZ.—Oh, if that's the case, I'll stay. But, do you know one of those fellows looks wonderfully like my old commanding officer?

Enter OFFICER.

OFFICER (*bowing and handing some papers*).—A despatch from Berlin, your Majesty, claiming your immediate attention. (*Frederick takes it and reads it.*)

MRS. SCHMIDT (*to Fritz*).—Majesty! He called him majesty!

FRITZ.—Majesty! I say, Frederick, what does he mean by majesty?

OFFICER.—Knave! know you not that this is the Emperor?

FRITZ.—Oh! you can't fool me! I've known him you

see before now. This is my old friend Frederick Meyer.

OFFICER.—Down on your knees, blockhead, to Frederick, Emperor of Prussia.

FRITZ.—Blockhead? Mr. Officer, if it's equally agreeable to you, keep a civil tongue in your head.

MRS. SCHMIDT (*kneeling to the Emperor*).—O your Majesty, your Majesty, don't slay the poor boy! He knew no better! Indeed, he knew no better! He's only my son—the staff of my age. Let him be whipped; but don't kill him—don't kill him!

FRITZ (*pulling her up*).—Nonsense, mother! This is only one of Frederick's jokes. He keeps it up well, though. Ha-ha—umph. And those despatches you are reading, Frederick!

OFFICER.—Irreverent blockhead! How dare you interrupt his Majesty?

FRITZ.—Twice you've called me blockhead. Don't you think that's being rather familiar? Frederick, have you any objection to my throwing your friend out of the window?

OFFICER.—Ha! Now I look closer, I remember you. You're a deserter. I arrest you.

FRITZ (*aside*).—It's all up with me! And there stands Frederick as unconcerned as if nothing had happened.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—I'm all in a maze. Good Mr. Officer, spare the poor boy! Take all I have—but spare him!

OFFICER.—Impossible! He must go before a cour-tmartial. He must be shot.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—O woe is me! Woe is me! That ever my poor boy should be shot.

FREDERICK.—Officer, I have occasion for the services of your prisoner. The arrest is set aside.

OFFICER.—Your Majesty's will is absolute. (*Frederick and the Officer converse in dumb show.*)

FRITZ (*aside*).—Majesty again! What does it all mean? A light breaks in upon me. Now I remember,—there were rumors in Holland just before I left, that the Emperor had been working in one of the shipyards. Can my Frederick be the Emperor?

FREDERICK.—Well, Schmidt, you have my secret now,—and we are even.

FRITZ.—And you are——

FREDERICK.—The Emperor.

MRS. SCHMIDT (*kneeling*).—O your Majesty! Change his punishment to imprisonment for life.

FREDERICK (*aiding her to rise*).—Rise, Madam. Your son, Baron Schmidt, is safe.

MRS. SCHMIDT.—Baron Schmidt?

FREDERICK.—I want him to superintend my shipyard at Hamburg. No words! Prepare, both of you, to leave for the new city to-morrow. Baron Schmidt, make that sweetheart of yours a Baroness this very night and bring her with you. No thanks. I understand it all. I have business claiming my care, or I would stop to see the wedding. (*He hands Schmidt a purse.*) Take and use, as you may need, this purse of ducats. My secretary shall call with further orders in the morning. Farewell. (*He goes out*).

FRITZ (*dazed*).—O Frederick, Frederick!—I mean your Majesty, your Majesty!——

MRS. SCHMIDT.—Down on your knees, Fritz.—I mean Baron Schmidt! Down on your knees! (*Aside, as she goes out.*) To think that Fritz should live to be a baron!

FRITZ (*with a twinkle in his eye*).—That court-martial, Mr. Officer, does not seem likely to come off.

OFFICER.—Don't speak of it, Baron. I am your very humble servant, Baron.—After you, Baron. (*Fritz goes out followed by the officer.*)

MIKE GETS A JOB.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Goodrich, *a well-dressed man of middle age.*

Michael Carnes, *an Irishman in search of a job, looking a little dilapidated*

Situation.—Mr. Goodrich *is seated at a table reading or writing when a servant shows in the Irishman. The great change of topics by* Mr. Goodrich *is merely meant to make* Mike *talk while his character is estimated.*

Mike (*taking off his hat and bowing*).—An' plaze yer honor, would ye be after giving employment to a faithful servant, who has been recimmended to call upon yer honor?

Goodrich.—You appear to have walked some distance; does it rain?

Mike.—Never a drop, plaze yer honor.

Goodrich (*looking out at window*).—Ah! I see the sun shines now; *post nubila Phœbus.*

Mike.—The post has not yet arrived, sir.

Goodrich.—What may I call your name?

Mike.—My name is Michael Carnes, and I have always been called Mike, and you are at liberty to call me that same.

Goodrich.—Well, Mike, who was your late master?

Mike.—Mr. Jacobs, plaze yer honor; and a nicer man never brathed.

GOODRICH.—How long did you live with Mr. Jacobs?

MIKE.—In troth, sir, I can't tell. I passed my time so pleasantly in his sarvice, that I niver kept any account of it, at all, at all. I might have lived with him all the days of my life, and a great deal longer, if I had plazed to do so.

GOODRICH.—Why, then, did you leave him?

MIKE.—It was by mutual agrament. The truth was, a slight difference arose between us, and he said I should not live with him longer; and at the same instant, you see, I declared I would not live with him: so we parted on good terms—by agrament, you see.

GOODRICH.—Was not your master a proud man?

MIKE.—Indade he was—bless his honest sowl! He would not do a mane act for the univarse.

GOODRICH.—Well, Mike, how old are you now?

MIKE.—I am just the same age of Patrick O'Leary; he and I were born the same wake.

GOODRICH.—And how old is he?

MIKE.—He is just my age. He and I are just of an age, you see, only one of us is older than the other; but which is the oldest I cannot say, neither can Patrick.

GOODRICH.—Were you born in Dublin?

MIKE.—No, sir, plaze yer honor, though I might have been, if I had desired; but, as I always preferred the country, I was born there; and, plaze God, if I live and do well, I'll be buried in the same parish I was born in.

GOODRICH.—You can write, I suppose.

MIKE.—Yes, sir; as fast as a dog can trot.

GOODRICH.—What is the usual mode of traveling in Ireland?

MIKE.—Why, sir, if you travel by water, you must take a boat; and, if you travel by land, either in a chaise or on horseback; and thim as can't afford either of them are

obliged to trudge it on foot, which to my mind, is decidedly the safest and chapest mode of moving about.

GOODRICH.—And which is the pleasantest season for traveling?

MIKE.—Faith, sir, I think that season whin a man has most money in his pocket.

GOODRICH.—I think your roads are passably good.

MIKE.—They are all quite passable, if you only pay the tollman.

GOODRICH.—I understand you have many black cattle in Ireland.

MIKE.—Faith, we have plenty of every color.

GOODRICH.—I think you have too much rain in your country.

MIKE.—So every one says; but Sir Boyle has promised to bring in an act of Parliament in favor of fair weather, yes, sir; and I am sure the poor hay-makers and turf-cutters will bless him for it. He is the man that first proposed that every quart-bottle should hold just two pints.

GOODRICH.—As you have many fine rivers, I suppose you have an abundance of good fish.

MIKE.—And well you may say that; for water never wet better ones. Why, sor, I won't tell you a lie; but, if you were at the Boyne, you could get salmon and trout for nothing; and if you were at Ballyshanny, you'd get them for much less.

GOODRICH.—Well, Mike, you are a bright fellow. Come in to-morrow and I'll see what I can do for you.

MIKE.—Pace to your good sowl! I'll be on hand, sor. (*He bows and goes out, and then Mr. Goodrich goes out.*)

THE STUPID LOVER.

CHARACTERS.

Margaret, *a plainly-dressed young lady.*

Donald, *a well-dressed young gentleman.*

Situation.—CONSTANCE, *with whom* DONALD *is desperately in love has just left the room in bad humor.* MARGARET *is trying to tell* DONALD *that* CONSTANCE *as deeply returns his affection, but* DONALD *is stupid to the end. The references to* DONALD *in the scene which follows, must not be made too pointed by* MARGARET, *or the delicacy of the situation will be lost.*

MARGARET *sits near the front of the platform and has some fancy work in her hands.* DONALD, *after the first exclamation, walks to and fro behind her.*

There should be two chairs and a small stand on which is placed a vase of flowers. If the platform is large enough other accessories may be added, as a table, near the front, a bookcase at the rear, a mirror at the side. Any object, such as a book, may be used instead of a vase of flowers, if desired.

DONALD (*to Constance*).—Oh, Constance! (*To Margaret.*) What *have* I done?

MARGARET (*aside*).—Oh, it isn't what you've *done*, Donald, it's what you don't do. (*Aloud.*) Oh, it's only

a little temper. You say she's an angel. Well, that's the temper of an angel.

DONALD.—I'm afraid it's my coming here that puts her out.

MARGARET.—Oh, no—it isn't. She was going out before you came. (*Pause.*) To tell you the truth, Donald, there's something very seriously the matter with Constance. I'm a good deal worried about her.

DONALD.—You don't mean she's ill, Margaret? It seems very sudden. It's nothing, really — really dangerous, I suppose?

MARGARET.—Well, she's got it very bad, and I shouldn't be surprised if she never got over it.

DONALD.—Why have you never told me of this before? Has it been going on for long?

MARGARET.—It took her last summer—a short time after you first met her, in fact; and it's been getting worse ever since.

DONALD (*going a little towards her*).—Has nothing been done for it?

MARGARET.—Nothing.

DONALD.—But surely——

MARGARET.—It's high time something *was*. Of course it is. Will you help me to do it?

DONALD (*going to her and sitting beside her*).—You know I will, Margaret, and how glad I shall be of the chance. I'd give my right hand to save her an instant's pain.

MARGARET (*looking at him*).—Offer it to her. It might do her good.

DONALD (*rising, mistaking her meaning*).—It isn't kind to ridicule me. It's only a figure of speech, I know, but I meant it. (*Crosses.*)

MARGARET (*with a sigh*).—He is stupid!

DONALD.—Who? I?

MARGARET.—You! You stupid! Good gracious, no!—what an idea! No, I was thinking of *him*.

DONALD.—Him! What him?

MARGARET.—Why, the *him*. The him that all this trouble is about. The him that Constance is in love with.

DONALD.—In love with?

MARGARET.—Yes, in love with. We poor little weak women do fall in love sometimes; we're not like you men. You cynical men of the world, of course, never do such foolish things.

DONALD.—I wish to God we never did. We're fools for doing so. (*Pacing up and down the room.*) I can't believe it. (*Crosses.*)

MARGARET.—Can't believe what?

DONALD (*turns*).—That Constance can be in love. She is so cold. She's said herself over and over again that she could never love anybody.

MARGARET.—You don't expect a girl to love *anybody*, do you? Constance is very particular in that sort of thing. "Can't be in love." Why anything else than a man would have seen it for himself six months ago.

DONALD.—You're right. I've been blind. I'm beginning to see now. I'm beginning to understand. I'm beginning to understand why she's always been so hard and cold to *me*, why she's been annoyed at my coming here. I suppose I've been getting in the other fellow's way. Who—who is it? Do I know him?

MARGARET.—Um—m! I hardly think you do.

DONALD.—What's his name?

MARGARET.—Well, I don't know whether I ought to tell you without Constance's consent—you see.

DONALD (*turning round sharply*).—Margaret, you're playing with me. You're joking.

MARGARET.—I'm not joking, Donald. Constance loves this man with her whole heart and soul as only women do love. Her whole life is in his hands. It's no joking matter for her.

DONALD (*throws himself into chair and leans his head on his hand*).—Nor for me, either.

MARGARET (*aside*).—Poor boy! It's too bad to tease him, really.

DONALD (*after a pause, in a changed, hard voice*).—What sort of fellow is it? Can't you tell me anything about him? What do *you* think of him, Margaret?

MARGARET.—*I* like him.

DONALD.—Do you think he'll make her happy?

MARGARET.—Yes, I really think he would. He loves her devotedly—I'm sure of that, and he is as kind and gentle as he is good and true. He's my idea of a gentleman, and I think Constance will be very lucky to get him.

DONALD (*sneeringly*).—I should think so, too. It's a pity he hasn't one or two faults, though. Perfection is apt to become monotonous. (*Rises and resumes his pacing.*)

MARGARET.—Oh, he's got faults. There's nothing to grumble at on that head, I assure you. To begin with, he's exceedingly—well—not exactly stupid, you know, but dull of comprehension. And then, he's conceited and foppish, (*glancing at his dress,*) and extravagant, (*looking at flowers.*) and sarcastic, and proud, and obstinate. And smokes—and drinks—and tells awful stories, and swears—fearful! I heard him once when he tumbled over the cat in the dark, and didn't know I was there. Ugh! it makes my blood run cold to think of it. And the cat swore, too, very nearly as bad. 'Twas a regular slanging match. It

was his fault though, he'd no business to tumble over the poor animal—only he's so clumsy. (*Donald, in walking about has just knocked up against the table and upset a vase full of flowers.*) And then he's occasionally bad-tempered, and at times quite violent. (*He is ramming the flowers back into the vase very roughly.*)

DONALD.—I'm sorry for your notion of a gentleman. *I* should call him—perhaps I had better not say what I should call him. Poor Constance! Ah, well! I hope he will make her happy, that's all. What's he like? I suppose he's good-looking enough. These sort of men are generally all right on the outside. (*He sits so that Margaret has a good profile view of his face.*)

MARGARET (*looking at him critically—he does not notice it*).—Well, I should hardly call him handsome. He's rather good-looking, though, except, perhaps, his nose. (*Donald now turns round with his back to Margaret.*) *I don't always* like his manners.

DONALD.—Poor Constance! Poor Constance! And she's going to marry this—this *gentleman?*

MARGARET.—I didn't say she was going to marry him.

DONALD (*turning round*).—*Not* going to marry him?

MARGARET.—Oh, and I didn't say she wasn't going to marry him, either. All I said was that she was in love with him. He hasn't asked her yet.

DONALD.—Hasn't asked her!

MARGARET.—I wish you wouldn't repeat all my words. Don't you know any of your own?

DONALD.—But you said he loved her.

MARGARET.—I know I did.

DONALD.—How do you know he does?

MARGARET.—Why, he's told me so.

DONALD.—Why doesn't he tell her?

MARGARET.—The very question I keep on asking myself.

DONALD (*jumping up*).—The man's an idiot!

MARGARET.—That's just what I say. I get so aggravated with him, I can't tell you. I feel inclined sometimes to bang his head against the wall. I shall do it one of these days, I know I shall.

DONALD.—Yes! I should like to help you. Has he any reason for not asking her? (*He stands wrapped in thought and answers next two questions mechanically.*)

MARGARET.—I think sometimes he hasn't any reason of any kind. And *she* hasn't got much more. They're pretty well matched. He is frightened to open his mouth to *her*, and she's afraid to look at *him*. He's worrying himself to death because he can't get her, and she's fretting herself into an early grave because he won't have her. And there they'll go on playing at this ridiculous game until they each die of a broken heart at the cruelty of the other one. Now what would you do with a couple like that?

DONALD.—What would I do?

MARGARET.—Yes, what would you do if you were in my place?

DONALD.—If I were in your place?

MARGARET.—Donald! (*He rises and comes over.*) If you'll look on that bottom shelf, (*Pointing to a book-shelf at back*) near the end (*He follows her directions.*) you'll find a dictionary. There's a lot of words in that, and if——

DONALD.—I beg your pardon. I'm so upset, I hardly know what I'm saying. I don't know what you could do, really.

MARGARET.—If we could only start them on the right track, you know, they'd rush into each other's arms.

DONALD.—You must let him know, somehow that she—she cares for him. Can't you drop a hint?

MARGARET.—Drop a hint! Ah, you evidently *don't* know him. I must introduce you to him. I want to have your opinion of him?

DONALD.—If you take my advice you'll keep us apart. (*Crosses.*)

MARGARET.—Oh, I think you'll like him when you know him.

DONALD.—Margaret, I'm not of a violent nature. But for Heaven's sake, don't let me and this man meet. You've done me enough harm as it is, never saying a word of all this before—letting me live on all these months in a fool's paradise when you knew there was no hope for me. (*Margaret rises and crosses while Donald is speaking.*) My life's ruined. Let that suffice. Don't torture me with the sight of the man who has won all the happiness I've lost. Let him enjoy his triumph. But don't let him come near enough to me to be strangled. Don't—(*Talking rather loudly.*)

MARGARET.—Hush! Not so loud! He's here!

DONALD (*staring round*).—Here! Where?

MARGARET (*she has come close up to him and now takes him by the back of the head, turns him round and thrusts his face close against the looking-glass*).*—There! (*She goes out.*)

DONALD.—Oh, Margaret. (*Donald follows her.*)

* If there is no mirror on the wall, a small hand-mirror may be ready for Margaret to pick it up just before she says, "*There!*"

OUR DAUGHTER.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Duffy, *a stock-broker, who has accumulated a fortune and moved uptown.*

Mrs. Duffy, *a good sized woman, anxious to make some show in the world.*

Situation.—Mr. Duffy *goes home at noon earlier than usual in order to consult his wife about their daughter's prospects. Both have been thinking and planning for her future welfare and each fears the other has not her happiness most at heart. Each rejects the other's proposals with indignation until the suitor's name is pronounced. They then rejoice that both had the same man in mind.*

Mrs. Duffy *is sitting by a table, and is working at some embroidery, when* Mr. Duffy *enters with his overcoat on and his hat in his hand.*

Duffy (*he takes off his overcoat and puts it on a chair*).—My dear, there's rare news from the Exchange. Mining stock is mounting every minute.

Mrs. Duffy (*she does not turn round to greet him*).—I am glad to hear it, my dear.

Duffy.—Yes, I thought you would be glad to hear of it. I have just sent the clerk to watch how matters go—I should have gone myself, but I wanted to speak of an affair of some importance to you——

Mrs. Duffy (*with some impatience*).—Ay, ay, you have

always some affair of great importance. (*She looks round and sees his coat and hat on the chair.*) Why didn't you leave your coat in the hall!

DUFFY.—My dear, don't talk about that coat. I have another matter.—I have been thinking that it is high time we had fixed our daughter; 'tis high time that Charlotte were married.

MRS. DUFFY.—You think so, do you? I have thought so many a time these three years; and so has she too, I fancy. I wanted to talk to you about the same subject.

DUFFY.—You did? Well; he, he, he!—I vow I'm pleased at this—Why, our inclinations do seldom jump together.

MRS. DUFFY.—Jump! No, I should wonder if they did, and how comes it to pass now? I suppose you have been employing some of your brokers, as usual; or perhaps advertising, as you used to do; but I expect to hear no more of these tricks, now that we are come up to the fashionable end of the town.

DUFFY.—No, no, my dear, this is no such matter. The gentleman I intend——

MRS DUFFY.—You intend!

DUFFY.—Yes, I intend.

MRS. DUFFY.—You intend. What! do you presume to dispose of my child without my consent? Mind your money matters, Mr. Duffy: look at your bulls and your bears,—but leave to me the management of my child. (*She rises and walks to and fro.*) What! Things are come to a fine pass indeed! I suppose you intend to marry the poor innocent to one of your city cronies, your clerks, your supercargoes, packers or dry salters; but I'll have none of them, Mr. Duffy, no, I'll have none of them. It shall never be said, that, after coming to this end of the town, the

great Miss Duffy was forced to trudge into the city again for a husband.

DUFFY (*sinking back in his chair aghast*).—Why, you are mad, Mrs. Duffy.

MRS. DUFFY.—No, you shall find I am not mad, Mr. Duffy;—that I know how to dispose of my child, Mr. Duffy.—What! did my poor dear brother leave his fortune to me and my child, and shall she now be disposed of without consulting me? (*She covers her eyes with her handkerchief, and falls into her chair.*)

DUFFY (*bending forward in his chair*).—Why, you are mad, certainly! If you will but hear me, you shall be consulted—Have I not always consulted you?—To please you, was I not inclined to marry my daughter to a lord? And has she not been hawked about, till the peerage of three kingdoms turn up their noses at you and your daughter? Did I not treat with my Lord Spindle, with Signor Macaroni, and with Herr Eselmann? And did we not agree, for the first time in our lives, that it would be better to find out a merchant for her, as the people of quality now-a-days marry for only a winter or so?

MRS. DUFFY (*relenting and turning toward him*).—Very well, we did so; and who, pray, is the proper person to find out a match for her? Who, but her mother, Mr. Duffy?—who goes into company with no other view, Mr. Duffy;—who flatters herself she is no contemptible judge of mankind, Mr. Duffy;—yes, Mr. Duffy, as good a judge as any woman on earth, Mr. Duffy.

DUFFY.—That I believe, Mrs. Duffy.

MRS. DUFFY.—Who then but me should have the disposal of her? And very well I have disposed of her. I have got her a husband in my eye.

DUFFY.—You got her a husband?

MRS. DUFFY.—Yes, I have got her a husband.

DUFFY (*rising and striding about*).—No, no, no, Mrs. Duffy, that will never do.—What! have I been toiling upwards of fifty years,—up early, down late, shopkeeper and housekeeper, made a great fortune, which I could never find in my heart to enjoy—and now, when all the comfort I have in the world, the settlement of my child, is in agitation, shall I not speak? Shall I not have leave to approve of her husband?

MRS. DUFFY.—There, there! You are getting into your tantrums, I see.

DUFFY (*with more and more excitement*).—What! did I not leave the city, every friend in the world with whom I used to pass an evening? Did I not, to please you, take this house here? Nay, did I not make a fool of myself by going to learn to come in and go out of a room? Did I not put on a sword, too, at your desire? And had I not like to have broken my neck down stairs, by its getting between my legs, at that diabolical Lady what-d'ye-call-her's rout? And did not all the footmen and chairmen laugh at me?

MRS. DUFFY (*laughing*).—And well they might, truly. An obstinate old fool——

DUFFY.—Ay, ay, that may be; but I'll have my own way —I'll give my daughter to the man I like—I'll have no *Sir This* nor *Lord Tother*—I'll have no fellow with his hair down to his shoulders, and one glass in his eye and——

MRS. DUFFY.—Why, Mr. Duffy, you are certainly mad, raving, distracted.—No, the man I propose——

DUFFY.—And the man I propose——

MRS. DUFFY.—Is a young gentleman of fortune, discretion, parts, sobriety, and connections.

DUFFY.—And the man I propose is a gentleman of abilities, fine fortune, prudence, temperance, and every virtue.

MRS. DUFFY.—And his name is——

DUFFY.—And his name is Burton.

MRS. DUFFY.—Burton! (*She pushes back her chair in amazement.*)

DUFFY.—Yes, Burton, I say, and a very pretty name, too.

MRS. DUFFY.—What! Mr. Burton, of Utica?

DUFFY.—Yes, Mr. Burton of Utica.

MRS. DUFFY.—Oh, my dear Mr. Duffy, you delight me! Mr. Burton is the very man I meant.

DUFFY.—Is it possible? Why, where have you met him?

MRS. DUFFY.—Oh, at several places: but particularly at Mrs. Grundy's assemblies.

DUFFY.—Indeed! was ever anything so fortunate? Didn't I tell you that our inclinations agreed; but I wonder that he never told me that he was acquainted with you.

MRS. DUFFY.—How odd that he should never tell me he had met with you! But I see he is a prudent man; he was determined to be liked by both of us. But where did you meet with him?

DUFFY.—Why, he bought some stock of me; but I am so—— This is very satisfactory, isn' tit, Mrs. Duffy, to have Charlotte so well fixed.

MRS. DUFFY.—Well, we'd better see the child. (*She moves away.*)

DUFFY.—Wait! She can't object, can she?

MRS. DUFFY.—Of course not.—There, Duffy, take away that old coat. (*She points at it in scorn.*) I'll find Charlotte. (*She goes out.*)

DUFFY (*as he gathers up his coat and hat*).—Well, who'd have thought. (*He goes out.*)

HIS OWN PILLS.

CHARACTERS.

Sir Charles Downing, *a tall, elderly, dignified man.*

Doctor Kawphin, *a very lean, learned, and timid man, with spectacles on.*

Mrs. Stout, *a very fleshy woman, hostess of the Red Horse Inn.*

Situation.—Sir Charles *has fallen from his horse and thereby sustained some injuries. He is quickly carried into the Inn. Although in great haste to depart, the hostess and the doctor with an eye to business have, up to the opening of this dialogue, managed to detain him with real and fancied ills.*

Enter the Doctor, *followed by* Mrs. Stout.

Mrs. Stout.—Nay, nay, another fortnight.

Doctor.—It can't be. The man's as well as I am—have some mercy! He hath been here almost three weeks already.

Mrs. Stout.—Well, then, a week.

Doctor.—We may detain him a week.

Enter Sir Charles, *unobserved in the rear, in his dressing-gown, with a drawn sword.*

You talk now like a reasonable hostess,
That sometimes has a reck'ning—with her conscience.

Mrs. Stout.—He still believes he has an inward bruise.

DOCTOR.—I would to Heaven he had! Or that he'd slipt
His shoulder blade, or broke a leg or two,
(Not that I bear his person any malice)
Or lost an arm, or even sprain'd his ankle!

MRS. STOUT.—Ay, broken anything except his neck.

DOCTOR.—However, for a week I'll manage him,
Though he has the constitution of a horse——
A farrier should prescribe for him.

SIR CHARLES (*aside*).—A farrier!

DOCTOR.—To-morrow he must once again be bled;
Next day my new-invented patent draught:—
Then I have some pills prepared.
On Thursday we throw in the bark; on Friday?—

SIR CHARLES (*coming forward*).—Well, sir, on Friday?—what on Friday? come,
Proceed——

DOCTOR.—Discovered!

MRS. STOUT.—Mercy, noble sir! (*They fall on their knees.*)

DOCTOR.—We crave your mercy.

SIR CHARLES.—On your knees? 'tis well!
Pray, for your time is short.

MRS. STOUT.—Nay, do not kill us!

SIR CHARLES.—You have been tried, condemned, and only wait
For execution. Which shall I begin with?

DOCTOR.—The lady, by all means, sir!

SIR CHARLES.—Come, prepare. (*To the Hostess.*)

MRS. STOUT.—Have pity on the weakness of my sex!

SIR CHARLES.—Tell me, thou quaking mountain of gross flesh,
Tell me, and in a breath, how many poisons—(*He raises*

his sword threateningly to the doctor, who is about to make off.)

If you attempt it. (*The doctor sinks into a chair. To Hostess.*) have you cooked up for me?

MRS. STOUT.—None, as I hope for mercy!

SIR CHARLES.—Is not thy wine a poison?

MRS. STOUT.—No, indeed, sir!

'Tis not, I own, of the first quality:

But——

SIR CHARLES.—What?

MRS. STOUT.—I always give short measure, sir.

And ease my conscience that way?

SIR CHARLES.—Ease your conscience!

I'll ease your conscience for you!

MRS. STOUT.—Mercy, sir!

SIR CHARLES.—Rise, if thou canst, and hear me.

MRS. STOUT.—Your commands, sir?

SIR CHARLES.—If in five minutes all things are prepared

For my departure, you may yet survive.

MRS. STOUT.—It shall be done in less.

SIR CHARLES.—Away, thou lump-fish! (*She goes out.*)

DOCTOR (*he suddenly drops abjectly to his knees and speaks to himself*).—So, now comes my turn!—'tis all over with me!—

There's dagger, rope, and ratsbane in his looks!

SIR CHARLES.—And now, thou sketch and outline of a man!

Thou thing that hast no shadow in the sun!

Thou eel in a consumption, eldest born

Of Death on Famine! Thou anatomy

Of a starved pilchard!—

DOCTOR.—I do confess my leanness—I am spare!

And therefore spare me!

SIR CHARLES.—Why wouldst thou have made me
A thoroughfare for thy whole shop to pass through?
DOCTOR.—Man, you know, must live!
SIR CHARLES.—Yes: he must die, too.
DOCTOR.—For my patients' sake!
SIR CHARLES.—I'll send you to the major part of them—
The window, sir, is open;—come, prepare——
DOCTOR.—Pray consider! (*He shakes visibly.*)
I may hurt some one in the street.
SIR CHARLES.—Why, then, I'll rattle thee to pieces in a dice-box,
Or grind thee in a coffee-mill to powder;
For thou must sup with Pluto:—So, make ready!
Whilst I, with this good small sword for a lancet,
Let thy starved spirit out—for blood thou hast none—
And nail thee to the wall, where thou shalt look
Like a dried beetle with a pin stuck through him.
DOCTOR.—Consider my poor wife!
SIR CHARLES.—Thy wife!
DOCTOR.—My wife, sir!
SIR CHARLES.—Hast thou dared think of matrimony, too?
No flesh upon thy bones, and take a wife?
DOCTOR.—I took a wife because I wanted flesh.
I have a wife and three angelic babes,
Who, by those looks, are well nigh fatherless!
SIR CHARLES (*turning away*).—Well, well! Your wife and children shall plead for you.
Come, come, the pills! Where are the pills? Produce them.
DOCTOR.—Here is the box. (*He brings out a large box of enormous pills.*)
SIR CHARLES.—Were it Pandora's, and each single pill
Had ten diseases in it, you should take them.

(*The doctor holds out the box to Sir Charles who refuses to touch it. The doctor loosens the cover while Sir Charles utters these two lines.*)

DOCTOR.—What, all? (*In horror he drops the box and the pills roll about the floor.*)

SIR CHARLES.—Ay, all; and quickly, too.—Come, sir, begin!

(*The doctor takes one.*) That's well:—another.

DOCTOR.—One's a dose!

SIR CHARLES.—Proceed, sir!

DOCTOR.—What will become of me?—(*He crawls slowly about the floor while Sir Charles watches and makes him swallow all.*)

Let me go home, and set my shop to rights,
And, like immortal Cæsar, die with decency!

SIR CHARLES.—Away! And thank thy lucky star I have not
Betrayed thee in thy own mortar, or exposed thee
For a large specimen of the lizard genus.

DOCTOR (*with a groan*). Would I were one—for they (*He puts his hand on his stomach.*) can feed on air!

SIR CHARLES (*motioning away with his sword*).—Home, sir! And be more honest.

DOCTOR.—If I am not
I'll be more wise at least! (*He goes out.*)

SIR CHARLES (*stands sternly watching his departure*).—Now to other business. (*He goes out on the other side.*)

LOUIS XIV. AND HIS MINISTER.

Adapted from "The Refugees," by A. Conan Doyle.

CHARACTERS.

Louis XIV., *King of France.*

Louvois, *Minister of War.*

Bontems, *valet to the King.*

Situation.—Louis XIV. *is awaiting the arrival of the Archbishop of Paris, who is to marry him to* Madame de Maintenon. *His minister of war brings in two bags of mail for his inspection. The dialogue is concerned with the reading of letters from these bags.*

The King wears a curled wig, a dark coat, black under-coat, scarlet silk inner vest, black velvet knee-breeches, red stockings, diamond-buckled, high-heeled shoes. On his breast are pinned various emblems, among them the cross of the order of St. Louis. When he walks he carries a cane.

Louvois *and* Bontems *wear similar costumes though less pretentious.*

Louis *sits by the table, his chin upon his hands, his elbows upon the table, with eyes staring vacantly at the wall, in moody, solemn silence. A tap at the door.* Louis *springs up eagerly.* Bontems *steps just inside the door.*

Bontems.—Your Majesty, Louvois would crave an interview.

King (*with a gesture, as he sits*).—Admit him, then.

LOUVOIS *enters and* BONTEMS *retires.*

LOUVOIS (*with a low bow*).—Sire, I trust that I do not intrude upon you.

KING.—No, no, Louvois. My thoughts were in truth beginning to be very indifferent company, and I am glad to be rid of them.

LOUVOIS.—Your Majesty's thoughts can never, I am sure, be anything but pleasant. But I have brought you here something which I trust may make them even more so.

KING.—Ah! What is that?

LOUVOIS.—When so many of our young nobles went into Germany and Hungary, you were pleased in your wisdom to say that you would like well to see what reports they sent home to their friends; also what news was sent out from the court to them.

KING.—Yes.

LOUVOIS.—I have them here—all that the courier has brought in, and all that are gathered to go out, each in its own bag. The wax has been softened in spirit, the fastenings have been steamed, and they are now open. (*He holds an open bag to the King.*)

KING (*taking out a handful of letters and looking at the addresses*).—I should indeed like to read the hearts of those people. Thus only can I tell the true thoughts of those who bow and simper before my face. I suppose (*A glance of suspicion suddenly flashes from his eyes.*) that you have not yourself looked into these?

LOUVOIS.—Oh, sire, I had rather die!

KING.—You swear it?

LOUVOIS.—As I hope for salvation!

KING (*selecting one*).—Hum! There is one among these which I see is from your own son.

LOUVOIS (*changing color, and stammering*). — Your

Majesty will find that he is as loyal out of your presence as in it, else he is no son of mine.

KING (*opening the letter*).—Then we shall begin with his. Ha! it is but ten lines long. "Dearest Achille, how I long for you to come back! The court is as dull as a cloister, now that you are gone. My ridiculous father still struts about like a turkey-cock, as if all his medals and crosses could cover the fact that he is but a head lackey, with no more real power than I have. He wheedles a good deal out of the king, but what he does with it I cannot imagine, for little comes my way. I still owe those ten thousand livres to the man in the Rue Orfèvre. Unless I have some luck at lansquenet, I shall have to come out soon and join you." Hum! I did you an injustice, Louvois. I see that you have *not* looked over these letters.

LOUVOIS (*with intense agony in his face and protruding eyes*).—The viper! Oh, the foul snake in the grass! I will make him curse the day he was born.

KING.—Tut, tut, Louvois. You are a man who has seen much of life, and you should be a philosopher. Hot-headed youth says ever more than it means. Think no more of the matter.—But what have we here? A letter from my dearest girl to her husband, the Prince of Conti. I would pick her writing out of a thousand. Ah, dear soul, she little thought that my eyes would see her artless prattle! Why should I read it, since I already know every thought of her innocent heart? (*He unfolds the pink sheet with a smile, which fades as he glances down the page. He springs to his feet with a snarl of anger.*) Minx! Impertinent, heartless minx! Louvois, you know what I have done for the princess. You know that she has been the apple of my eye. What have I ever grudged her? What have I ever denied her?

LOUVOIS.—You have been goodness itself, sire.

KING.—Hear what she says of me: "Old Father Grumpy is much as usual, save that he gives a little at the knees. You remember how we used to laugh at his airs and graces! Well, he has given up all that, and though he still struts about on great high heels, like a Landes peasant on his stilts, he has no brightness at all in his clothes. Of course all the court follow his example, so you can imagine what a nightmare place this is. Then this woman still keeps in favor, and her frocks are as dismal as Grumpy's coats; so when you come back we shall go into the country together, and you shall dress in red velvet, and I shall wear blue silk, and we shall have a little colored court of our own in spite of my majestic papa." (*The king drops the letter, and sinks his face in his hands.*) You hear how she speaks of me, Louvois.

LOUVOIS.—It is infamous, sire; infamous!

KING.—She calls me names—*me*, Louvois!

LOUVOIS.—Atrocious, sire.

KING.—And my knees! One would think that I was an old man!

LOUVOIS.—Scandalous! But, sire, I would beg to say that it is a case in which your Majesty's philosophy may well soften your anger. Youth is ever hot-headed, and says more than it means. Think no more of this matter.

KING.—You speak like a fool, Louvois. The child that I have loved turns upon me, and you ask me to think no more of it. Ah, a king can trust least of all those who have his own blood in their veins.—What writing is this? (*He picks up another letter.*) It is the good Cardinal de Bouillon. This sainted man loves me. I will read you his letter, Louvois, to show you that there is still such a thing as loyalty and gratitude in France. (*He reads.*) "My

dear Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon." Ah, it is to him he writes. "I promised when you left that I would let you know, from time to time how things were going at court, as you consulted me about bringing your daughter up from Anjou, in the hope that she might catch the king's fancy." What! what! Louvois! What villainy is this? "The Sultan goes from bad to worse. The Fontanges was at least the prettiest woman in France; the Montespan was a fine woman in her day; but fancy his picking up now with a widow who is older than himself, a woman, too, who does not even try to make herself attractive, but kneels at her prie-dieu or works at her tapestry from morning to night. They say that December and May make a bad match, but my own opinion is that two Novembers make an even worse one." Louvois! Louvois! I can read no more. Have you a lettre de cachet?

LOUVOIS.—There is one here, sire. (*He indicates a drawer in the table.*)

KING.—For the Bastille?

LOUVOIS.—No; for Vincennes.

KING.—That will do very well. Fill it up, Louvois! Put this villain's name in it! Let him be arrested to-night, and taken there in his own calèche. The shameless, ungrateful, foul-mouthed villain!—Why did you bring me these letters, Louvois? Oh, why did you yield to my foolish whim? Mon dieu, is there no truth, or honor, or loyalty in the world? (*He stamps with his feet and shakes his hands in the air in frenzy.*)

LOUVOIS.—Shall I, then, put back the others?

KING.—Put them back, but keep the bag.

LOUVOIS.—Both bags?

KING.—Ah! I had forgot the other one. (*Louvois leaves the letters he is putting into the first bag and going*

round behind the king empties some of the letters out of the second bag on the other side of the table.) Perhaps I have at least some honest subjects at a distance. Let us take one hap-hazard. Who is this from? (*He opens it.*) Ah! it is from the Duc de la Rochefoucauld. He has ever seemed to be a modest and dutiful young man. What has he to say? The Danube—Belgrade—the Grand Vizier—Ah! (*He gives a cry as if he had been stabbed.*)

LOUVOIS (*stepping forward in alarm*).—What, then, sire?

KING.—Take them away, Louvois! Take them away! I would that I had never seen them! I will look at them no more. He gibes even at my courage, I who was in the trenches when he was in his cradle! "This war would not suit the king," he says, "for there are battles, and none of the nice little safe sieges which are so dear to him." Pardieu, he shall pay to me with his head for that jest! Ay, Louvois, it will be a dear gibe to him. But take them away. I have seen as much as I can bear. (*The minister thrusts the letters back into the bag and puts it one side. Then he crosses and begins to return the other letters to the first bag.*)

LOUVOIS (*starting as he picks up a letter whose handwriting he recognizes*).—Ha! it was hardly necessary to open this one.

KING.—Which, Louvois? Whose is it? (*Louvois hands the letter forward and the king starts as his eyes fall on it.*) Madame's writing!

LOUVOIS.—Yes, it is to her nephew in Germany. (*The king takes it in his hands, then suddenly throws it down, but his hand steals out to it. He is terribly agitated.*)

KING (*fingering nervously the letter and finally tossing it to his minister*).—Read it to me.

LOUVOIS (*with a malicious light in his eyes, flattening out the letter and reading*).—"My dear nephew, what you ask

me in your last is absolutely impossible. I have never abused the king's favor so far as to ask for any profit for myself, and I should be equally sorry to solicit any advance for my relatives. No one would rejoice more than I to see you rise to be a major in your regiment, but your valor and your loyalty must be the cause, and you must not hope to do it through any word of mine. To serve such a man as the king is its own reward, and I am sure that whether you remain a cornet or rise to some higher rank, you will be equally zealous in his cause. He is surrounded, unhappily, by many base parasites. Some of these are mere fools, like Lauzun; others are knaves, like the late Fouquet; and some seem to be both fools and knaves, like Louvois, the Minister of War." (*Louvois chokes with rage and cannot continue, but sits gurgling and drumming with his fingers on the table.*)

KING (*smiling*).—Go on, Louvois, go on.

LOUVOIS.—"These are the clouds which surround the sun, my dear nephew; but the sun is, believe me, shining brightly behind them. For years I have known that noble nature as few others can know it, and I can tell you that his virtues are his own, but that if ever his glory is for an instant dimmed over, it is because his kindness of heart has allowed him to be swayed by those who are about him. We hope soon to see you back at Versailles, staggering under the weight of your laurels. Meanwhile accept my love and every wish for your speedy promotion, although it cannot be obtained in the way which you suggest."

KING (*with love in his eyes*).—Ah, how could I for an instant doubt her! And yet I had been so shaken by the others. Françoise is as true as steel. Was it not a beautiful letter, Louvois?

LOUVOIS (*dubiously*).—Madame is a very clever woman.

KING.—And such a reader of hearts! Has she not seen my character aright?

LOUVOIS.—At least she has not read mine, sire.

A rap at the door and BONTEMS *enters.*

BONTEMS.—The Archbishop has arrived, sire.

KING.—Very well, Bontems. Ask Madame to be so good as to step this way. And order the witnesses to assemble in the anteroom. (*Bontems hurries away and the King turns to Louvois.*) I wish you to be one of the witnesses, Louvois.

LOUVOIS.—To what, sire?

KING.—To my marriage.

LOUVOIS (*starting*).—What, sire, already?

KING.—Now, Louvois; within five minutes.

LOUVOIS (*extremely disconcerted*).—Very good, sire.

KING.—Put these letters away, Louvois. The last one has made up for all the rest. But these rascals shall smart for it, all the same. By the way, there is that young nephew to whom madame wrote. Gérard d'Aubigny is his name, is it not?

LOUVOIS.—Yes, sire.

KING.—Make him out a colonel's commission, and give him the next vacancy, Louvois.

LOUVOIS.—A colonel, sire! Why, he is not yet twenty.

KING.—Ay, Louvois. Pray, am I the chief of the army, or are you? Take care, Louvois. I have warned you once before. I tell you, man, that if I choose to promote one of my jack-boots to be the head of a brigade, you shall not hesitate to make out the papers. Now go into the anteroom, (*He indicates a room on one side of the platform.*) and wait with the other witnesses until you are wanted. (*He goes out on the other side. Louvois takes the bags of letters off to the anteroom.*)

THE CHALLENGE.

CHARACTERS.

Bob Acres, *a perfect coward, from the country.*

Sir Lucius O' Trigger, *an Irish gentleman with a delicate sense of honor.*

Captain Absolute, *a friend of* ACRES, *in Bath under the name of* ENSIGN BEVERLEY.

David, *an old servant to* ACRES.

Another servant.

Situation.—SIR LUCIUS *plays on the feelings of* BOB ACRES *until a challenge is written to* ENSIGN BEVERLEY. *Unwittingly* ACRES *gets* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE *to deliver this note. The most ludicrous scene is that in the King's Mead fields, whither* SIR LUCIUS *has at length dragged the unwilling* ACRES.

The strength of this dialogue lies in showing the sham courage, the indomitable cowardice of ACRES, *and the cool carelessness of* SIR LUCIUS.

SIR LUCIUS *speaks with an Irish brogue, and* DAVID *has a broad English accent. Considerable ingenuity may be displayed in arranging appropriate costumes.*

Scene I.

Lodgings of BOB ACRES. *A table with writing material stands at one side. Enter* ACRES *with a dancing step.*

ACRES.—Sink, slide—Confound the first inventors of cotillions, say I——

Enter Servant.

SERVANT.—Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, sir.

ACRES.—Show him in. (*Servant goes out.*)

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

SIR LUCIUS.—Mr. Acres, I am delighted to see you.

ACRES.—My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

SIR LUCIUS.—Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

ACRES.—'Faith, I have followed Cupid's jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last!—In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius. I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as a very ill-used gentleman.

SIR LUCIUS.—Pray, what is the case?—I ask no names.

ACRES.—Mark me, Sir Lucius; I fall as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival; and receive answer, that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of. This Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

SIR LUCIUS.—Very ill, upon my conscience!—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

ACRES.—Why, there's the matter: she has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds, slanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

SIR LUCIUS.—A rival in the case, is there?—and you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

ACRES.—Unfairly! to be sure he has. He never could have done it fairly.

SIR LUCIUS.—Then sure you know what is to be done.

ACRES.—Not I, upon my soul!

SIR LUCIUS.—We wear no swords here, but you understand me?

ACRES.—What! fight him?

SIR LUCIUS.—Ay, to be sure: what can I mean else?

ACRES.—But he has given me no provocation.

SIR LUCIUS.—Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world. Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another, than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by my soul, it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship.

ACRES.—Breach of friendship! Ay, ay; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

SIR LUCIUS.—That's no argument at all—he has the less right, then, to take such a liberty.

ACRES.—'Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace; odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valor in him, and not know it.—But couldn't I contrive to have a little right on my side?

SIR LUCIUS.—What the devil signifies right when your honor is concerned? Do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broad sword, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

ACRES.—Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching.—I certainly do feel a kind of valor arising, as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say.—Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

SIR LUCIUS.—Ah, my little friend! If we had Blunderbuss Hall here—I could show you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, every one of whom had killed his man!—For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank heaven, our honor and the family pictures are as fresh as ever.

ACRES.—Oh, Sir Lucius, I have had ancestors too!—every man of them colonel or captain in the militia!—odds balls

and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it. The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast!—Zounds! as the man in the play says, 'I could do such deeds'——

SIR LUCIUS.—Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

ACRES.—I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius—I must be in a rage—Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me.—Come, here's pen and paper. (*Sits.*) I would the ink were red!—Indite, I say, indite!—How shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good bold hand however.

SIR LUCIUS.—Pray, compose yourself. (*Sits down.*)

ACRES.—Come—now, shall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme.

SIR LUCIUS.—Pho! pho! do the thing decently, and like a Christian. Begin now—"Sir,——"

ACRES.—That's too civil, by half.

SIR LUCIUS.—"To prevent the confusion that might arise——"

ACRES.—Well——

SIR LUCIUS.—"From our both addressing the same lady——"

ACRES.—Ay—"both undressing the same lady"—there's the reason—"same lady"—Well——

SIR LUCIUS.—"I shall expect the honor of your company——"

ACRES.—Zounds! I'm not asking him to dinner!

SIR LUCIUS.—Pray, be easy.

ACRES.—Well, then, "honor of your company"—Does company begin with a C or a K?

SIR LUCIUS.—"To settle our pretensions——"

ACRES.—Well.

SIR LUCIUS.—Let me see—ay, King's Mead fields will do —"in King's Mead fields."

ACRES.—So, that's done—Well, I'll fold it up presently, my own crest, a hand and dagger, shall be the seal.

SIR LUCIUS.—You see, now, this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

ACRES.—Ay, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

SIR LUCIUS.—Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time. Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening, if you can; then, let the worst come of it, 'twill be off your mind to-morrow.

ACRES.—Very true.

SIR LUCIUS.—So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening. (*He goes out.*)

ACRES (*with a shake of his head*).—By my valor, I should like to see him fight. Odds life, I should like to see him kill a man, if it was only to get a little lesson! (*He goes out.*)

Scene II

The same room. Enter ACRES, *disconsolately, pursued by* DAVID. ACRES *sits by the table.*

DAVID.—Then, by the mass, sir, I would do no such thing! Ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight, when I wasn't so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say, when she hears o't?

ACRES.—But my honor, David, my honor! I must be very careful of my honor.

DAVID.—Ay, by the mass, and I would be very careful of it, and I think in return, my honor could not do less than to be very careful of me.

ACRES.—Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honor.

DAVID.—I say, then, it would be but civil in honor never to risk the loss of a gentleman. Look ye, master, this honor seems to me to be a marvelous false friend. Put the case: I was the gentleman, (which, thank heaven, no one can say of me;) well—my honor makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance. So, we fight. (Pleasant enough that.) Boh! I kill him—(the more's my luck.) Now, pray, who gets the profit of it? Why, my honor. But put the case, that he kills me! By the mass! I go to the worms, and my honor whips over to my enemy.

ACRES.—No, David; in that case, odds crowns and laurels! your honor follows you to the grave.

DAVID.—Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

ACRES.—Zounds! David, you are a coward! It doesn't become my valor to listen to you. What, shall I disgrace my ancestors? Think of that, David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

DAVID.—Under favor, the surest way of not disgracing them, is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look ye, now, master; to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think it might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

ACRES.—But, David, now, you don't think there is such very—very—great danger, hey? Odds life! people often fight without any mischief done.

DAVID.—By the mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you! Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his villainous double-barreled swords and cut-and-thrust pistols! Lord bless us! it makes me tremble to

think on't — those be such desperate, bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide them! from a child I never could fancy them. I suppose there ain't been so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

ACRES.—Zounds! I won't be afraid! Odds fire and fury! you shan't make me afraid. Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend, Jack Absolute, to carry it for me.

DAVID.—Ay, in the name of mischief, let him be the messenger. For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it, for the best horse in your stable. By the mass, it don't look like another letter! It is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter, and I warrant smells of gunpowder, like a soldier's pouch. Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off.

ACRES.—Out, you poltroon!—you haven't the valor of a grasshopper.

DAVID.—Well, I say no more: 'twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod Hall, but I ha' done. How Phyllis will howl when she hears of it! Ay, poor dog, she little thinks what shooting her master's going after! And I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honor, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born. (*Whimpering.*)

ACRES.—It won't do, David—I am determined to fight, so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.—Captain Absolute, sir.

ACRES.—Oh, show him up. (*Servant goes out.*)

DAVID.—Well, heaven send we be all alive this time to morrow.

ACRES.—What's that? Don't provoke me, David!

DAVID.—Good-by, master. (*Sobbing.*)

ACRES.—Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven! (*David goes out.*)

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—What's the matter, Bob?

ACRES.—A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead!—If I hadn't the valor of St. George, and the dragon to boot——

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—But what did you want with me, Bob?

ACRES.—Oh!—there—(*Gives him the challenge.*)

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE (*reads*).—"*To Ensign Beverley.*"—(*Aside*). So—what's going on now?—(*Aloud.*) Well, what's this?

ACRES.—A challenge.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Indeed!—Why, you won't fight him, will you, Bob?

ACRES.—Egad, but I will, Jack.—Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage, and I'll fight this evening that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—But what have I to do with this?

ACRES.—Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Well, give it me, and trust me he gets it.

ACRES.—Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it. No trouble in the world, I assure you.

ACRES.—You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend!—you couldn't be my second—could you, Jack?

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Why, no, Bob—not in this affair—it would not be quite so proper.

ACRES.—Well, then, I must get my friend, Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.—Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the captain.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—I'll come down instantly. (*Servant goes out.*) Well, my little hero, success attend you. (*Going.*)

ACRES.—Stay, stay, Jack.—If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—To be sure, I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob?

ACRES.—Ay, do, do—and if that frightens him, egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack?

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—I will; I will; I'll say you are called, in the country, "Fighting Bob."

ACRES.—Right, right—'tis all to prevent mischief; for I don't want to take his life, if I clear my honor.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—No!—that's very kind of you.

ACRES.—Why, you don't wish me to kill him, do you, Jack?

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—No, upon my soul, I do not. But a devil of a fellow, hey? (*Going.*)

ACRES.—True, true.—But stay,—stay, Jack—you may add that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—I will, I will.

ACRES.—Remember, Jack—a determined dog!

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Ay, ay, "Fighting Bob." (*He goes out.*

ACRES (*shaking his head and gritting his teeth*).—Oh, yes! a determined dog! (*He goes out on other side.*)

Scene III.

King's Mead Fields. Enter SIR LUCIUS *and* ACRES, *with pistols.*

ACRES.—By my valor, then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance. Odds levels and aims! I say it is a good distance.

SIR LUCIUS.—It is for muskets or small field-pieces; upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave these things to me. Stay, now, I'll show you. (*Measures paces along the stage.*) There, now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

ACRES.—Zounds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off the cooler I shall take my aim.

SIR LUCIUS.—Faith, then, I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

ACRES.—No, Sir Lucius, but I should think forty, or eight and thirty yards——

SIR LUCIUS.—Pho! pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

ACRES.—Odds bullets, no! by my valor, there is no merit in killing him so near! Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot; a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me.

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, the gentleman's friend and I must settle that. But tell me, now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

ACRES.—I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius, but I don't understand——

SIR LUCIUS.—Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk—and, if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it—I say, it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

ACRES.—A quietus!

SIR LUCIUS.—For instance, now, if that should be the case—would you choose to be pickled, and sent home?—or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey?—I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

ACRES.—Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

SIR LUCIUS.—I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before.

ACRES.—No, Sir Lucius, never before.

SIR LUCIUS.—Ah, that's a pity—there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray, now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

ACRES.—Odds files! I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius, there! (*He puts himself into a very awkward attitude.*) A side-front, eh?—Odd, I'll make myself small enough—I'll stand edgeways.

SIR LUCIUS.—Now, you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim—(*He levels his pistol at him.*)

ACRES.—Zounds, Sir Lucius! are you sure it is not cocked?

SIR LUCIUS.—Never fear.

ACRES (*shivering*).—But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

SIR LUCIUS (*speaks in a very easy, careless tone*).—Pho! be easy. Well, now, if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance; for if it misses a vital part on your right side, 'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left.

ACRES.—A vital part!

SIR LUCIUS (*crosses to him*).—But there—fix yourself so—(*He places him.*) Let him see the broadside of your full front—there—now, a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do you any harm at all.

ACRES (*shrinking away*).—Clean through me! A ball or two clean through me!

SIR LUCIUS.—Ay, may they—and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

ACRES.—Look ye, Sir Lucius—I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one—so, by my valor! I will stand edgeways.

SIR LUCIUS (*looking at his watch*).—Sure they don't mean to disappoint us—ah! no, faith—I think I see them coming.

ACRES.—Hey!—what!—coming?

SIR LUCIUS.—Ay, who are those yonder, getting over the stile?

ACRES.—There are two of them, indeed!—well, let them come—hey, Sir Lucius!—we-we-we-we—won't run.

SIR LUCIUS.—Run!

ACRES.—No, I say—we won't run, by my valor!

SIR LUCIUS.—What the devil's the matter with you?

ACRES.—Nothing, nothing, my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold, somehow, as I did.

SIR LUCIUS.—Oh, fie! consider your honor.

ACRES.—Ay, true, my honor—do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two, every now and then, about my honor.

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, here they're coming. (*Looking.*)

ACRES.—Sir Lucius, if I wasn't with you, I should almost think I was afraid—if my valor should leave me! valor will come and go.

SIR LUCIUS.—Then, pray, keep it fast while you have it.

ACRES.—Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes, my valor is certainly going! it is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing out, as it were, at the palms of my hands!

SIR LUCIUS.—Your honor—your honor!—Here they are.

ACRES.—Oh, that I was safe at Clod Hall! or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter FAULKLAND *and* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

SIR LUCIUS.—Gentlemen, your most obedient—hah!—what, Captain Absolute! So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend—then to proceed to business on your own account?

ACRES.—What, Jack!—my dear Jack!—my dear friend!

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Harkye, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame you saluting the gentleman civilly. So, Mr. Beverley (*To Faulkland,*) if you choose your weapons, the captain and I will measure the ground.

FAULKLAND.—My weapons, sir!

ACRES.—Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends!

SIR LUCIUS.—What, sir, did not you come here to fight Mr. Acres?

FAULKLAND.—Not I, upon my word, sir!

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game—you won't be so cantankerous as to spoil the party, by sitting out.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Oh, pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

FAULKLAND.—Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter——

ACRES.—No, no, Mr. Faulkland—I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian.—Lookye, Sir Lucius, there's no

occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

SIR LUCIUS.—Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled with! You have certainly challenged somebody, and you came here to fight him. Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him—I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

ACRES.—Why, no, Sir Lucius; I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face. If he were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Hold, Bob—let me set you right—there is no such man as Beverley in the case. The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, this is lucky. Now you have an opportunity——

ACRES.—What, quarrel with my dear friend, Jack Absolute!—not if he were fifty Beverleys! Zounds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me so unnatural!

SIR LUCIUS.—Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valor has oozed away with a vengeance!

ACRES.—Not in the least! odds backs and abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you snug lying in the Abbey here; or pickle you, and send you over to Blunderbuss Hall, or anything of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

SIR LUCIUS.—Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

ACRES.—Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a coward; coward was the word, by my valor!

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, sir?

ACRES.—Lookye, Sir Lucius, 'tisn't that I mind the word coward—Coward may be said in a joke—But if you had called me a poltroon, odds daggers and balls !——

SIR LUCIUS.—Well, sir?

ACRES.—I should have thought you a very ill-bred man, but if ever I give you a chance of pickling me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all. (*He goes out. The others salute each other and file off.*)

THE HOMELESS OLD MAN.

Adapted from "The Bondman," by Hall Caine.

CHARACTERS.

Adam Fairbroth *a benevolent old man.*

Asher, Ross, Thurstan, Jacob, John, *his sons,—farmers.*

Chalse A'Killey, *old faithful servant to* ADAM.

Ruth Fairbrother, *miserly, unaffectionate wife of* ADAM.

Greeba Fairbrother, *beautiful, loving daughter to* ADAM.

Situation.—*The scene is laid in the Isle of Man.* ADAM FAIRBROTHER *has just been superseded in the governor-generalship of the isle. His generosity while in office has left him penniless. Even his ancestral home he has given by deed to his miserly wife, who lives on the estate with the sons, lazy, worthless fellows. A stranger,* MICHAEL SUNLOCKS, *has taken the sons' place in the father's heart, and he has also won the affections of* GREEBA, *and now seeks his fortune in Iceland. In* SUNLOCK'S *absence,* JASON ORRY *lays unsuccessful siege to her heart.* ADAM, *in his penury, returns to his old home for protection but meets with the following reception.*

MRS. FAIRBROTHER *is sitting on one side of the platform front, knitting. Enter behind her* ADAM, *who takes a seat by the fireplace opposite;* GREEBA *follows and stands back of his chair;* CHALSE *shambles into the rear, scratching vacantly his uncovered head.*

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*drawing herself up and holding back her skirts*).—And pray, what ill wind blows you here?

ADAM.—An ill wind indeed, Ruth, for it is the wind of adversity. You must have heard of our misfortune, since the whole island knows of it. Well, it is not for me to complain, for God shapes our ways and He knows what is best. But I am an old man now, Ruth, little able to look to myself, still less to another, and——

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*tapping with her foot on the floor*).—Cut it short, sir. What do you want?

ADAM (*with stupefied look but quietly*).—I want to come home, Ruth.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*sharply*).—Home! And what home, if you please?

ADAM (*with a momentary struggle*).—What home, Ruth? Why, what home but this?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—This indeed! This is not your home.

ADAM (*dropping back into his seat, dumfounded*).—Not my home! (*Suddenly bracing up.*) Not my home! Did you say this was not my home? Why, woman, I was born here; so was my father before me, and my father's father before him. Five generations of my people have lived and died here, and the very roof rafters over your head must know us.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Hoity-toity! and if you had lived here much longer not a rafter of them all would have been left to shelter us. No, sir. I've kept the roof on this house, and it is mine.

ADAM (*slowly*).—It is yours, indeed, for I gave it you.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—You gave it me! Say I took it as my right when all that you had was slipping through your fingers like sand, as everything does that ever touches them.

ADAM (*drawing himself up with dignity*).—There is one thing that has indeed slipped through my fingers like sand, and that is the fidelity of the woman who swore before God forty and odd years ago to love and honor me.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER. — Crinkleum-crankum! A pretty thing, truly, that I should toil and moil at my age to keep house and home together, ready and waiting for you, when your zany doings have shut every other door against you. Misfortunes, indeed! A fine name for your mistakes!

ADAM.—I may have made mistakes, madam, but true it is, as the wise man has said, that he who has never made mistakes has never made anything.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Tush!

ADAM.—Ruth, do you refuse to take me in?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—This house is mine, mine by law and deed, as tight as wax can make it.

ADAM (*rising to his feet*).—Do you refuse to take me in?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—You have brought ruin on yourself by your shilly-shally and vain folly, and now you think to pat your nose and say your prayers by my fireside.

ADAM.—Ruth, do you refuse to take me in?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Yes, and that I do. You would beggar me as you have beggared yourself, but that I warrant you never shall. (*Grim silence for a moment.*)

ADAM (*gripping his staff convulsively*).—God give me patience. Yes, I'll bear it meekly. Ruth, I'll not trouble you. Make yourself sure of that. While there's a horse-wallet to hang on my old shoulders, and a bit of barley-bread to put in it, I'll rove the country round, but I'll never come on my knees to you and say, "I am your husband, I gave you all you had, and you are rich and I'm a beggar, and I am old—give me for charity my bed and board."—(*He gives way to wrath*) Out on you, woman! Out on

you! God forgive me the evil day I set eyes on you! God forgive me the damned day I took you to my breast to rend it!

GREEBA (*she has silently watched with quivering eyelashes and clenched fingers, and now steps forward*).—Forgive him, mother. Do not be angry with him. He will be sorry for what he has said; I'm sure he will. But only think, dear mother; he is in great, great trouble, and he is past work, and if this is not his home, then he is homeless.

ADAM (*dropping back into his chair and weeping*).—I am not ashamed of my tears, child, but they are not shed for myself. Nor did I come here for my own sake, though your mother thinks I did. No, child, no; say no more. I'll repent me of nothing I have said to her—no, not a word. She is a hard, cruel woman; but, thank heaven, I have my sons left to me yet. She is not flesh of my flesh, though one with me in wedlock; but they are, and they will never see their father turned from the door.

Enter three sons, ASHER, ROSS, *and* THURSTAN.

This is not your will, Asher?

ASHER.—I do not know what you mean, sir.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*her apron to her eyes*).—He has damned your mother and cursed the day he married her.

ADAM.—But she is turning me out of the house. This house—my father's house.

ASHER.—Ask her pardon, sir, and she will take you back.

ADAM.—Her pardon! God in heaven!

THURSTAN.—You are an old man, now, sir.

ADAM.—So I am; so I am.

THURSTAN.—And you are poor as well.

ADAM.—That's true, Thurstan; that's true, though your brother forgets it.

THURSTAN.—So you should not hold your head too high.

ADAM.—What! Are you on her side, also? Asher, Thurstan, Ross, you are my sons—would you see me turned out of the house?

ASHER (*all three hang their heads*).—What mother says he must agree to.

ADAM.—But I gave you all I had. If I am old I am your father, and if I am poor you know best who made me so.

THURSTAN.—We are poor, too, sir; we have nothing, and we do not forget who is to blame for it.

ROSS.—You gave everything away from us; and because your bargain is a rue bargain, you want us now to stand aback of you.

Enter JACOB *and* JOHN.

JACOB (*sneeringly*).—Ah, yes, and who took the side of a stranger against his own children? What of your good Michael Sunlocks, now, sir? Is he longing for you? Or have you never had the scribe of a line from him since he turned his back on you, four years ago?

GREEBA (*angrily, with flashing eyes*).—For shame, for shame! Oh, you mean, pitiful men, to bait and badger him like this. (*Jacob laughs.*)

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Chut, girl, you're waxing apace with your big words, considering you're a chit that has wasted her days in London and hasn't learned to muck a byre yet.

ADAM (*stunned*).—Not for myself, no, not for myself, though they all think it. (*To his sons.*) You think I came to beg for bed and board for myself, you are wrong. I came to demand it for the girl. I may have no claim upon you, but she has, for she is one with you all and can ask for her own. She has no home with her father now, for it

seems that he has none for himself; but her home is here, and here I mean to leave her.

JOHN.—Not so fast, sir. All she can ever claim is what may one day be hers when we ourselves come into anything. Meantime, like her brothers, she has nothing but what she works for.

ADAM.—Works for, you wagtail? She is a woman! Do you hear? A woman!

JOHN (*snapping his fingers*).—Woman or man, where's the difference here?

ADAM.—Where's the difference, you jackanapes? Do you ask me where's the difference here? Here? In grace, in charity, in unselfishness, in faith in the good, in fidelity to the true, in filial love and duty! There's the difference, you jackanapes.

JOHN.—You are too old to quarrel with, sir. I will spare you.

ADAM.—Spare me, you whippersnapper! *You* will spare *me!* But, oh, let me have patience! If I have cursed the day I first saw my wife, let me not also curse the hour when she first bore children, and my heart was glad. Asher, you are my first-born, and heaven knows what you were to me. You will not stand by and listen to this. She is your sister, my son. Think of it,—your only sister.

ASHER (*indifferently*).—The girl is nothing to me. She is nothing to any of us. She has been with you all the days of her life, except such as you made her to spend with strangers. She is no sister of ours.

ADAM (*to Ross*).—And do you say the same?

ROSS.—What can she do here? Nothing. This is no place for your great ladies. We work here, every man and woman of us, from daylight to dark, in the fields and in the dairy. Best send her back to her fine friends in London.

JACOB (*smiling into Greeba's face*).—Ay, or marry her straight off—that is the shortest way. I heard a little bird tell of some one who might have her. Don't look astonished, Miss, for I make no doubt you know who it is. He is away on the mountains now, but he'll be home before long.

ADAM (*struggling with his emotion*).—If she is not your sister, at least she is your mother's daughter, and a mother knows what that means. (*He turns to Mrs. Fairbrother.*) Ruth, the child is your daughter, and by that deed you speak of, she is entitled to her share of all that is here——

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*sharply*).—Yes, but only when I am done with it.

ADAM.—Even so, would you see the child want before that, or drive her into any marriage, no matter what?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER (*deliberately*)—I will take her on one condition.

ADAM.—What is it, Ruth? Name it, that I may grant it.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—That you shall give up all control of her, and that she shall give up all thought of you.

ADAM.—What?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—That you shall never again expect to see her or hear from her, or hold commerce of any kind with her.

ADAM.—But why? Why?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Because I may have certain plans for her future welfare that you might try to spoil.

ADAM.—Do they concern Michael Sunlocks?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—No, indeed.

ADAM.—Then, they concern young Jason, the Icelander.

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—If so, it is *my* concernment.

ADAM.—And that is your condition?

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Yes.

ADAM.—And you ask me to part from her, forever? Think

of it, she is my only daughter. She has been the light of my eyes. You have never loved her as I have loved her. You know it is the truth. And you ask me to see her no more, and never more to hear from her. Now, God punish you for this, you cold-hearted woman !

MRS. FAIRBROTHER.—Take care, sir. Fewer words, or mayhap I will recall my offer. If you are wise you will be calm for the girl's sake.

ADAM (*dropping his head*).—You are right. It is not for me to take the bread out of my child's mouth. She shall choose for herself. (*He twists round in his chair and looks up at her.*) Greeba, my darling, you see how it is. I am old and very poor, and heaven pity my blind folly. I have no home to offer you, for I have none to shelter my own head. Don't fear for me, for I have no fear for myself. I will be looked to in the few days that remain to me and come what may, the sorry race of my foolish life will soon be over. But you have made no mistakes that merit my misfortunes. So choose, my child, choose. It is poverty with me or plenty with your mother. Choose, my child, choose; and let it be quickly, let it be quickly, for my old heart is bursting.

GREEBA (*drawing herself up proudly*).—Choose? There is no choice. I will go with my father, and follow him over the world, though we have no covering but the skies above us.

ADAM (*leaping from his chair in joy*).—Do you hear that, you people? There's grace and charity, and unselfishness, and love left in the world still. Thank heaven, I have not yet to curse the day her body brought forth children. Come, Greeba, we will go our ways, and God's protection will go with us. "I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging

bread." (*He strides across the platform to the door he entered, stops and looks back at the group of his sons.*) And you, you unnatural sons, I cast you out of my mind. I give you up to your laziness and drunkenness and vain pleasures. I am going to one who is not flesh of my flesh, and yet he is my son indeed. (*He starts out, but again turns ana faces his wife.*) As for you, woman, your time will come. Remember that! Remember that!

GREEBA (*laying a hand on his shoulder*).—Come, father, come.

ADAM (*again turning back*).—Farewell, all of you! Farewell! You will see me no more. May a day like this that has come to your father never, never come to you. (*He breaks down, reels, and Greeba helps him out, while he sobs out the following apostrophe.*) Sunlocks, my boy; Sunlocks, I am coming to you—I am coming to you. (*He goes out with Greeba.*)

CHALSE (*muttering*).—Strange, the near I was to crucifying the Lord afresh and swearing a mortal swear, only I remembered my catechism and the good John Wesley. (*He goes out.*)

CURTAIN.

THE WITCH OF VESUVIUS.

Adapted from "The Last Days of Pompeii," by Bulwer Lytton.

CHARACTERS.

Glaucus, *a handsome, graceful and rich Greek.*

Ione, *a brilliant and beautiful young woman, born in Naples of Greek parents.*

The Witch, *an old wrinkled, weather-beaten hag, bent and lame.*

Situation.—GLAUCUS *has taken* IONE *on a little journey and on the return they are overtaken by a violent storm not far from the* WITCH'S *cavern. They hurry into this gloomy place, where the* WITCH *questions them and curses them.*

On one side is a fire with a small cauldron over it. Herbs and weeds are hung in lines to dry. The fire gives a weird light on the face of the hag. There is a fox couching by the fire, and a heap of sculls of animals in the corner.

GLAUCUS *and* IONE *must enter in garments spattered with rain and mud. The snake need not be real or apparent. It will be sufficient for all three actors to imagine it present.*

The WITCH *is seated before the fire with dried weeds heaped at her feet. She sorts weeds and stirs the cauldron.*

WITCH.—Years ago I was not the thing that I am now.

I loved and I fancied I was beloved. Another and less fair than I—yes, by Nemesis! less fair—allured my chosen from me. We all in my dark Etrurian tribe knew the secrets of the gloomier Magic. My mother, too, she was a Saga. O mother, you shared the resentment of thy child. You, even you, gave me the poison that was to destroy my rival. Oh, crush me, dread walls, that my trembling hands should mistake the phials and I should see my lover indeed at my feet, but dead! dead!—What has life been to me since? How suddenly I became old! How long I have given myself to these sorceries of my race! Still by an irresistible impulse I curse myself; still I seek the most noxious herbs; still I concoct poisons; still I imagine that I am to give them to my hated rival; still I pour them into the phial; still I fancy that they shall blast her beauty to the dust; still I wake and see the quivering body, the foaming lips, the glazing eyes of my Aulus,—murdered, and by me! (*She shudders and shakes from head to foot and then she sits very still.*)

Enter GLAUCUS *and* IONE. *They stand by the door.*

GLAUCUS.—It is a dead thing.

IONE (*faltering and clinging to him*).—Nay it stirs,—it is a ghost or——

WITCH (*in a hollow and ghostly tone*).—Who are ye? And what do ye here?

GLAUCUS (*drawing Ione farther into cavern*).—We are storm-beaten wanderers from the neighboring city, and decoyed hither by your light; we crave shelter and the comfort of your hearth.

WITCH.—Come to the fire if ye will. I never welcome living thing, save the owl, the fox, the toad and the viper, so I cannot welcome ye; but come to the fire without welcome; why stand upon form? (*She relapses into her*

profound reverie. Glaucus takes off Ione's outer wraps and places a log for her to sit on near the fire.)

IONE.—We disturb you, I fear.

WITCH (*after a long pause*).—Tell me, are ye brother and sister?

IONE (*blushing*).—No.

WITCH.—Are ye married?

GLAUCUS.—Not so.

WITCH.—Ho, lovers! ha! ha! ha! (*She laughs long and loud.*)

GLAUCUS (*after muttering a counter spell*).—Why dost thou laugh, old crone?

WITCH (*absently*).—Did I laugh?

GLAUCUS (*to Ione, in a low tone*).—She is in her dotage.

WITCH (*she has heard the words and has caught his eye*).—Thou liest!

GLAUCUS.—Thou art an uncourteous welcomer.

IONE (*to Glaucus*).—Hush! provoke her not, dear Glaucus!

WITCH.—I will tell thee why I laughed when I discovered ye were lovers. It was because it is a pleasure to the old and withered to look upon young hearts like yours and to know the time will come when you will loathe each other,—loathe—loathe—ha! ha! ha!

IONE.—The gods forbid! yet poor woman, thou knowest little of love or thou wouldst know that it never changes.

WITCH (*quickly*).—Was I young once, think ye, and am I old and hideous and deathly now? Such as is the form so is the heart. (*She sinks again into a profound stillness.*)

GLAUCUS (*after a pause*).—Hast thou dwelt here long?

WITCH.—Ah, long!—yes!

GLAUCUS.—It is but a drear abode.

WITCH.—Ha! thou mayst well say that. Hell is beneath

us! (*She points to the earth.*) And I will tell thee a secret: the dim things below are preparing wrath for ye above,—you, the young, and the thoughtless, and the beautiful.

GLAUCUS.—Thou utterest but evil words, ill becoming the hospitable, and in future I will brave the tempest rather than thy welcome.

WITCH.—Thou wilt do well. None should ever seek me, save the wretched.

GLAUCUS.—And why the wretched?

WITCH (*with a grin*).—I am the witch of the mountain. My trade is to give hope to the hopeless. For the crossed in love I have philtres; for the avaricious, promises of treasure; for the malicious, potions of revenge; for the happy and the good, I have only what life has,—curses! (*She turns away.*) Trouble me no more.

GLAUCUS (*turns to Ione who is seated, drops on his knee, seizes her hand and says tenderly*).—Ione! Ione!

IONE (*suddenly, seeing a snake emerge from the dry roots on the floor, shrieks and seizes Glaucus*).—Oh! Glaucus, look.

GLAUCUS (*seizing a half-burned stick to beat off the snake*).—Witch, command thy creature, or thou wilt see it dead.

WITCH (*quickly aroused*).—It has been despoiled of its venom. (*Glaucus watches the snake which rises up to strike at him, and before he has caught the meaning of the Witch's words, hits the snake so hard a blow on the head that it falls writhing to the floor. The Witch springs up with a face full of wrath.*) Thou hast had shelter under my roof, and warmth at my hearth; thou hast returned evil for good; thou hast smitten and haply slain the thing that loved me and was mine: nay more, the creature above

all others consecrated to gods, and deemed venerable by man; now hear thy punishment. By the moon, who is the guardian of the sorceress, by Orcus, who is the treasurer of wrath, I curse thee, and thou art cursed! May thy love be blasted, may thy name be blackened, may the Infernals mark thee, may thy heart wither and scorch, may thy last hour recall to thee the prophet voice of the Sage of Vesuvius! (*She turns to Ione.*) And thou——

GLAUCUS.—Hag! forbear! Me thou hast cursed and I commit myself to the gods. I defy and scorn thee. But breathe but one word against yon maiden, and I will convert the oath on thy foul lips to thy dying groan. Beware!

WITCH (*laughing wildly*).—I have done, for in thy doom is she who loves thee accursed. And not the less, that I heard *her* lips breathe thy name, and know by what word to commend thee to the demons. *Glaucus,* thou art doomed! (*She turns from them, drops on her knees and searches for the wounded snake, paying no attention to them.*)

IONE (*greatly terrified*).—O Glaucus! what have we done? Let us hasten from this place. The storm has ceased.—Good mistress, forgive him; recall thy words; he meant but to defend himself; accept this peace-offering to unsay the said. (*She puts her purse in the Witch's lap.*)

WITCH (*bitterly*).—Away! away! The oath once woven the Fates only can untie. Away!

GLAUCUS (*impatiently*).—Come, dearest! Thinkest thou that the gods above us or below hear the impotent ravings of dotage? Come! (*The Witch laughs long and loud. Glaucus and Ione go out.*)

CURTAIN

HIS ENEMY'S HONOR.

CHARACTERS.

MacPherson, *a very powerful Scot with some Scotch plaid apparent.*

MacPhail, Bruce, Drummond, *friends of* MacPherson.

Sinclair, *a young man of a different clan from the rest and of half drunken frenzy. He wears a different Scotch plaid from* MacPherson's.

Situation.—*In a drunken quarrel between two groups from different clans* Sinclair *has killed a man and rushes off for safety. Hardly himself he does not recognize the house of his bitter enemy and stumbles into the room where the following scene takes place.*

There should be an entrance from each side of the platform, and a stout club near the door from which MacPherson *comes.*

Enter Sinclair *in great confusion.*

Sinclair.—What, ho! Who hears? A stranger claims a refuge! Refuge and help! Is no one in the house? (*To himself.*) 'Twas a hot chase—but I have distanced them! My brain still whirls—the wine is not yet out. What have I done, O, fatal, fatal frenzy! Now it comes back—the dire reality! O, irretrievable and utter wreck Of all my hopes, made in one drunken moment! This morning rich in all that graces life,

And now—a miserable homicide,
A hunted fugitive!

Enter MACPHERSON *from the other side of the platform.*

MACPHERSON.—A stranger here?
I knew not any one was in the room.
Did no one wait upon you?
SINCLAIR.—No. I entered
By stealth one of the windows in the basement,
And made my way unchallenged to this room.
I am pursued—my life is in your hands—
I throw myself for shelter on your mercy!
MACPHERSON.—Pursued? For what? No crime, I hope?
SINCLAIR.—No crime,
Premeditate in act or in intent—
Nothing to stain my honor;—yet a deed
To blacken all my future—ay, to make it
One long sigh of repentance! At a tavern,
A few miles off, a party of us stopped
And dined. The wine flashed freely. We partook
More than our brains could carry. Up there came
Another party of young men, elated,
Like us, with wine. Quick wakener of contention,
Politics grew the theme—high words ensued—
The lie was given—a blow—a fatal blow!—
Was struck—and I the giver! the receiver
Fell backward—hit the curb-stone with his neck—
Rose—staggered—dropped—and died!
MACPHERSON.—Unhappy chance!
SINCLAIR.—When the appalling fear that I had killed him
Grew to conviction, I stood motionless
And mute with horror. Then a cry of *Vengeance!*

Broke from his friends. Mine, overpowered, urged me
To fly. I ran, scarce knowing how or why,—
But, with such speed, I soon left my pursuers
Far out of sight. At length I reached this house,
And here I stand your suppliant.

MACPHERSON.—Your reliance
Shall not be disappointed. On my hearth
You stand, a sacred guest. Let that suffice.
Why do you start?

SINCLAIR.—Because your tartan tells me,
My foes are of your clan.

MACPHERSON.—And what of that?
Did a Macgregor ever yet betray
Or friend or foe? Did a disloyal host
Ever yet bear our name? Fear not. Your trust
Shall be respected. If I heard aright,
The deed was one of passion, not of malice.

SINCLAIR.—O, not of malice—not of brooding malice!
But momentary anger—anger, that,
Quick as the lightning, was as quickly ended,
Leaving a desolation and regret!
O, in that fatal wine-cup there was melted
A pearl of price,—the relish of a life!
Never again the morning sunlight reddening
My window-pane shall wake a thrill of joy!
Never again the smile of innocence
Shall be reflected from these haggard lips!
That sad, appealing look my victim gave me,
In his last dying throe, will paint itself
On the void air, and make my memory
A funeral chamber for the dreadful image
Forever!

MACPHERSON.—I'll not try to blunt the edge

Of your great sorrow. 'T is a wholesome pain.
That man is less than man who can destroy
The sacred human life and feel no awe,
No swelling of compunction. I'd not trust him!
To time and to God's mercy I commit you.

(*An impatient knocking is heard outside of the house.*)

SINCLAIR (*listens*).—Hark! They have tracked me here!
They knock for entrance,
I hear their voices. Now the door is opened!
They're on the stairs. In their revenge and fury,
Attempt to stay them, they will dash you down.

MACPHERSON.—Enter that room. Whatever you may hear,
Be mute and do not stir. Fear not for me.

(SINCLAIR *goes out through the same door by which* MACPHERSON *entered.* *Enter* MACPHAIL *and* BRUCE.)

MACPHAIL.—He is not here!

BRUCE.—I know not that.—MacPherson,
A fugitive is sheltered in this house.
Deny it not. Show us his hiding-place.

MACPHERSON.—Unmannerly clown! And if a fugitive
Were here, am I the man to give him up
On such a summons? Master Archie Bruce
Go home, and bid your teachers keep you there
Till you can show a touch of gentle breeding
When you accost a gentleman.

MACPHAIL.—MacPherson,
You'll blame us not for our disdain of forms,
When you hear all. You'll readily give up
The miscreant when you learn he is the slayer
Of your own son—of Albert!

MACPHERSON.—No! No! No!

Albert MacPherson slain? A trick! A trick
To get possession of the fugitive!
To make me play the recreant—the traitor.

BRUCE.—So! He admits it! He admits the culprit
Is in this house!

MACPHERSON.—I admit nothing. Boy!
If what you say is true,—that he—my son—
Is slain—(and now the anguish at my heart
Confirms the direful blow)—is't not enough,
For one day's woe, that I'm bereft of *him*—
Would ye bereave me of my honor too?

MACPHAIL.—MacPherson, your own words betray the fact,
That here our man is harbored.
We must pass through this door. (*He goes toward the door through which Sinclair passed out.*)

MACPHERSON.—*Must* pass, MacPhail? Back—trifler! *Must*, indeed!
'T is a MacPherson you are dealing with.
Must is a word that he's not wont to hear
In his own house—or elsewhere.

MACPHAIL (*with stiff politeness*).—Then, MacPherson,
I pray you *suffer* us to pass. (*Bruce and MacPhail approach him as if to lay hands on him.*)

MACPHERSON (*seizing the club*).—Stand back! (*They fall back.*)
This is my house, and I am master of it.
Keep a respectful distance.

MACPHAIL.—Give us up
The wretch at once or we'll call in assistance.

MACPHERSON.—Then you shall know what desperation is,
And we'll have havoc. Would you madden me?

BRUCE.—The man you shelter is a murderer—

The murderer of your son! (*A pause.*)

MACPHAIL.—You hear, MacPherson?

MACPHERSON.—Were he the murderer of all my clan,—
If he had made my hearth a sanctuary,—
If I had given my word to shelter him,—
So help me, Heaven!—I'd perish, hacked in pieces,
Ere I would violate the sacred pledge!

Enter DRUMMOND.

DRUMMOND.—Where is the homicide?

BRUCE.—Concealed within,
As we believe. MacPherson bars our entrance.
A loving father, truly,
To try to screen the murderer of his son!

MACPHERSON.—What wouldst *thou* be? The murderer of my honor!
Reviler, mocker of a father's anguish,—
Think you I could have loved my son so well,
Carried I here the stuff traitors are made of?
Think you the bitterness of my bereavement
Sharp as it is, beyond your poor conception,
Could parallel the pang of treachery
In a true heart—in a MacPherson heart?

DRUMMOND.—You've done your best, MacPherson! On your head
No blame can fall. Away! and let us enter.
We must have life for life. Sinclair must die.

MACPHERSON.—Sinclair! You said *Sinclair?*

DRUMMOND.—The son and heir
Of your most deadly foe.

MACPHAIL.—We had forgot
To mention that. Now you'll not hesitate
To give him up.

MACPHERSON.—A double sanctity

Invests him now. If I had wavered, that
One mention had confirmed me.

DRUMMOND.—We waste time.

Enter we *must*—by soft means or by hard.

MACPHERSON.—Well, Master Drummond, enter if you dare!

Why do you wait? Why waste the time you grudge?

SINCLAIR *comes back.*

SINCLAIR.—From further parley I relieve you all!
MacPherson, I absolve you from your pledge.
Thanks for your noble dealing,—for the honor,
Stronger than vengeance, tenderer than love,
That would protect one who has thrown a blight
On all your joys——
Now, seekers of my life, come on and take it!
Be quick! Ye'll only ease me of a burden
My act has rendered hateful.

DRUMMOND.—Ho! Secure him!

MACPHERSON (*stepping in front of Sinclair*).—I'd like to see the rash one who will venture
To lay a finger, save in gentleness,
Upon this youth. Back! Tamperers with my honor!
Out of my house! That man who tarries longer
Is in great danger. Out of my house, I say! (*He brandishes the club and they all go out by the door they entered. He follows them to the door and then comes back to centre of platform, turns part round and buries his face in his hands.*)

SINCLAIR (*approaching MacPherson and kneeling*).—MacPherson, I am kneeling at your feet!——
Not for my *life*—O, not to thank you, sir,
For that poor boon which one ungoverned impulse

Has emptied of all value,—but in token
Of veneration for true nobleness,—
Of the prostration of my wretchedness,—
Of sympathy—of sorrow—of remorse!

MACPHERSON.—O, I am childless.

SINCLAIR (*rising*).—That thought is like a knife
In my own heart. Let there be expiation! (*He goes to the door his enemies just went out of and calls.*)
Drummond! MacPhail! Come, seize me!

MACPHERSON (*seizing him*).—Reckless boy!
Would you thus frustrate all my pains to save you?
Judge you so poorly of me as to think
I nurse a brute revenge that blood of yours
Alone can satisfy?—that my affliction
Such balm could mitigate?

SINCLAIR (*covering his face*).—O, let me die!

MACPHERSON.—No! Be a man—and live! Look up, Sinclair!
Hark! (*He goes and listens.*) I hear angry voices. Your pursuers
In thicker numbers crowd. They will be here
In half a minute. Come! This way lies safety.
They little know the secrets of my hold.
We'll foil them. Do not doubt it. You shall hide
Here in my house till I can guide you safely
To Inverary to your friends. Delay not.
Will you bring added woe upon my head?
Moments are precious. Come!

SINCLAIR.—One word from you,
And only one, shall from this spot uproot me,
And that word is *forgiveness!*

MACPHERSON.—I forgive you.
As I would be forgiven, I forgive you.

SINCLAIR (*giving him his hand*).—
Lead on, then, my preserver!
O, let my future tell how much you lift
From this despairing heart in that one word,—
You do *forgive* me!
Now guide me and bestow me as you will!
Henceforth, above all prayers, shall rise *this* prayer,
That I may live to comfort and requite you! (*They go out.*)

CLEOPATRA AND THE MESSENGER.

Adapted from Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra."

CHARACTERS.

Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, *dressed in flowing garments, and carrying a small dagger, concealed.*

Charmian, *chief attendant on* CLEOPATRA.

Iras, *another female attendant.*

Alexas, Mardian, *male attendants on the Queen.*

A Messenger from Rome.

Situation.—ANTONY *has hurried away on imperial matters to Rome, leaving* CLEOPATRA *very disconsolate. She has now gathered her attendants about her in a vain endeavor to pass the time without weariness.*

In this scene, CLEOPATRA *shows the most rapid and violent changes of emotion, all of which indicate her intense passion for the noble* ANTONY. CHARMIAN *and* MARDIAN *are the only attendants that speak, but the others must act, fanning* CLEOPATRA, *arranging her chair or couch, standing guard at the door, etc.* CLEOPATRA *ought to sit opposite the entrance and some distance from it; and the* MESSENGER *should do obeisance on entering, and approach very slowly.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS *and* ALEXAS.

CLEOPATRA.—Give me some music; music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.

ALL.—The music, ho!

Enter MARDIAN.

CLEOPATRA.—Let it alone; let's to billiards: come, Charmian.

CHARMIAN.—My arm is sore; best play with Mardian.

CLEOPATRA.—Come, you'll play with me, sir?

MARDIAN.—As well as I can, madam.

CLEOPATRA.—And when good-will is show'd, though't come too short,
The actor may plead pardon. I'll none now:
Give me mine angle; we'll to the river; there,
My music playing far off, I will betray
Tawny-finn'd fishes; my bended hook shall pierce
Their shiny jaws, and as I draw them up,
I'll think them every one an Antony,
And say "Ah, ha! you're caught."

CHARMIAN.—'Twas merry when
You wagered on your angling; when your diver
Did hang a salt fish on his hook, which he
With fervency drew up.

CLEOPATRA.—That time—O times!—
I laughed him out of patience, and that night
I laughed him into patience; and next morn,
Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed;
Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
I wore his sword Philippan.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Oh, from Italy!
Ram thou thy frightful tidings in mine ears,
That long time have been barren.

MESSENGER.—Madam, madam——

CLEOPATRA.—Antonius dead! If thou say so, villain,

Thou kill'st thy mistress; but well and free,
If thou so yield him, there is gold, and here
My bluest veins to kiss; a hand that kings
Have lipp'd, and trembled kissing.

MESSENGER.—First, madam, he is well.

CLEOPATRA.—Why, there's more gold.
But, sirrah, mark we use
To say the dead are well; bring it to that,
The gold I give thee will I melt and pour
Down thy ill-uttering throat.

MESSENGER.—Good madam, hear me.

CLEOPATRA.—Well, go to, I will;
But there's no goodness in thy face; if Antony
Be free and healthful,—so tart a favor
To trumpet such good tidings! If not well,
Thou shouldst come like a Fury crown'd with snakes,
Not like a formal man.

MESSENGER.—Will't please you hear me?

CLEOPATRA.—I have a mind to strike thee ere thou speak'st:
Yet if thou say Antony lives, is well,
Or friends with Cæsar, or not captive to him,
I'll set thee in a shower of gold, and hail
Rich pearls upon thee.

MESSENGER.—Madam, he's well.

CLEOPATRA.—Well said.

MESSENGER.—And friends with Cæsar.

CLEOPATRA.—Thou'rt an honest man.

MESSENGER.—Cæsar and he are greater friends than ever.

CLEOPATRA.—Make thee a fortune from me.

MESSENGER.—But yet, madam,——

CLEOPATRA.—I do not like "But yet," it does allay
The good precedence; fie upon "But yet!"

"But yet" is as a gaoler to bring forth
Some monstrous malefactor. Prithee, friend,
Pour out the pack of matter to mine ear,
The good and bad together: he's friends with Cæsar,
In state of health, thou say'st, and thou say'st, free.

MESSENGER.—Free, madam! no; I made no such report;
He's bound unto Octavia.

CLEOPATRA (*turning away from him*).—I am pale, Charmian.

MESSENGER.—Madam, he's married to Octavia.

CLEOPATRA.—The most infectious pestilence upon thee! (*She strikes him down.*)

MESSENGER.—Good madam, patience.

CLEOPATRA.—What say you? Hence. (*She strikes him again.*)
Horrible villain! or I'll spurn thine eyes
Like balls before me: I'll unhair thy head. (*She drags him up and down.*)
Thou shalt be whipped with wire and stewed in brine,
Smarting in lingering pickle.

MESSENGER.—Gracious madam, I that do bring the news made not the match.

CLEOPATRA.—Say 'tis not so, a province I will give thee
And make thy fortunes proud; the blow thou hadst
Shall make thy peace for moving me to rage,
And I will boot thee with what gift beside
Thy modesty can beg.

MESSENGER.—He's married, madam.

CLEOPATRA.—Rogue, thou hast lived too long. (*She draws a knife.*)

MESSENGER.—Nay, then I'll run.
What mean you, madam? I have made no fault. (*He runs out.*)

CHARMIAN.—Good madam, keep yourself within yourself.
The man is innocent.

CLEOPATRA.—Some innocents 'scape not the thunderbolt.
Melt Egypt into Nile! and kindly creatures
Turn all to serpents! Call the slave again:
Though I am mad, I will not bite him: call. (*Charmian goes to the door and beckons in vain.*)

CHARMIAN.—He is afeard to come.

CLEOPATRA.—I will not hurt him. (*Charmian goes out.*)
These hands do lack nobility, that they strike
A meaner than myself; since I myself
Have given myself the cause.

Re-enter CHARMIAN *dragging in the Messenger.*

Come hither, sir.
Though it be honest, it is never good
To bring bad news: give to a gracious message
An host of tongues, but let ill tidings tell
Themselves when they be felt.

MESSENGER.—I have done my duty.

CLEOPATRA.—Is he married?
I cannot hate thee worser than I do,
If thou again say "Yes."

MESSENGER.—He's married, madam.

CLEOPATRA.—The gods confound thee! dost thou hold there still?

MESSENGER.—Should I lie, madam?

CLEOPATRA.—O, I would thou didst,
So half my Egypt were submerged and made
A cistern for scaled snakes! Go, get thee hence:
Hadst thou Narcissus in thy face, to me
Thou wouldst appear most ugly. He is married?

MESSENGER.—I crave your highness' pardon.

CLEOPATRA.—He is married?

MESSENGER.—Take no offense that I would not offend you:
To punish me for what you make me do
Seems much unequal: he's married to Octavia.

CLEOPATRA.—O that his fault should make a knave of thee,
That art not what thou'rt sure of! Get thee hence:
The merchandise which thou hast brought from Rome
Are all too dear for me: lie they upon thy hand
And be undone by 'em. (*Messenger goes out.*)

CHARMIAN.—Good your highness, patience.

CLEOPATRA.—In praising Antony, I have dispraised Cæsar.

CHARMIAN.—Many times, madam.

CLEOPATRA.—I am paid for't now.
Lead me from hence;
I faint: O Iras, Charmian! 'tis no matter,
Go to the fellow, good Alexas; bid him
Report the feature of Octavia, her years,
Her inclination; let him not leave out
The color of her hair: bring me word quickly. (*Alexas goes out.*)
Let him for ever go: let him not—Charmian,
Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon,
The other way's a Mars. (*To Mardian.*) Bid you Alexas
Bring me word how tall she is. Pity me, Charmian,
But do not speak to me. Lead me to my chamber. (*They go out.*)

THE BISHOP'S SILVER CANDLESTICKS.

Adapted from Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables."

CHARACTERS.

Bishop Welcome, *a venerable, kind-hearted old man.*
Madame Magloire, *the* BISHOP'S *housekeeper.*
Jean Valjean, *an escaped convict of great strength.*
A Corporal of Police and three Officers.

Situation.—*The convict after searching in vain for a night's lodging has been received by the* BISHOP, *given supper and a bed. At three o'clock in the morning he rose, stole the* BISHOP'S *basket of silver plate and went away. The scene which follows is in the morning when the discovery of the robbery is made.* JEAN VALJEAN *is arrested and brought back, but is pardoned by the tender-hearted* BISHOP *and given two candlesticks in addition to what he has stolen.*

An empty basket for silver plate is lying on the floor. The BISHOP *enters slowly, picks it up and is walking on when* MADAME MAGLOIRE *rushes in.*

MADAME.—Monseigneur, monseigneur! does your Grandeur know where the plate-basket is?

BISHOP.—Yes.

MADAME.—The Lord be praised; I did not know what had become of it.

BISHOP.—Here it is. (*Hands it to her.*)

MADAME.—Well! there is nothing in it; where is the plate?

BISHOP.—Ah! it is the plate that troubles your mind. Well, I do not know where that is.

MADAME.—Good Lord! it is stolen, and that man who came last night is the robber. (*She rushes out, but soon hurries back and screams.*) Monseigneur, the man is gone! the plate is stolen! (*Her eyes fall on a corner of the garden.*) That is the way he went! He leaped into the lane! Oh, what an outrage! He has stolen our plate!

BISHOP (*after a moment's silence, raising earnest eyes*).—By the way, was that plate ours? (*Madame is speechless.*) Madame Magloire, I had wrongfully held back this silver, which belonged to the poor. Who was this person? Evidently a poor man.

MADAME.—Good gracious! I do not care for it, nor does Mademoiselle, but we feel for Monseigneur. With what will Monseigneur eat now?

BISHOP (*in amazement*).—Why! are there not pewter forks to be had?

MADAME (*with a shrug*).—Pewter smells.

BISHOP.—Then iron!

MADAME (*with a grimace*).—Iron tastes.

BISHOP.—Well, then—wood? (*He seems thoughtful.*)

MADAME (*to herself*).—What an idea! to receive a man like that and lodge him by one's side. And what a blessing it is that he only stole! Oh, Lord! the mere thought makes a body shudder. (*She goes out.*)

BISHOP (*in answer to a knock at the door*).—Come in. (*The corporal and three men enter holding another by the collar.*)

CORPORAL (*with a military salute*).—Monseigneur.

CONVICT (*to himself*).—Monseigneur, then he is not the curate.

OFFICER.—Silence! this gentleman is Monseigneur the Bishop.

BISHOP (*advancing with a look of pleasure*).—Ah! there

you are. I am glad to see you. Why, I gave you the candlesticks too, which are also of silver, and will fetch you two hundred francs. Why did you not take them away with the rest of the plate? (*A strange puzzled look comes over the countenance of the convict.*)

CORPORAL.—Monseigneur, what this man told us was true then? We met him, and as he looked as if he were running away, we arrested him. He had this plate——

BISHOP (*with a smile*).—And he told you that it was given to him by an old priest at whose house he passed the night? I see it all. And you brought him back here? That is a mistake.

CORPORAL.—In that case we can let him go?

BISHOP.—Of course. (*The officers loose their hold and Jean Valjean staggers back.*)

CONVICT (*in utter bewilderment*).—Is it true that I am at liberty?

AN OFFICER.—Yes, you are let go; don't you understand?

BISHOP.—My friend, before you go take your candlesticks. (*The old bishop goes to mantelpiece, takes candlesticks and carries them over to the convict who visibly trembles, yet receives them.*) Now, go in peace. By the bye when you return, my friend, it is unnecessary to pass through the garden, for you can always enter, day and night, by the front door, which is only latched. (*Turning to the Police officers.*) Gentlemen, you can retire. (*They go out. The bishop approaches the convict and speaks in a low voice.*) Never forget that you have promised me to employ this money in becoming an honest man. My brother, you no longer belong to evil, but to good. I have bought your soul of you. I withdraw it from black thoughts and the spirit of perdition, and give it to God. (*The look of bewilderment on the convict's face changes to veneration for the bishop and he goes out.*)

THE PEASANT BOY'S VINDICATION.

The last scene of "The Peasant Boy," a very old play by Dimond.

CHARACTERS.

Alberti, *the* DUKE, *just returned from the wars.*

Montaldi, *his brother, just returned from the gaming tables of Italy, where he has lost heavily.*

Julian, *an honest-looking young peasant.*

Ludovico, *a friend of* ALBERTI, *who has met* MONTALDI *elsewhere and knows his character.*

Stefano, *a guard who arrests* JULIAN.

Situation.—MONTALDI *in despair at his gambling losses arrives at* ALBERTI'S *home to find that his brother is expected soon to return after a prolonged absence. He coldly plans to murder* ALBERTI *that he may succeed to the dukedom with its financial resources.* LUDOVICO, *a friend of the duke, suspects some treacherous design and by following* MONTALDI *is able to prevent the assassination.* JULIAN *is arrested and while he is in jail awaiting the trial, is offered large bribes by* MONTALDI *to confess the assault; but* LUDOVICO *sends word to call upon him in case of great extremity.*

The judge's chair and desk should be so placed that MONTALDI'S *right hand in a glove may be very evident to the audience. There should be a group of peasants in which is* LUDOVICO *at the back of the stage watching the trial.*

Enter Guards, conducting JULIAN—*all the characters follow, and a crowd of vassals*—ALBERTI *advances to the judgment seat.*

ALBERTI.—My people!—the cause of your present assemblage too well is known to you. You come to witness the dispensations of an awful but impartial justice;—either to rejoice in the acquittal of innocence or to approve the conviction of guilt. Personal feelings forbid me to assume this seat myself; yet fear not but that it will be filled by nobleness and honor;—to Montaldi only, I resign it.

JULIAN (*aside*).—He my judge! then I am lost indeed.

ALBERTI.—Ascend the seat, my friend, and decide from it as your own virtuous conscience shall direct. This only will I say: should the scales of accusation and defence poise doubtfully, let mercy touch them with her downy hand and turn the balance on the gentler side.

MONTALDI (*ascending the seat*).—Your will and honor are my only governors! (*Bows.*) Julian! stand forth! you are charged with a most foul and horrible attempt upon the life of my noble kinsman—the implements of murder have been found in your possession, and many powerful circumstances combine to fix the guilt upon you. What have you to urge in vindication?

JULIAN.—On the evening of yesterday, I crossed the mountain to the monastery of St. Bertrand; my errand thither finished, I returned directly to the valley. Rosalie saw me enter the cottage—soon afterwards a strange outcry recalled me to the door; a mantle spread before the threshold caught my eye; I raised it, and discovered a mask within it. The mantle was newly stained with blood! consternation seized upon my soul—the next minute I was surrounded by guards, and accused of murder. They produced a weapon I had lost. I had not power to explain the

truth. I was dragged to the dungeons of the castle. I may become the victim of circumstance, but I never have been the slave of crime!

MONTALDI (*smiling ironically*).—Plausibly urged; have you no more to offer?

JULIAN.—Truth needs not many words—I have spoken!

MONTALDI.—Yet bethink yourself—dare you abide by this wild tale, and brave a sentence on no stronger plea?

JULIAN.—Alas! I have none else to offer.

MONTALDI.—You say, on the evening of yesterday, you visited the monastery of St. Bertrand. What was your business there?

JULIAN (*with hesitation*).—With father Nicolo—to engage him to marry Rosalie and myself on the following morning.

MONTALDI.—A marriage too! Well!—at what time did you quit the monastery?

JULIAN.—The bell for vesper-service had just ceased to toll.

MONTALDI.—By what path did you return to the valley?

JULIAN.—Across the mountain.

MONTALDI.—Did you not pass through the wood of olives, where the dark deed was attempted?

JULIAN (*recollecting*).—The wood of olives?

MONTALDI.—Ha! mark! he hesitates—speak!

JULIAN (*with resolution*).—I did pass through the wood of olives.

MONTALDI.—Ay! and pursuit was close behind. Stefano, you seized the prisoner?

STEFANO.—I did. The bloody weapon bore his name; the mask and mantle were in his hands, and he was shaking in every limb.

MONTALDI.—Enough! heavens! that villainy so monstrous should inhabit such a tender youth! Oh, wretched

youth, I warn you to confess. Sincerity can be your only claim to mercy.

JULIAN.—I have spoken truth: yes,—Heaven knows that I have spoken truth!

MONTALDI.—Then I must exercise my duty. Death is my sentence.

JULIAN.—Hold!—pronounce it not as yet.

MONTALDI.—If you have any further evidence, produce it.

JULIAN (*with despairing energy*).—I call on Ludovico.

(LUDOVICO *steps forward with alacrity*—MONTALDI *recoils with visible trepidation.*)

LUDOVICO.—I am here!

MONTALDI.—And what can he unfold! only repeat that which we already know. I will not hear him—the evidence is perfect——

ALBERTI (*rising with warmth*).—Hold! Montaldi, Ludovico must be heard; to the ear of justice, the lightest syllable of proof is precious.

MONTALDI (*confused*).—I stand rebuked. Well, Ludovico, depose your evidence.

LUDOVICO.—Mine was the fortunate arm to rescue the duke. I fought with the assassin, and drove him beyond the trees into the open lawn. I there distinctly marked his figure, and from the difference in the height alone, Julian cannot be the person.

MONTALDI.—This is no proof—the eye might easily be deceived. I cannot withhold my sentence longer.

LUDOVICO.—I have further matter to advance. Just before the ruffian fled, he received a wound across his right hand; the moonlight showed me that the cut was deep and dangerous. Julian's fingers bear no such mark.

MONTALDI (*evincing great emotion and involuntarily drawing his glove closer over his hand*).—A wound—mere fable—

LUDOVICO.—Nay, more—the same blow struck from off

one of the assassin's fingers, a jewel; it glittered as it fell; I snatched it from the grass—I now produce it—'tis here—a ring—an amethyst set with brilliants!

ALBERTI (*rising hastily*).—What say you? an amethyst set with brilliants! even such I gave Montaldi. Let me view it.—(*As Ludovico advances to present the ring to the duke, Montaldi rushes with frantic impetuosity between, and attempts to seize it.*)

MONTALDI—Slave! resign the ring!

LUDOVICO.—I will yield my life sooner!

MONTALDI.—Wretch! I will rend thy frame to atoms! (*They struggle with violence, Montaldi snatches at the ring, Ludovico catches his hand and tears off the glove—the wound appears.*)

LUDOVICO.—Murder is unmasked—the bloody mark is here! Montaldi is the assassin. (*All rush forward in astonishment—Julian drops upon his knee in mute thanksgiving.*)

MONTALDI.—Shame! madness! hell!

ALBERTI.—Eternal Providence! Montaldi a murderer!

MONTALDI.—Ay! accuse and curse! Idiots! Dupes! I heed you not! I can but die! Triumph not, Alberti—I trample on thee still! (*He draws a poniard and attempts to destroy himself—the weapon is wrested from his hand by the guards.*)

ALBERTI.—Fiend! thy power to sin is past.

MONTALDI (*delirious with passion*).—Ha! ha! ha! my brain scorches, and my veins run with fire! disgraced, dishonored! oh! madness! I cannot bear it—save me—oh! (*He falls into the arms of attendants.*)

ALBERTI.—Wretched man! bear him to his chamber—his punishment be hereafter. (*They carry him off.*)

JULIAN.—Oh! my heart is too full for words.

ALBERTI.—Noble boy! You shall have Rosalio, and we will all attend the ceremony.—CURTAIN.

THE BARON AND THE JEW.

Adapted from the novel, " Ivanhoe," by Sir Walter Scott.

CHARACTERS.

Sir Reginald Front-de-Boeuf, *a large, cruel old English baron.*

Isaac of York, *a Jew in the dungeon of the baron.*

Two Saracens, *servants of the baron.*

Situation.—*The Jew, his daughter and many others of a company, have just been captured and carried within the castle, where* FRONT-DE-BŒUF *seizes the opportunity to extract money from the Jew by means of torturing irons. The appearance of another party without the castle saves the Jew from torture.*

The BARON *carries a poniard at his belt and a bunch of rusty old keys on his right side. The Jew is crouching in the corner of the dungeon. Enter the* BARON *with several slaves, deliberately locks and double locks the door, very slowly approaches* ISAAC, *who stares at him in perfect terror.*

ISAAC.—So may Abraham, Jacob, and all the fathers of our people assist me. I have not the means of satisfying your demand.

BARON.—Seize him, and strip him, slaves, and let the fathers of his race assist him if they can. (*The servants*

seize ISAAC, *raise him from the floor and glare at him with cunning ferocity.*)

ISAAC (*after looking at the baron and the servants*).—I will pay the thousand pounds of silver—that is, with the help of my brethren; for I must beg as a mendicant at the door of our synagogue ere I make up so unheard of a sum. When and where must it be delivered?

BARON.—Here must it be delivered—weighed and told down on this very dungeon floor. Thinkest thou I will part with thee until thy ransom is secure?

ISAAC.—And what is to be my surety that I shall be at liberty after this ransom is paid?

BARON.—The word of a Norman noble, thou pawn-broking slave; the faith of a Norman nobleman, more pure than the gold and silver of thee and all thy tribe.

ISAAC.—I crave pardon, noble lord, but wherefore should I rely wholly on the word of one who will trust nothing to mine?

BARON.—Because thou canst not help it, Jew. Wert thou now in thy treasure-chamber at York, and were I craving a loan of thy shekels it would be thine to dictate. This is *my* treasure-chamber. Here I have thee at advantage, nor will I deign to repeat the terms on which I grant thee liberty. When shall I have the shekels, Isaac?

ISAAC.—Let my daughter Rebecca go forth to York with your safe conduct, noble knight, and so soon as man and horse can return, the treasure (*groans*)—the treasure shall be told down on this very floor.

BARON.—Thy daughter! by heavens, Isaac, I would I had known of this. I gave yonder black-browed maiden to Sir Brian de Bois Guilbert.

ISAAC (*yells so that servants loose their hold. He then throws himself down and clasps the knees of the baron*).—

Take all that you have asked, sir knight,—take ten times more—reduce me to ruin and to beggary, if thou wilt, but spare my daughter, deliver her in safety and honor. Will you reduce a father to wish that his only living child were laid beside her dead mother, in the tomb of our fathers?

BARON.—I would that I had known of this before. I thought your race had loved nothing save their money-bags.

ISAAC (*eagerly*).—Think not so vilely of us, Jews though we be. The hunted fox, the tortured wild-cat loves its young—the despised and persecuted race of Abraham love their children.

BARON.—Be it so, I will believe it in future, Isaac, for thy very sake—but it aids us not now, I cannot help what has happened, or what is to follow; my word is passed to my comrade in arms, nor would I break it for ten Jews and Jewesses to boot. Besides, why shouldst thou think evil is to come to the girl, even if she became Bois Guilbert's booty?

ISAAC.—There will, there must! (*He wrings his hands in agony.*) When did templars breathe aught but cruelty to men and dishonor to women?

BARON.—Dog of an infidel, blaspheme not the Holy Order of the Temple of Zion, but take thought instead to pay me the ransom thou hast promised or woe betide thy Jewish throat!

ISAAC (*with great passion*).—Robber and villain! I will pay thee nothing—not one silver penny will I pay thee, unless my daughter is delivered to me in safety and honor!

BARON (*sternly*).—Art thou in thy senses, Israelite? Has thy flesh and blood a charm against heated iron and scalding oil?

ISAAC (*desperately*).—I care not. Do thy worst. My daughter is my flesh and blood, dearer to me a thousand

times than those limbs which thy cruelty threatens. No silver will I give thee, unless I were to pour it molten down thy avaricious throat—no, not a silver penny will I give thee, Nazarene, were it to save thee from the deep damnation thy whole life has merited. Take my life if thou wilt, and say the Jew, amidst his tortures, knew how to disappoint the Christian.

BARON.—We shall see that; for by the blessed rood, which is the abomination of thy accursed tribe, thou shalt feel the extremities of fire and steel! Strip him, slaves, and chain him down upon the bars. (*The servants seize Isaac and have him partially stripped, when the sound of a bugle twice without and voices calling "Sir Reginald Front-de-Boeuf" stop proceedings. The baron makes a sign to the servants and goes out followed by the servants and Isaac who is putting on his coat.*)

IN LOVE WITH HIS WIFE.

CHARACTERS.

Doctor Aiken, *a prosperous country physician, wise and gentle.*

Josephine Barton, *an actress with painted face, and abrupt manners.*

Situation.—*Doctor Aiken has been in attendance on a poor woman in great distress. Her sole companion is an actress known as* JOSEPHINE BARTON, *who cares for her with the utmost devotion. He is impressed with the sincere disinterestedness of the actress and discloses his own affection for her. She proves to be his long lost wife.*

The scene takes place in a poor lodging in the country. There is a fireplace at the side and a light in the back part of the room.

ACTRESS *is sitting by a table in the front of the platform.* DOCTOR *enters softly from an inner room and closes the door carefully.*

JOSEPHINE.—Oh, there you are, doctor. How is she to-day?

DOCTOR.—Better, thanks to you.

JOSEPHINE.—Oh dear no! I've done nothing.

DOCTOR.—You have nursed her until you are ill and worn out yourself. May I feel your pulse?

JOSEPHINE.—No.

DOCTOR.—You think you are all right?

JOSEPHINE.—I know I am.

DOCTOR.—May I stay and talk to you a little?

JOSEPHINE.—If you like.

DOCTOR.—You have been here a month.

JOSEPHINE.—Yes, luckily for Lil, or she would have lost her engagement.

DOCTOR.—And her nurse too.

JOSEPHINE.—How do you know? I might have gone on with the company and left her.

DOCTOR.—Might you?

JOSEPHINE.—Don't think me a saint!

DOCTOR.—I haven't yet put you in that light. I have only seen a very good woman.

JOSEPHINE (*putting up her hand*).—Stop! Talk of something else. Now, you would never think, would you, that I was playing last night—to look at me, I mean?

DOCTOR (*giving her an indifferent look*).—Well, no.

JOSEPHINE.—Make-up, sir. It's a splendid thing to make up our characters, too, in real life, so that you sha'n't detect us. Now you think I'm good?

DOCTOR.—I think nothing of the kind.

JOSEPHINE (*disconcerted*).—Good gracious! Do you think I'm bad?

DOCTOR (*smiling*).—I have already told you that your devotion to your friend has won my most honest admiration.

JOSEPHINE.—Oh! Well, that's put on. It pays. She will nurse me when I am ill, won't she? (*Silence for a moment.*) Doctor, don't believe in me.

DOCTOR.—I can't help it.

JOSEPHINE.—Why I am a mass of deceit. What color would you call my hair?

DOCTOR.—Golden—a golden brown.

JOSEPHINE.—I knew it. My hair is really black, (*he starts*) dyed, sir, as we dye our very natures, lest you should discover the color of our sins.

DOCTOR (*as if recollecting something amazing*).—Black?

JOSEPHINE.—Of course! Cleverly managed, that's all. It makes a vast difference to a face. Once when we were very poor——

DOCTOR (*astonished*).—We! That is, yourself and your friend.

JOSEPHINE.—No! I was married—I meant the child. It died.

DOCTOR.—I was married too.

JOSEPHINE.—Were you? Is she dead?

DOCTOR (*quietly*).—No! She ran away. She was very young and giddy, and I was grave and stern, and she tired of me. That is all.

JOSEPHINE.—And you have hated women from that moment, of course.

DOCTOR.—I lost my faith in them.

JOSEPHINE.—Will it never return?

DOCTOR (*with warmth*).—It has returned.

JOSEPHINE.—What nonsense! Don't let it! Yet we are, after all, much what men make us. I held my real nature hidden for two years at the pleasure of a man, and it broke free at last. I was treated like a child just as I was struggling to be a woman, and my best impulses were laughed at, and kept down.

DOCTOR.—And so you leave to-morrow?

JOSEPHINE.—Yes.

DOCTOR (*with concern*).—To continue to lead this life?

JOSEPHINE.—Why not? It is no less true for seeming false. I remember when my baby died I had to play just

the same, and in the piece I had to cry, and I did. And a woman I knew in the audience told me I was a fool to put glycerine on my lashes to look like tears, because it ruined my make-up. That's life! Give men and women the real article and they think they see through it, and doubt its truth. Give them paste and paint, and they like it, and believe it true, and know better than the owner of it. People will persist in being too clever; but, after all, they only cheat themselves.

DOCTOR (*smiling*).—You are quite a philosopher.

JOSEPHINE.—I am a woman who has suffered—perhaps that's the same thing.

DOCTOR.—You were not educated for the stage?

JOSEPHINE (*bitterly*).—No; I was educated for a man.

DOCTOR.—You mean——

JOSEPHINE.—I mean I was very young when I married, and he was clever, and wished to mould me after his own pattern. I chose to pretend this was impossible; but my nature grew all the same. Let a man beware when he crushes ambition and interest in a woman, it will live in spite of him, and come to the surface some time. Now, your wife——

DOCTOR.—Was young and foolish—never sinful—that is all.

JOSEPHINE.—And you were never selfish enough to wish her sole pride to be in you, her sole interest in your interests, her sole knowledge, the knowledge you instilled into her giddy brain?

DOCTOR.—I hope not.

JOSEPHINE.—You were never jealous of her mind, as you were jealous of her favor, of her love for art and literature—a blind love, for she knew little of either—because you could not spare time to instruct her in either?

DOCTOR.—Again—I hope not.

JOSEPHINE.—Then you were. We never hope about a certainty.

DOCTOR.—If she had been a woman—well, like you—all might have been different.

JOSEPHINE.—Nonsense! You have seen one side of my character, that is all. Men are so quick to imagine the surface turned towards them is the only one we women own.

DOCTOR.—I saw you tending your sick friend. I saw your patience and love for her. I see you slaving at your profession with no one to help and encourage you, leading a life that must be often uncongenial. I want to know little more of you than that.

JOSEPHINE.—False! False! Everything's false. There is nothing real about me. Now, my age?

DOCTOR (*smiling*).—You are not very old.

JOSEPHINE.—My back is to the light. Put out your hand and touch my cheek. (*He does it.*) Why, how your hand trembles! Covered with white stuff, of course. Wrinkles all hidden. I told you about my hair.

DOCTOR.—I don't care. I—I like the woman I know. The woman you have been since I first met you—when they carried your friend home ill from the theatre, and then sent for me. If you are false, I am afraid I love falseness. I am foolish enough to have got so far that even defamation of yourself from your own lips could not harm you. Yet I am glad after all, that you are going; for, as I told you, I have a wife somewhere, and even to love you as I love you, is a sin.

JOSEPHINE (*rising and walking away*).—You love me.

DOCTOR (*passionately*).—As I never knew one could love. I even love this poor, pretty, tortured hair, and

these dear tired eyes. I love you painted, or old, laughing or in tears. I seem to have crept out of the cold and found your heart as it really is. Don't try to hide it from me. The glimpses I have had of it have been paradise.

JOSEPHINE.—Her hair—your wife's hair—was black.

DOCTOR.—Who told you that?

JOSEPHINE.— The way you looked when I said what mine had been. Try and imagine me with black hair.

DOCTOR.—I can't.

JOSEPHINE.—And so you love this actress?

DOCTOR.—And would marry her if——

JOSEPHINE.—If she were *your wife.*

DOCTOR (*starting in alarm*).—What do you mean?

JOSEPHINE.—Look at me well. (*He gazes at her intensely for a moment or two. Then she lays her hand tenderly on his arm.*) Our little baby died, dear. (*He embraces her and they stand gazing at each other as the curtain falls.*)

CHRISTIAN FORGIVENESS.

CHARACTERS.

Claudius, *a Roman in exile, with a keen, cruel face and unkempt appearance, and with a bent and shrivelled form.*

Philo, *a Christian, with noble gentle face and strong athletic body.*

Situation.—CLAUDIUS *as a judge in Rome condemned* PHILO *and all his family to the slaughter of the arena. But* PHILO *by his immense strength slew the lion and then through Pompilius Taurus effected his escape. His father and the rest of his family were killed. In the wilderness* PHILO *has wandered, has built himself a hut, and has supported a family.* CLAUDIUS, *banished from Rome, a homeless, hopeless old man, with only cruelties in his past life to contemplate, meets* PHILO, *who at first thinks only of vengeance; but when* CLAUDIUS *appeals to his mercy as a Christian he relents, takes him home and ministers to him.*

The costumes should be the Roman dress of about the time of Nero. The scenery represents a thick forest.

CLAUDIUS *enters, looking about in despair.*

CLAUDIUS.—Alone, in this impenetrable forest!
No token of a human habitation,
Look where I may! My voice is hoarse with shouting.
No answer comes, save from some startled bird
Or creeping thing of prey. (*Calls.*). Ho! Hear me! Ho!

Vain effort!—Hark! The crackling of a bough!
A human footstep!—Yes! Relief is nigh!
PHILO *enters.*
O, welcome, stranger, whosoe'er thou art!
For I am lost in these bewildering thickets.
Most timely is thy coming.
PHILO.—And who art thou?
CLAUDIUS.—A Roman; once in power; now an exile—
A wretched outcast, plundered and forsaken;
Compelled to seek this rude and dangerous shelter.
PHILO.—If thou art wretched and an exile, welcome!
(*Gives his hand.*)
CLAUDIUS.—Thou shalt not find me poor in gratitude,
Though otherwise a beggar. Is there not
Some place of refuge near us?
PHILO.—On the border
Of this thick wood, I with my wife and children,
Dwell in a place I will not call a house,
But where at least life's poor necessities
Of food and shelter may be found. The little
We have to share, thou shalt be welcome to.
CLAUDIUS.—How happens it that thou, a man whose speech
Proclaims thou'rt not a mere clod-turning peasant,
Canst in a wild like this content thyself,
Far from the guardianship and pomp of Rome?
PHILO.—The guardianship of Rome! The guardianship!
Great cause have I of gratitude for that!
For to Rome's fatal guardianship I owe
The massacre of kindred and of friends;
Of father, mother, brothers, butchered—butchered
All in cold blood! And oh! for what?

CLAUDIUS.—How? Butchered?
By Rome's authority? A family
Peaceable and obedient to the laws,
And guiltless—butchered by authority?
O, when and where?
PHILO.—Ten years ago—in Rome!
(*Aside*) Yes it is he! none other.
(*Aloud*) O last of all shouldst thou be ignorant!
CLAUDIUS.—Butchered by whom?
PHILO.—By thee! by thee! Thou art the man! thou, Claudius!
The unjust judge, the craven magistrate,
Creature of Nero, purveyor of his brutal,
His fiendish cruelties! Thou art the man!
For what—for what was all that wealth of blood,
Of pure and innocent blood, poured out like water?
Because it ran in Christian veins!
CLAUDIUS.—Thou ravest!
My hands were never stained with Christian blood.
(*Agitated*) You do mistake me for some other man.
I will depart. (*Going.*)
PHILO.—Stay! One lie more or less
Cannot be much to *thee*. Thy cowering glance,
Thy trembling knees, belie thy faltering words.
Let me refresh thy memory a little.
Dost thou remember that eventful day,
In the great amphitheatre, when first
Thou wert informed, the famous Libyan lion,
The emperor's favorite, that dreadful beast
Which thou hadst ordered out to tear in pieces
A white-haired man, Servetus Cincinnatus,
(My father!)—had been slain?
Dost thou recall thy rage against the slayer?

Thou dost! *I* slew the beast!—Vain all disguise!

CLAUDIUS.—How—how didst thou escape?

PHILO.—Ah, ha! Thy words,—
Thy very words betray thee! Even now,
If fear would let thee, thou wouldst plunge thy dagger
Here in my heart. But how did I escape?
I'll tell thee how. The man thou didst most trust
Became a Christian.

CLAUDIUS.—He! Pompilius Taurus
Oh, had I known it then!

PHILO.—Poor, baffled hound!
Dost thou regret, even in retrospection,
The relish of a disappointed vengeance?
Why do thy fingers work so? Ah! thou *wouldst*,
But durst not! What are *thy* limbs and sinews
Compared with *these* that have been trained and tested
In wrestling with wild nature for my food,
With the fierce bear for life, or with the gale
Upon the lake, for safety?

CLAUDIUS.—Do not abuse thy power! Forgive —forgive me!

PHILO.—Forgive thee? Oh! Have I not often revelled
In the anticipation of a moment
Like this now present—when I could have thee thus—
With no one by—when I could grasp thee thus—(*Grasps him.*)
Thus—thus by the throat—and hiss into thy ear,
Remember old—Servetus!

CLAUDIUS.—Mercy!

PHILO.—Mercy?
Ay! even such mercy as *thou* didst show, abhorred one,
Show to that gray-haired man, his kneeling wife,
And his imploring children!
Thy only answer to their prayer was *death!*

Not a swift, easy death, but one of torture,—
Of horror,—in the amphitheatre,—
Torn by wild beasts! Dost *thou* dare plead for mercy?

CLAUDIUS (*sinking on his knees*).—As thou'rt a man, be merciful!

PHILO.—That plea
Will not avail.

CLAUDIUS.—Ah! then, as thou'rt a Christian! (*A pause, during which Philo gently and gradually releases his hold and Claudius rises.*)

PHILO.—And dost thou venture to pronounce *that* name,
The sacred name, by thee so spurned and hated?
I thank thee for it, Claudius! Ay, I thank thee.
Thou hast recalled me to my better self.
Bloody oppressor, diligent murderer,
And persecutor of all Christian men,
As thou hast been,—with every hair of thy head
Steeped in my family's blood,—still, do not fear!
Thou 'rt safe.

CLAUDIUS.—Thanks! thanks! (*Going.*)

PHILO.—Why, whither wouldst thou go?

CLAUDIUS.—To find a shelter for the night.

PHILO.—To perish!
What with the hungry wolf, the inclement air,
Slender thy chance of life!
Here! Come with *me*, and thou shalt have a bed
In my poor hut, with food, and warmth, and safety.
Wilt thou not trust me?

CLAUDIUS.—Oh, thy wrongs have been
Too deadly for forgiveness!

PHILO.—Knowest thou not,
The Christian, *if* a Christian, *must* forgive,
As he would be forgiven by the Father?

CLAUDIUS.—But here forgiveness fails. I blame thee not.
For now, in this majestic solitude,
My crimes start up between me and all hope,
I know it is not in the heart of man,
Where such wrongs cry aloud, to cast out vengeance.

PHILO.—"Vengeance is mine! I will repay, saith the Lord!"

I do forgive thee Claudius.
The Christian's *act* shall tell thee what his *faith* is.
Not the dear child who hangs about my neck
And calls me *father* shall more tenderly
Be cared for and protected from all danger
Than thou, if thou wilt come and be my guest.
Dost thou believe me?

CLAUDIUS (*covering his face, in agony*).—Ay! I cannot help it.

The creed *must* be divine that works this change.
O that I could blot out the hateful past!
O that I might cast off that weight of sin!

PHILO.—This is no fitful mood.
'Tis Christ's own hand has led thee here, my brother;
And from that hand, with reverence I accept thee. (*Taking his hand.*)
Do not despair! There's balm for thee in Gilead.
Hereafter, should I waver in my kindness,
Utter again that plea: "As thou'rt a Christian!" (*They go out.*)

A WIFE AND A HOME.

CHARACTERS.

Colonel Mason, *an old man, follower of Cromwell.*

Juliet Mason, *his daughter.*

Ernest Montague, *a young follower of the King.*

Michael, *a servant to Colonel Mason.*

Situation.—ERNEST MONTAGUE *has been banished from England, and his property has been seized by the Roundheads of Cromwell and given to* MASON. *For various reasons* MONTAGUE *secretly visits England and takes occasion to revisit the scenes of his youth. Here he meets and falls in love with* JULIET. *She does not know that he formerly owned her home.*

The scene should represent an old-fashioned garden of the middle of the seventeenth century. On one side is a strong door or gate to the garden. The wall is high. It was the fashion then to say "thou" and "thee." The costumes should be old-fashioned, and if possible of the time of the Roundheads and Cavaliers.

Scene I.

JULIET MASON, *alone. She has a sprig of lavender in her hand.*

JULIET.—Oh, Ernest Montague.—He promised to meet me here by eight, and the great clock in the hall wanted but five minutes full half an hour ago. It must be half an

hour. I have been pacing up and down this walk from the yew-hedge to the fountain, twenty times at least, besides going twice to the little door in the garden wall, to be sure that it was unbolted. It can't be a minute less than half an hour. He had as well stay now in his hiding place at the village, for I'll never speak to him again. Never! and yet, poor fellow.—No! I'll never speak to him again!—(*Ernest Montague comes in stealthily. He looks round, then hastens to her and takes her hand. She turns away.*) So, Sir Ernest.

ERNEST.—So, my pretty Miss Juliet? Why turn away so angrily? What fault have I committed, I pray thee?

JULIET.—Fault? None.

ERNEST.—Nay, nay, my little Venus of the Puritans, my princess of all Precisions, if thou be offended, tell me so.

JULIET.—Offended, forsooth! People are never offended with people they don't care about.—Offended!

ERNEST.—And is it because some people don't care for other people, that they put their pretty selves into such pretty tantrums—eh, Miss Juliet? I am after time, sweet—but——

JULIET.—After time! I have been here this half-hour!—and my father fast asleep in the hall! After time! If thou had'st cared for me—But men are all alike. There hath not been a true lover in the world since the days of Amadis—and that was but a false legend. After time!—Why, if thou hadst cared for me only as much as I care for this sprig of lavender, thou wouldst have been waiting for me, before the chimes had rung seven. Just think of the time thou hast lost.—Now thou may'st go thy ways—Leave me, sir! (*She tries to withdraw her hand.*)

ERNEST.—Nay, mine own sweet love, do not offer to snatch thy hand away. I cannot part with thee, Juliet,

though thou shouldst flutter like a new caught dove. I must speak with thee. I have that to say which *must* be heard.

JULIET.—Well!

ERNEST.—I have been dogged all day by a canting Puritan, a follower, as I take it, of thy godly father.

JULIET.—Jeer not my father, Ernest, although he be a roundhead and thou a cavalier. He is a brave man and a good.

ERNEST.—He is thy father, and therefore sacred to me. Where did'st thou say he is now?

JULIET.—I left him in the hall, just settling quietly to an after-supper nap.—Why dost thou ask?

ERNEST.—I have been watched all day by one whom I suspect to be a spy; and I fear me, that in spite of my disguise, my false name, and my humble lodging, I am discovered.

JULIET.—Discovered in thy visits here? Discovered as my friend?

ERNEST.—No, no, I trust not so. Therefore I delayed to come to thee till I could shake off my unwelcome follower. Not discovered as thy lover, thy *friend*, if such name better please thee—but as the cavalier and malignant (for so their phrase runs) Ernest Montague.

JULIET.—But granting that were true, what harm hast thou done? What hast thou to fear?

ERNEST.—Small harm, dear Juliet, and yet in these bad days small harm may cause great fear. I have borne arms for the king; I have never acknowledged the Protector; and moreover, I am the rightful owner of this same estate and mansion of Montague Hall, its parks, manors, and dependencies, bestowed by the sequestrators on thy father, Colonel Mason. Seest thou no fear there, fair Juliet?

JULIET.—Alas ! alas !

ERNEST.—Then my deceased father, stout old Sir William, has meddled in every plot and rising in the country, from the first year of the Rebellion to this, as I well trust, the last of the usurpation, so that the very name sounds like a fire-brand. 'Twould be held a fair service to the state, Juliet, to shoot thy poor friend; and yet I promise thee, albeit a loyal subject to king Charles, I am hardly fool enough to wage war in my own single person against Oliver, whom a mightier conqueror than himself will speedily overthrow.

JULIET.—A mightier conqueror !

ERNEST.—Even the great tyrant death—he who levels the mighty and the low—Ernest Montague and Oliver Cromwell !

JULIET.—Death ! Art thou then in such peril? And dost thou loiter here? I beseech thee away ! away this moment ! what detains thee?

ERNEST.—That which brought me here—thyself. Being in England I came hither, more weeks ago than I care to think of, to look on my old birth-place, my old home. I saw thee, Juliet, and ever since I have felt that these walls are a thousand-fold more precious to me as thy home, as thy inheritance, than ever they could have been as mine. I love thee, Juliet.

JULIET.—Oh, go ! go ! go ! To talk of love whilst thou art in such danger !

ERNEST.—I love thee, my own Juliet.

JULIET.—Go !

ERNEST.—Wilt thou go with me? I am not rich—I have no fair mansion to take thee to; but a soldier's arm, and a true heart, Juliet ! Wilt thou go with me, sweet one? I'll bring horses to the little garden door. The moon will be

up at twelve (*She sobs in his arms.*)—Speak, dearest! And yet this trembling hand speaks for thee. Wilt thou go with me and be my wedded wife?

JULIET.—I will. (*He goes out as he came in, and she goes out on opposite side, looking and motioning to him.*)

Scene II.

ERNEST *enters from the side door.*

ERNEST.—Juliet! Not yet arrived! Surely she cannot have changed her purpose? No, no! it were treason against true love but to suspect her of wavering—she lingers from maiden modesty, from maiden fear, from natural affection, from all that man worships in woman. But if she knew the cause I have to dread every delay!

JULIET *enters from the house.*

Juliet! sweetest—how breathless thou art! Thou canst hardly stand! Rest thee on this seat a moment, my Juliet. And yet delay—hath aught befallen to affright thee? Sit here, dearest! What hath startled thee?

JULIET.—I know not. And yet—

ERNEST.—How thou tremblest still! And what——

JULIET.—As I passed the gallery.—Only feel how my heart flutters, Ernest!

ERNEST.—Blessings on that dear heart! Calm thee, sweetest.—What of the gallery?

JULIET.—As I passed, methought I heard voices.

ERNEST.—Indeed! And I too have missed the detected spy who hath been all day dogging my steps. Can he—but no! All is quiet in the house. Look, Juliet! All dark and silent. No light save the moonbeams dancing on the window panes with a cold pale brightness. No sound save the song of the nightingale—dost thou not hear it?

It seems to come from the tall shrubbery sweet-briar, which sends its fragrant breath in at yonder casement.

JULIET.—That is my father's chamber—my dear, dear father! Oh, when he shall awake and find his Juliet gone, little will the breath of the sweet-briar, or the song of the nightingale comfort him then! My dear, dear father! He kissed me after prayers to-night, and laid his hand on my head and blessed me. He will never bless his poor child again.

ERNEST.—Come, sweetest! The horses wait; the hours wear on; morning will soon be here.

JULIET.—Oh, what a morning to my poor, poor father! His Juliet, his only child, his beloved, his trusted! Oh, Ernest, my father! my father! (*She sobs on his shoulder.*)

ERNEST.—Maiden, if thou lovest thy father better than me, remain with him. It is not yet too late. I love thee, Juliet, too well to steal thee away against thy will, too well to take thy hand without thy heart. The choice is still open to thee. Return to thy father's house, or wend with me. Weep not thus, dear one; but decide, and quickly.

JULIET.—Nay, I will go with thee, Ernest. Forgive these tears! I'll go with thee to the end of the world. (*A noise. They start.*)

ERNEST.—Now then. What noise is that?

JULIET.—Surely, surely the turning of a key. (*They both jump to their feet in alarm.*)

ERNEST (*he tries to open door*).—Ay, the garden door is fastened; the horses are led off. We are discovered.

JULIET.—Is there no other way of escape?

ERNEST.—None. The garden is walled round. Look at these walls, Juliet; a squirrel could scarcely climb them. Through the house is the only chance; and that——

JULIET.—Try the door again; I do beseech thee, try.

Push against it—I never knew it fastened other than by this iron bolt. Push manfully. (*He struggles with door.*)

ERNEST.—It is all in vain; thou thyself heard'st the key turn; and see how it resists my utmost strength. The door is surely fast.

JULIET.—See; the household is alarmed! Look at the lights! Venture not so near, dear Ernest. Conceal thee in the arbor till all is quiet. I will go meet them.

ERNEST.—Alone?

JULIET.—Why, what have I to fear? Hide thee behind the yew-hedge till the first search be past, and then——

ERNEST.—Desert thee! Hide me! And I a Montague! But be calmer, sweetest! Thy father is too good a man to meditate aught unlawful. 'Twill be but some short restraint, with thee for my warder. Calm thee, dearest. (*They shrink back almost out of sight.*)

Enter COLONEL MASON *and a servant with an old-fashioned arquebuss.*

COLONEL MASON.—Shoot! Shoot instantly, Michael. (*Michael fumbles with fuse.*) Slay the robber! Why dost thou not fire? Be'st thou in league with him? What dost thou fumble at?

MICHAEL.—So please your worship, the wind hath extinguished the touch-paper. (*He holds up a bit of burnt paper.*)

COLONEL MASON.—The wind hath extinguished thy wits, I trow, that thou couldst bring aught but that old arquebuss. Return for a steel weapon. (*Michael goes out.*) Meantime my sword—I see but one man, and surely a soldier of the Cause and Covenant, albeit aged, may well cope with a night-thief. Come on, young man. Be'st thou coward as well as robber? Defend thyself.

JULIET.—Oh, father ! father ! (*She rushes to him.*) Wouldst thou do murder before thy daughter's eyes?

COLONEL MASON.—Cling not thus around me, maiden. What makest thou with that thief, that craven thief?

ERNEST.—Nay, tremble not, Juliet; for thy sake I will endure even this contumely.—Put up your sword, sir, it is needless. I yield myself your prisoner. When I make myself known to Colonel Mason, I trust that he will retract an expression as unworthy of his character as of mine.

COLONEL MASON.—I do know thee. Thou art the foul malignant Ernest Montague; the abettor of the plotting traitor Ormond: the outlawed son of the lawless cavalier who once owned this demesne.

ERNEST.—And knowing me for Ernest Montague couldst thou take me for a garden robber? Couldst thou grudge to the sometime heir of these old halls a parting glance of their venerable beauty?

COLONEL MASON.—Young man, wilt thou tell me, darest thou tell me, that it was to gaze on this old mansion that thou didst steal hither, like a thief in the night? Ernest Montague, canst thou look at thy father's house and utter that falsehood? Ye were a heathenish and blinded generation, main props of tyranny and prelacy, a worldly and a darkling race, who knew not the truth;—but yet, from your earliest ancestor to the last possessor of these walls, ye had amongst the false gods whom ye worshipped, one idol, called Honor. (*The young man shakes his head.*) Ernest Montague,I joy that thou hast yet enough of grace vouchsafed to thee to shrink from affirming that lie.

ERNEST.—But a robber ! a garden-thief !

COLONEL MASON.—Ay, a robber ! I said, and I repeat, a robber, a thief, a despoiler. Hath the garden no fruit save its apricots and dewberries? Hath the house no treasure

but its vessels of gold and silver? If ever thou art a father, and hast one hopeful and dutiful maiden, the joy of thine heart, and the apple of thine eye, (*she sinks down and covers her face to hide her tears*). then thou wilt hold all robbery light, so that it leaves thee her, all robbers guiltless save him who would steal thy child. Weep not thus, Juliet. And thou, young man, away. I joy that the old and useless gun defeated my angry purpose—that I slew not my enemy on his father's ground. Away with thee, young man! Go study the parable that Nathan spake to David. I will not make thee prisoner in the house of thy fathers. Thank me not; but go.—(*He turns away.*)

JULIET (*rising*).—Father, hear me!

COLONEL MASON.—Within! To-morrow! (*He points to the house.*)

JULIET (*falling on her knees.*)—Nay, here and now. Thou hast pardoned him; but thou hast not pardoned me.

COLONEL MASON.—I have forgiven thee—I do forgive thee.

JULIET.—Thou knowest not half my sins! I am the prime offender, the great and unrepenting culprit. I loved him, I do love him; we are betrothed, and I will hold faithful to my vow! Never shall another man wed Juliet Mason! Oh, father, I knew not till this very hour how dear thy poor child was to thy heart—Canst thou break hers?

COLONEL MASON (*tenderly.*)—Juliet, this is a vain and simple fancy.

JULIET.—Father, it is love—plead for us, Ernest.

ERNEST.—Alas! I dare not. Thou art a rich heiress; I am a poor exile.

JULIET.—Out on such distinctions! one word from my father; one stroke of Cromwell's pen, and thou art an exile no longer. Plead for us, Ernest!

ERNEST.—Juliet, I dare not. Thy father is my benefactor; he has given me life and liberty. Wouldst thou have me repay these gifts by bereaving him of his child?

JULIET.—We will not leave him. We will dwell together. Ernest, wilt thou not speak? (*Silence.*)

COLONEL MASON (*looking long and searchingly at Montague.*) His honorable silence hath pleaded better for him than words. Ernest Montague, dost thou love this maid?

ERNEST.—Do I love her!

COLONEL MASON.—I believe in good truth that thou dost. Take her then from the hand of her father.—There is room enough in yonder mansion for the heir and the heiress, the old possessor and the new. Take her, and Heaven bless ye, my children! (*He goes out and they follow arm in arm.*)

AURELIAN AND ZENOBIA.

Adapted from "Zenobia," by William Ware.

CHARACTERS.

Aurelian, *a dark, powerful man, courageous, generous, quick-tempered,—Emperor of Rome.*

Zenobia, *tall, beautiful, and commanding in form and feature,—Queen of Palmyra.*

Antiochus, *powerfully, but loosely built, dull, unprincipled, —betrayer of Queen.*

Sindarina, *very dark, tall, slender,—an Indian princess, slave of Queen, accomplice of* ANTIOCHUS.

Julia, *daughter of Zenobia.*

Carus, *an officer of high rank in the Roman army.*

Officers, guards, attendants.

Situation.—ZENOBIA, *Queen of Palmyra, has become so great in the East that* AURELIAN, *Emperor of Rome, has demanded the relinquishing of all titles but that of Queen of Palmyra. She defies him. He sets out for the East, defeats her in two battles, and besieges* PALMYRA. *As she is secretly going to ask aid of a neighboring nation, she is betrayed and led to the tent of* AURELIAN. *There, the following interview takes place.*

AURELIAN, CARUS, *and two officers stand at the side of the platform, watching the slow approach of* ZENOBIA, JULIA *and an attendant.*

AURELIAN (*evidently affected by the majestic bearing of Zenobia*).—It is a happy day for Rome, (*he salutes her courteously*) that sees you, lately Queen of Palmyra and of the East, a captive in the tent of Aurelian.

ZENOBIA (*in a melancholy tone*).—And a dark one for my afflicted country.

AURELIAN.—It might have been darker, had not the good providence of the gods delivered you into my hands.

ZENOBIA.—The gods preside not over treachery. And it must have been by treason among those in whom I have placed my most familiar trust, that I am now where and what I am. It had been a nobler triumph to you, O Roman, and a lighter fall to me, had the field of battle decided the fate of my kingdom, and led me prisoner to your tent.

AURELIAN.—Doubtless it had been so; yet was it for me to cast away what chance threw into my power? A war is now happily ended, which, had your mission succeeded, might yet have raged—and but to the mutual harm of two great nations. Yet it was a bold and sagacious device. A more determined, a better appointed or more desperate foe, I have never yet contended with.

ZENOBIA.—It were strange indeed, if you met not with a determined foe, when life and liberty were to be defended. Had not treason, base and accursed treason, given me up like a chained slave to your power, yonder walls must have first been beaten piecemeal down by your engines, and buried me beneath their ruins, and famine cluched all whom the sword had spared, ere we had owned you master. What is life, when liberty and independence are gone?

AURELIAN.—But why, let me ask, were you moved to

assert an independency of Rome? How many peaceful and prosperous years have rolled on since Trajan and the Antonines, while you and Rome were at harmony. Why was this order disturbed? What madness ruled to turn you against the power of Rome?

ZENOBIA.—The same madness that tells Aurelian he may yet possess the whole world, and sends him here into the far East to wage needless war with a woman—Ambition! Yet had Aurelian always been upon the Roman throne, or one resembling him, it had perhaps been different. There then could have been naught but honor in any alliance that had bound together Rome and Palmyra. But while the thirty tyrants were fighting for the Roman crown, was I to sit still waiting humbly to become the passive prey of whosoever might please to call me his? By the immortal gods, not so! I asserted my supremacy and made it felt. I came in and reduced the jarring elements of the Eastern provinces, and out of parts broken and sundered, and hostile, constructed a fair and well-proportioned whole. And when I had tasted the sweets of sovereign and despotic power—what they are, thou knowest—was I tamely to yield the whole at the word or threat even of Aurelian? It could not be. Sprung from a royal line, and so long upon a throne, it was superior force alone—divine or human—that should drag me from my right. Thou hast been but four years king, Aurelian, monarch of the great Roman world, yet wouldst thou not, but with painful unwillingness, descend and mingle with the common herd. For me, ceasing to reign, I would cease to live.

AURELIAN.—Thy speech shows thee well worthy to reign. It is no treason to Rome, Carus (*he turns to his general*), to lament that the fates have cast down from a throne one who filled its seat so well. Hadst thou hearkened to my

message thou mightest still, lady, have sat upon thy native seat. The crown of Palmyra might still have girt thy brow.

ZENOBIA.—But not of the East.

AURELIAN.—I lament, great Queen,—for so I may call thee—that upon an ancient defender of our Roman honor, upon her who revenged Rome upon the insolent Persian, this heavy fate should fall. The debt of Rome to Zenobia is great, and shall yet in some sort at least be paid. Curses upon those who moved thee to this war. They have brought this calamity upon thee, Queen, not I nor thou. This is not a woman's war.

ZENOBIA.—Rest assured, great prince, that the war was mine. I had indeed great advisers, Longinus, Gracchus, Zabdas, Otho. Their names are honored in Rome as well as here. They have been with me, but without lying or vanity, I may say I have been their head.

AURELIAN.—Be it so; nevertheless, thy services shall be remembered.—But let us now to the affairs before us. The city has not surrendered—though thy captivity is known, the gates are still shut. A word from thee would open them.

ZENOBIA (*indignantly*).—It is a word I cannot speak. Wouldst thou that I too should turn traitor?

AURELIAN.—It surely would not be that. It can avail naught to contend further—it can but end in a wider destruction, both of your people and my soldiers.

ZENOBIA.—Longinus, I may suppose is now supreme. Let the emperor address him and what is right will be done.

AURELIAN (*he turns and converses a moment with his officers*).—Within the walls thou hast sons. Is it not so?

ZENOBIA (*quickly in alarm*).—It is not they, nor either of them who have conspired against me!

AURELIAN.—No—not quite so. Yet he who betrayed

thee calls himself of thy family. Thy sons surely were not in league with him.—(*Speaking in a louder tone*) Soldiers, lead forth the great Antiochus and his slave. (*The Queen starts at the name, Julia utters a faint cry.*)

ANTIOCHUS *enters, followed by* SINDARINA, *who stands for a moment with bowed head, then in great emotion rushes to the Queen, throws herself at her feet covering them with kisses.*

ZENOBIA (*with deep sorrow*).—My poor Sindarina! (*Sindarina's sobs choke her utterance.*)

AURELIAN (*sternly*).—Bear her away,—bear her from the tent. (*A guard seizes her and hurries away.*) This (*he turns to Zenobia*) is thy kinsman, as he tells me—the Prince Antiochus? (*Zenobia makes no reply.*) He has done Rome a great service. (*Antiochus straightens himself up.*) He has the merit of ending a weary and disastrous war. It is a rare fortune to fall to any one. 'Tis a work to grow great upon. Yet, Prince, the work is not complete. The city yet holds out. If I am to reward thee with the sovereign power, as thou sayest, thou must open the gates. Canst thou do it?

ANTIOCHUS (*eagerly*).—Great Prince, it is provided for. Allow me but a few moments, and a place proper for it, and the gates I warrant shall swing quickly upon their hinges.

AURELIAN (*ironically*).—Ah! do you say so? That is well. What, I pray, is the process?

ANTIOCHUS.—At a signal which I shall make, noble Prince, and which has been agreed upon, every head of every one of the Queen's party rolls in the dust—Longinus, Gracchus, and his daughter, and a host more—their heads fall. The gates are then to be thrown open.

AURELIAN.—Noble Palmyrene, you have the thanks of

all. Of the city then we are at length secure. For this, thou wouldst have the rule of it under Rome, wielding a sceptre in the name of the Roman senate, and paying tribute as a subject province? Is it not so?

ANTIOCHUS.—It is. That is what I would have, and would do, most excellent Aurelian.

AURELIAN.—Who are thy associates in this? Are the Queen's sons of thy side and partners in this enterprise?

ANTIOCHUS.—They are not privy to the design to deliver up to thy great power the Queen their mother; but they are my friends, and most surely do I count upon their support. As I shall return king of Palmyra, they will gladly share my power.

AURELIAN (*in terrific tones*).—But if friends of thine they are enemies of mine. They are seeds of future trouble. They may sprout up into kings also, to Rome's annoyance. They must be crushed. Dost thou understand me?

ANTIOCHUS.—I do, great Prince. Leave them to me. I will do for them. But to say the truth they are too weak to disturb any—friends or enemies.

AURELIAN.—Escape not so. They must die.

ANTIOCHUS (*somewhat alarmed*).—They shall, they shall; soon as I am within the walls their heads shall be sent to thee.

AURELIAN.—That now is as I would have it. One thing more thou hast asked—that the fair slave who accompanies thee be spared to thee, to be thy Queen.

ANTIOCHUS.—It was her desire—hers, noble Aurelian, not mine.

AURELIAN.—But didst thou not engage to her as much?

ANTIOCHUS.—Truly I did. But among princes such words are but politic ones: that is well understood. Kings marry for the state. I would be higher matched. (*He looks significantly toward Julia.*) Am I understood? (*There is*

silence a moment.) The Princess Julia I would raise to the throne. (*He seems to swell in importance.*)

AURELIAN (*turning away towards the Queen and then towards his officers and attendants.*)—Do I understand thee? I understand thee to say that for the bestowment of the favors and honors thou hast named, thou wilt do the things thou hast now specifically promised? Is it not so?

ANTIOCHUS.—It is, gracious king.

AURELIAN.—Dost thou swear it?

ANTIOCHUS.—I swear it by the great God of Light.

AURELIAN (*His countenance becomes black with fury and contempt. Antiochus starts and turns pale*).—Romans, pardon me for so abusing your ears! And you, our royal captives! I knew not that such baseness lived—still less that it was here.—(*Turning to Antiochus.*) Thou foul stigma upon humanity! Why opens not the earth under thee, but that it loathes and rejects thee! Is a Roman like thee, dost thou think, to reward thy unheard of treacheries? Thou knowest no more what a Roman is, than what truth and honor are.—Soldiers! seize yonder miscreant, write traitor on his back, and spurn him forth the camp. His form and his soul both offend alike. Hence monster! (*Antiochus trembles all over, appeals to the Emperor's mercy, but a guard stops his mouth, and drags him away. His shrieks are heard in the distance.*) It was not for me to refuse what fate threw into my hands. Though I despise the traitorous informer, I could not shut my ear to the facts he revealed, without myself betraying the interests of Rome. But believe me, it was information I would willingly have spared. My infamy were as his, to have rewarded the traitor. Fear not, great Queen. I pledge the word of a Roman and an Emperor for thy safety. Thou are safe both from Roman and Palmyrene.

ZENOBIA.—What I have but now been witness of, assures me that in the magnanimity of Aurelian I may securely rest.

AURELIAN.—Guards, conduct the Queen to the palace set apart for her. (*He bows. Zenobia and Julia bow and go out followed by guard. Aurelian and officers then go out on other side.*)

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"Fourth of July,"	*J. Pierpont,*
Freedom's Natal Day,	*Elizabeth M. Griswold,*
The Declaration of Independence,	*John Quincy Adams,*
The Nation's Birthday,	*Mary E. Vandyne,*
The New Liberty Bell,	*H. B. C.,*
The Principles of the Revolution,	*Josiah Quincy,*

Labor Day.

Idleness a Crime,	*Henry B. Carrington,*
Knights of Labor,	*T. V. Powderly,*
Labor,	*Rev. Orville Dewey,*
No Excellence without Labor,	*William Wirt,*
Opportunity to Labor,	*Thomas Brackett Reed,*
The Dignity of Labor,	. . . .
Toil,	. . . .
Work,	*Thomas Carlyle,*

Thanksgiving.

TITLE	AUTHOR
A Thanksgiving Prayer,	
For a Warning,	*C. B. Le Row*,
Give Thanks,	
Harvest Hymn,	*John Greenleaf Whittier*
How the Pilgrims Gave Thanks,	
Our Thanksgiving Accept,	*W. D. Howells*,
Thanksgiving,	
" Among the Greeks,	
" " " Jews,	
" for His House,	*Robert Herrick*,
" Hymn,	
" Ode,	*John Greenleaf Whittier*,
Thanksgivings of Old,	*E. A. Smuller*,
That Things are No Worse, Sire,	*Helen Hunt Jackson*,
The First Boston Thanksgiving—July, 1631,	
The First English Thanksgiving in New York,	
The First National Thanksgiving,	
The First Thanksgiving Proclamation Issued by George Washington,	
The Day of Thanksgiving,	*Henry Ward Beecher*,
The Old Thanksgiving Days,	*Ernest W. Shurtleff*,
Washington's Proclamation,	

Christmas.

A Christmas Thought,	*Lucy Larcom*,
" " about Dickens,	*Bertha S. Scranton*,
' Question,	*Rev. Minot J. Savage*,
A Merry Christmas and A Glad New Year,	*George Cooper*,
A Schemer,	*Edgar L. Warren*,
A Secret,	*Mrs. G. M. Howard*,
A Telephone Message,	
Bells of Yule,	*Alfred Tennyson*,
Christmas Bells,	*H. W. Longfellow*,
" in Olden Time,	*Sir Walter Scott*,
" Roses,	*May Riley Smith*,
Ode on Christmas,	*J. E. Clinton*,
Old Christmas,	
"Quite Like a Stocking,"	*Thomas Bailey Aldrich*,
The Day of Days,	
The Christmas Peal,	*Harriet Prescott Spofford*,
The Little Christmas-Tree,	*Susan Coolidge*,
The Little Mud-Sparrows,	*Elizabeth Stuart Phelps*,
The Merry Christmas-Time,	*George Arnold*,
The Nativity,	*Louisa Parsons Hopkins*,
The Star in the West,	*Hezekiah Butterworth*,

New Year's.

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