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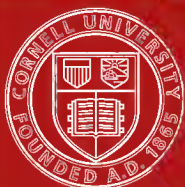
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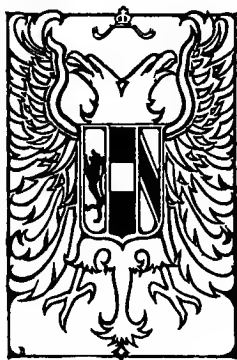
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PROFESSOR BERNHARDI

PROFESSOR BERNHARDI

A COMEDY BY ARTHUR SCHNITZLER
AN ADAPTATION IN ENGLISH
BY MRS. EMIL POHLI



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THIS LITTLE VOLUME
IS DEDICATED TO MY BELOVED SON
AUSTIN RAMON POHLI

Introduction

"Professor Bernhardi" is Schnitzler's latest and most original drama. The first performance of the play took place in the month of December 1912, at the Kleine Theater in Berlin. The incident upon which the play is founded, occurred in Vienna some time ago and created a great deal of feeling. For that reason, the Censor forbade the production of the play in Austria. I shall leave it to the judgment of the reader, whether the ban of the Censor is in any way justified. Of course, it must be borne in mind that Austria is an ultra-Catholic country.

It is well-known that Schnitzler's father was a distinguished physician and Professor at the University of Vienna; and that his son Arthur followed his father's profession for several years. Undoubtedly this experience helped him in his deep understanding of human nature; you can feel the deft surgeon's hand with its soft touch, the discernment of the diagnostician in his wonderful analysis of woman's soul.

In almost all of Schnitzler's plays, the reminiscences of his professional life are immortalized in the character of a doctor through whose lips as in "Der Einsame Weg," "Das Weite Land," "Der Ruf Des Lebens," "Freiwild," "Das Mærchen," the poet expresses his own view-point, his philosophy.

There is no leading lady in "Professor Bernhardi." The only woman in the play is a nurse who speaks only a few lines in the first Act. Fourteen physicians are the other characters.

Introduction

With remarkable technique, these fourteen doctors are introduced: the hypoprite, the incompetent, the enthusiast, the Zionist, the anti-Semitic ones, the false and the real philanthropists. Even on the stage, it is difficult to distinguish them in their diversity.

It is in sparkling dialogue, discussions on diseases and in the display of their respective feelings towards their chief, that they show their characteristics to the audience.

However, to bring the substance of the play within the compass of a public reading and lecture—in which form the play was first presented by me to the public—I was compelled to re-cast the work of the author and, for that purpose I took the liberty of reducing the original text to one-fourth, often letting my personal interpretation take the place of many pages of dialogue. The reader will therefore understand that this is not offered as a translation but is only a resumé, as it were, of the main features of the play.

Mrs. Emil Pohli

*San Francisco
August the first
Nineteen hundred and thirteen*

CHARACTERS

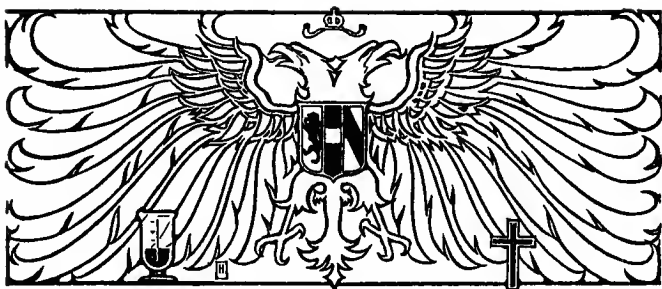
- PROFESSOR BERNHARDI . . . PROFESSOR FOR INTERNAL
MEDICINE AND DIRECTOR OF THE ELIZABETHINUM
- DOCTOR EBENWALD . PROFESSOR OF SURGERY, VICE-DIRECTOR
- DOCTOR CYPRIAN NERVE SPECIALIST
- DOCTOR PFLUGFELDER EYE SPECIALIST
- DOCTOR FILITZ DISEASES OF WOMEN
- DOCTOR TUGENDVETTER SKIN SPECIALIST
- DOCTOR LOEWENSTEIN . . . SPECIALIST ON CHILDREN'S
DISEASES
- DOCTOR SCHREIMANN THROAT SPECIALIST
- DOCTOR ADLER PATHOLOGICAL ANATOMIST
- DOCTOR OSCAR BERNHARDI } ASSISTANTS TO BERNHARDI
- DOCTOR KURT PFLUGFELDER }
- DOCTOR WENGER . . . ASSISTANT TO TUGENDVETTER
- HOCHROITZPOINTNER . STUDENT OF MEDICINE—INTERNE
- SISTER LUDMILLA A NURSE
- DOCTOR FLINT MINISTER OF EDUCATION
- PRIVY-COUNSELOR WINKLER . . . DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
- FRANZ REDER . PRIEST AT THE CHURCH OF HOLY FLORIAN
- DOCTOR GOLDENTHAL ATTORNEY-AT-LAW
- KULKA A REPORTER

Vienna—in 1900

Time and Place

Fifteen years before the opening scene, Professor Bernhardt, with the help of Professor Tugendvetter and Professor Cyprian, founded the medical institution named Elizabethinum, after the Empress of Austria. Now, owing to his skill as a physician, his mental gifts and his energy, the hospital and clinic are among the best in Vienna, with Professor Bernhardt at its head as President.

PROFESSOR BERNHARDI



ACT I

In the Elizabethinum — The opening scene is laid in a large ante-room of the Elizabethinum, with several doors, one leading to a ward, another to a private sick-room, and large folding doors opening into a vestibule.

All the furnishings are white; along the walls are large bookcases filled with medical works, and glass cases where the latest surgical instruments and appliances are assembled.

In an open wardrobe are seen the white operating coats of doctors. There is also a long table covered with charts, diaries and other documents.

Sister Ludmilla, a nurse, about twenty-eight years old, is occupied arranging medical instruments. She has large blue eyes, weak and watery.

Hochroitpointner enters from the ward. Young man twenty-five years old, medium height, fat, pale face with scars, small moustache, eye-glasses, and oiled smooth hair. Type of student who attends all

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lectures and has never succeeded in passing an examination.

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. Professor has not come yet? They are a long time at it today. That's the third autopsy in a week, and only twenty beds in the ward. And tomorrow we'll have another one.

SISTER. Do you think so, Doctor? That septicæmia case?

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. Yes. By the way, did you make a report?

SISTER. Of course, Doctor.

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. Well, we could not prove it, but it was surely a case of malpractice. I tell you, Sister, there are all kinds of things happening in the world. Ah! here are the invitations to the ball—under the patronage of the Princess Stixenstein. Well, Sister, are you going to the ball?

SISTER. I guess not, Doctor.

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. Dancing forbidden?

SISTER (*smiling*). No, Doctor, we are not a religious order. Nothing is forbidden us.

HOCHROITZPOINTNER (*with a sly look*). Nothing?
(*Doctor Oscar Bernhardt enters. Twenty-five years old, elegantly dressed, handsome, pleasing appearance, but diffident manner.*)*

OSCAR. Good-morning! Father will be here directly
(*At the table.*) Oh! here are the invitations to the ball. Why do they send them here?

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. The ball for the benefit of

*The tender relations between Bernhardt and his son Oscar, are a tribute to the affection that existed between Professor Schnitzler and his son Arthur.

PROFESSOR BERNHARDI

the Elizabethinum promises to be the most elegant affair of the season. The papers are full of it. I hear that you have composed a waltz for the occasion.

OSCAR (*deprecatory gesture and pointing to sick-room*). Anything new in there?

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. That septicæmia case is near the end.

OSCAR (*regretfully*). Oh, well! there was nothing to be done.

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. I gave her a camphor injection.

OSCAR. Yes, the art of prolonging a doomed life is one secret that we have solved.

(Enter Professor Bernhardi. Type of a man of the world, distinguished, gray hair, fine eyes. He is accompanied by his assistant, Doctor Kurt Pflugfelder, twenty-seven years old. They come from the dissecting room.)

KURT. I could not help it, Professor. Doctor Adler would have liked it much better if Professor Ebenwald's diagnosis had been correct.

BERNHARDI. But, my dear Doctor Pflugfelder, you suspect treason everywhere.

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. I just hear from Doctor Oscar that we were right.

BERNHARDI. Yes, but at the same time, *we* were wrong! Or don't you attend Professor Ebenwald's courses?

OSCAR. Doctor Hochroitzpointner attends nearly all the courses.

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BERNHARDI (*laying his hand on Hochroitzpointner's shoulder, kindly*). Well, anything new?

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. That septicæmia case is very bad.

BERNHARDI. Poor girl! Still alive?

(*Enter Professor Ebenwald.*)

EBENWALD (*Vice-president, tall, slender spectacles; with exaggerated Austrian accent*). Good-morning! Ah, there you are, Professor!

BERNHARDI. How do you do, Doctor.

EBENWALD. Have you a second for me?

BERNHARDI. Now?

EBENWALD (*approaching him*). If it were possible. It is in regard to the appointment of a successor to Professor Tugendvetter.

BERNHARDI. Is there any hurry for that?

(*The Sister gives Bernhardt a document to sign.*)

Excuse me one moment, we have a case of septicæmia there, (*pointing to door*) a young girl, absolutely conscious; she wants to get up, take a walk, believes herself perfectly well. You cannot count the pulse any more. It may be over before an hour is gone.

EBENWALD (*pompously*). That occurs not infrequently.

HOCHROITZPOINTNER (*eagerly*). Shall I give her another camphor injection?

BERNHARDI. You might have spared yourself the first one—never mind, you gave her perhaps the happiest hour of her life, though, I suppose, unintentionally.

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HOCHROITZPOINTNER. Do you consider me a mere butcher?

BERNHARDI. I do not remember having uttered a reproach of that kind. (*Hochroitzpointner and Ebenwald exchange a look.*)

BERNHARDI (*to Sister*). Has she relatives?

SISTER. Nobody has called.

BERNHARDI. Not her lover?

OSCAR. Trust him! He won't dare. She hasn't even mentioned him. Perhaps she doesn't know his name.

BERNHARDI. And that is what they call "love's happiness."

SISTER (*who has been standing near, whispers to Hochroitzpointner*). I'll go now and get his Reverence to come.

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. Yes, you might go. If you get there too late, it is no misfortune. (*Sister goes out.*)

EBENWALD (*displaying impatience*). Well, the case is this, Doctor: I have received a letter from Professor Hell, from Graz. He is inclined to accept an appointment as successor to Tugendvetter.

BERNHARDI. Ah! he is inclined!

EBENWALD. Yes, sir.

BERNHARDI. Did anyone ask him?

EBENWALD. I took the liberty, as his old friend and classmate.

(*Enter Professor Tugendvetter. About fifty years old, gray, "side-chops," affects jovial, humorous manner. Of uncertain demeanor, tries to win applause.*)

PROFESSOR BERNHARDI

TUGENDVETTER. Good-morning! I have to talk to you, Bernhardi. His Excellency—I have just come from His Excellency—sends his regards to you.

BERNHARDI. Who sends his regards?

TUGENDVETTER. Flint, the Minister. Oh! we talked about you. He thinks a great deal of you. He remembers with pleasure the time when you were assistants together at Rappenweiler's. Ah! he is a winner! First time in Austria a clinical professor ever rose to be a Minister.

BERNHARDI. He was always a good politician, your latest friend Flint. By the way, did he approve your acceptance of this municipal hospital appointment? Lucky we have someone to take your place.

TUGENDVETTER. Little Wenger? Yes, quite capable. You will not let him fill my place for any length of time?

EBENWALD. I have just mentioned having received a letter from Professor Hell, who is willing—

TUGENDVETTER. Oh! he has also written to me—

BERNHARDI. Well! there is certainly nothing slow about the gentleman.

TUGENDVETTER (*looking at Ebenwald*). Say, Bernhardi, your institution would have a splendid acquisition in Hell.

BERNHARDI. Then he must have developed remarkably in Graz. When he was in Vienna, we considered him absolutely incompetent.

TUGENDVETTER. Who, for instance?

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BERNHARDI. You, for instance.

TUGENDVETTER. I think that Wenger is too young.

BERNHARDI. Well, one of them has to be elected, and I hope that you take sufficient interest in the future of your department to vote for the better man.

TUGENDVETTER. Well, I should say so! Aren't we the founders of it, Bernhardt, Cyprian and I. How long ago was it?

EBENWALD. Fifteen years ago, dear Tugendvetter.

TUGENDVETTER. Fifteen years, a-hem—a beautiful time. By Jove, it will not be easy for me. Say, Bernhardt, could it not be arranged for me to remain here?

BERNHARDI. Absolutely not. The day you take your place there I shall appoint your former assistant to fill your place until the election.

EBENWALD. Then I wish to ask that the election take place within the next few days.

(Bernhardt shows resentment at the interference of Ebenwald, who leaves in apparent indignation. All exit. As they leave, Doctor Adler enters; small, dark, lively, about thirty years old. Kurt enters. He and Adler engage in conversation about the slow progress the science of medicine has made.)

ADLER. All that you can do is to experiment.

KURT. What are we to do? We must try the new remedies if the old ones fail.

ADLER. And to-morrow the new is old; that is why I chose Pathological Anatomy. There, at least one knows what he is doing, and is the master.

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KURT. You forget, Doctor Adler, there is One above you.

ADLER. And He hasn't time to bother about us, He is too busy with the spiritual department. (*Looks over the record.*) Also Röntgen? Do you really use that in such cases?

KURT. We are obliged to try everything, Doctor Adler, especially where there is nothing more to be lost.

(*Cyprian enters, an elderly man with long, blonde hair. He is looking for the janitor.*)

CYPRIAN. Can't find him. I am sure he is in a saloon. The same thing will happen here that occurred in Prague, where we had a janitor who was addicted to liquor. That fellow actually drank even the alcohol out of the specimen jars.

(*Bernhardi enters.*)

OSCAR (*from the sick-room*). Oh, father, if you want to speak to her—

(*Bernhardi exits.*)

ADLER (*to Cyprian*). A dying patient!

(*Priest enters. Young man, twenty-eight years old, with an energetic, intelligent face. The Acolyte remains standing at the door. Adler greets him.*)

PRIEST. Good-day, gentlemen. I hope that I am not too late?

KURT. No, Your Reverence, the professor is with the patient now.

PRIEST. Then you have not given up hope?

KURT. Yes, it is a perfectly hopeless case!

(*Hochroitzpointner offers the priest a chair.*)

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PRIEST. I will wait until the professor has left the patient.

CYPRIAN. Your Reverence, if only we could help all of these patients; but sometimes we cannot do anything better than to comfort them.

KURT. And lie to them.

PRIEST. You use a very hard word there.

KURT. Pardon, Your Reverence, I was referring to the physician; still that is sometimes the most difficult and noblest part of our professional duty.

(Bernhardi is seen at the door; the priest rises. There are now present in the room: Hochroitzpointner, Adler, Kurt, Cyprian, Oscar, Priest and Bernhardi. The Sister follows Bernhardi in from the sick-room.)

BERNHARDI. Oh, Your Reverence!

PRIEST *(shakes hands with him)*. We take each other's places, Professor. Will I find the patient still conscious?

BERNHARDI. Yes, you might say—in a heightened state of consciousness; she is in a state of absolute euphoria. She is, you might say—well, she feels well.

PRIEST. Oh! that is perfectly beautiful. Only the other day I had the joy of seeing a young man on the street, who, fully prepared to die, had a few weeks previously received from me the last ointment.

ADLER. Who knows whether it was not Your Reverence who gave him back the strength and courage for the new life.

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BERNHARDI (*turning to Adler*). His Reverence has misunderstood me. I meant to say that the patient has no conception of her true condition; she is going, but imagines that she is recovering.

PRIEST. Really?

BERNHARDI. And I almost fear that your appearance, Your Reverence—

PRIEST. Fear nothing for your patient; I have not come to pronounce the death sentence. When may I prepare the patient? It would be best to prepare her.

(At a glance from the priest to the Sister, unnoticed by Bernhardi, the Sister enters the sick-room.)

BERNHARDI. That would not help matters. As I have told you already, the patient has no idea that she is going to die; she expects anything else rather than this visit. On the contrary, she is in the happy belief that in the next hour, someone that is near to her, may come to take her with him into life and into happiness. I believe, Your Reverence, that it would be wrong to awaken her from this last dream.

PRIEST. Is there a chance that my appearance might bring about a change for the worse, Professor?

BERNHARDI. It is not impossible that the end might be hastened, possibly by only a few minutes, but at all events—

PRIEST. Can your patient still be saved? Does my appearance in that sense, mean danger? Then, of course, I would be ready to retire.

PROFESSOR BERNHARDI

BERNHARDI. She is hopeless. There is no doubt about it.

PRIEST. Then, Professor, I see no reason—

BERNHARDI. Excuse me, Your Reverence, I am still here performing my professional duty, which demands that, if it is not in my power to save my patient, it is at least my duty to let her die happily.

(Cyprian shows impatience and disapproval.)

PRIEST. To die happily? Probably we have different conceptions of what that means, and from what I learned from the Sister, your patient is more in need of absolution than others.

BERNHARDI *(with an ironical smile)*. Are we not all sinners?

PRIEST. That is neither here nor there; you do not know whether in the depth of the soul, into which God alone can look, there may be just in this last moment, a longing to free itself from sin by absolution.

BERNHARDI. Must I repeat again, Your Reverence, that the patient does not know that she is lost; she has hope, she is peaceful, and she feels no repentance.

PRIEST. All the more culpable would I be, if I left this place without having administered the consolation of our holy religion to this dying one.

BERNHARDI. Your Reverence, every earthly judge will absolve you from this guilt. *(After a gesture of the priest's.)* Your Reverence, as her physician, I cannot permit you to go near my patient.

PRIEST. I was called here. I must beg—

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BERNHARDI. Not by me. I can only repeat, Your Reverence, that as her physician, to whom the happiness of the patient is confided to the last minute, I must forbid your entering that room.

PRIEST. You forbid me?

BERNHARDI (*touching his shoulder lightly*). Yes, Your Reverence.

(*The Sister hurries in from the sick-room.*)

SISTER. Your Reverence—

BERNHARDI. Were you in there?

SISTER. It will be too late, Your Reverence—

(*Kurt quickly enters the sick-room.*)

BERNHARDI (*to Sister*). You told the patient that His Reverence is here?

SISTER. Yes, Doctor.

BERNHARDI. Answer me quietly. How did the patient take the message? Did she say anything? Speak! Well—!

SISTER. She said—

BERNHARDI. Well—?

SISTER. She was a little bit frightened.

BERNHARDI (*not angrily*). Well, speak! what did she say?

SISTER. "Must I really die?"

KURT (*from the sick-room*). It is all over—

BERNHARDI. Do not be disturbed, Your Reverence. It was not your fault; you only wanted to do your duty, the same as I. I am more than sorry that I did not succeed.

PRIEST. It is not for you, Professor, to give me absolution. That poor soul has gone hither as a

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sinner, and without the solace of her religion; and that is your fault.

BERNHARDI. I am perfectly willing to accept the responsibility.

PRIEST. It will remain to be seen whether you are able to do so. Good-day, gentlemen.

(Priest leaves. The others are stirred and embarrassed. Bernhardt looks at all of them in turn.)

BERNHARDI. Well, Doctor Adler, tomorrow the autopsy.

CYPRIAN *(aside to Bernhardt)*. It was not right.

BERNHARDI. Why, not right?

ADLER. I would be insincere, did I not say right now, that in this affair, I cannot take your side, Professor.

BERNHARDI. And it would be insincere on my part, if I did not assure you that I was certainly aware of that.

(Cyprian and Adler leave. Oscar bites his lips.)

BERNHARDI. I hope this will not hurt your career.

OSCAR. Oh, father!

(Bernhardt lays his hand tenderly upon Oscar's head.)

SISTER. Professor I thought—

BERNHARDI. Well, what did you think? Well, what is the difference? It is all over now.

SISTER *(stammering, and pointing at Hochroitzpointner)*. Well—well—the Doctor—

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. Well, I, of course, did not forbid her.

BERNHARDI. Oh, of course not, Doctor. You un-

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doubtedly are as zealous an attendant at church as at the lectures.

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. Professor, we live in a Christian state.

BERNHARDI (*looking at him steadfastly*). Yes, God forgive them, they know too d——d well what they do.

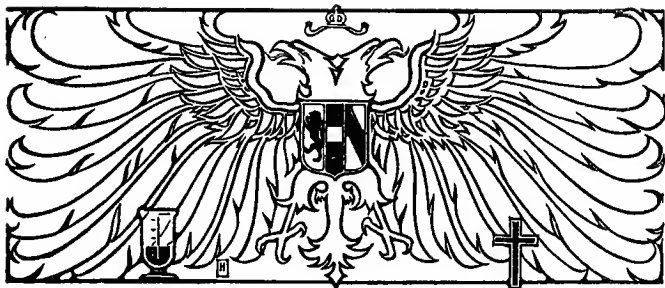
(*Bernhardi leaves with Kurt and Oscar.*)

HOCHROITZPOINTNER (*to Sister*). Why did you excuse yourself, child? You only did your duty. Why did you cry? Look out that you do not get one of those attacks again.

SISTER (*weeping*). Professor was so angry!

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. Suppose he was angry; the Professor, our President, he will not last much longer—this will break his neck.

(*Curtain.*)



ACT II

Office of Professor Bernhardi. (Bookcases, writing-desks, medical appliances, pictures, and statuary busts of scientists. Oscar is seated at his father's desk. A bell rings and a servant brings a card.)

OSCAR (*to servant*). Admit the gentleman.

(Enter Filitz. Handsome, blond, about forty years old. Pince-nez.)

FILITZ. Good morning, Doctor Oscar! Where is your father?

OSCAR. Good-morning, Professor! Father is with Prince Constantin. I expect him at any moment.

FILITZ. I cannot wait. Give your father a message from me, which will be of some interest to you also. My wife has been refused admission today by the Princess Stixenstein.

OSCAR. Oh! maybe the Princess was not at home.

FILITZ. My wife has been asked, in her capacity as President of the Ball Committee, to appear before the patronesses of the Board of Directors. I think this is significant.

(Enter Loewenstein. Medium height, small eyes,

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spectacles, hanging shoulders, bent knees. Excited manner. He carries a letter.)

LOEWENSTEIN (*handing letter to Oscar*). Here, read it! The Princess Stixenstein has withdrawn from the Advisory Board of the Ball Committee.

OSCAR. Without explanation?

LOEWENSTEIN. She did not consider it necessary to give any.

FILITZ. It is too evident to everyone.

OSCAR. Why? Has that story about the priest become public within a week?

LOEWENSTEIN. I knew, as I heard of the scene, that it would be "nuts" for certain people. No one would have tried to exaggerate the harmless incident into an affair if Bernhardt were not a Jew.

FILITZ. If a Christian had acted like Bernhardt, it would have been an affair just the same.

(Enter Bernhardt with his customary smile.)

BERNHARDI. Well, gentlemen! What's the matter? Are we burnt out, or did someone leave us a million?

(Oscar hands him the letter.)

OSCAR. The Princess has resigned from our Ball Committee.

BERNHARDI. Well! We will find another patroness.

FILITZ. I came here, to tell you that the Princess did not receive my wife today. You need not play the innocent. I want to know what reparation you intend to make for the insult to my wife?

BERNHARDI. Say! really you are not in earnest?

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(*Enter Cyprian.*) Are you also coming to me because the Princess has resigned?

CYPRIAN. The ball is a second consideration—

FILITZ. Excuse me, I have no time. I ask you once more—

BERNHARDI. Tell your charming wife, dear Filitz, that I consider her far too intelligent to believe for one moment that her feelings would be hurt, because the salon of a princely goose is closed to her.

FILITZ. That kind of an answer relieves me at once. I have the honor, gentlemen—

(*Exit Filitz.*)

CYPRIAN. You should not say such things, Bernhardt. The Princess is no fool, but a very intelligent woman, and you'll see that the entire Board of Directors is going to resign.

BERNHARDI. You are entirely mistaken. Prince Constantin told me that the Bishop sympathizes.

CYPRIAN. Did he tell you what the Bishop said? His words were—"That man Bernhardt pleases me, but he will have to pay for this."

BERNHARDI. Who has given you all this information?

CYPRIAN. Counselor Winkler, whom I saw just now, intimated to me that the entire board might resign.

BERNHARDI. And all this because I did my duty as a physician.

LOEWENSTEIN. It's monstrous! It's a disgrace! Well, let them resign, let the institution go, and we'll build up another, without the Ebenwalds, Filitz and their clan. Ah, Bernhardt, how I warned you not to trust those people.

PROFESSOR BERNHARDI

CYPRIAN. Let me say a word! Loewenstein, you do not give anyone a chance. So far, only the Princess has resigned, and I think Bernhardt can find a way to explain this unfortunate incident in a manner satisfactory to all.

LOEWENSTEIN. He shall not apologize! !

BERNHARDI. I really do not care to play the hero, *a tout prix*, I have sufficiently proven that I have the manhood to carry through anything that I sincerely want.

CYPRIAN (*slightly ironically*). You will find the way, I am sure. Your smile would be sufficient; one need only to bring that to the Princess.

(Exit Cyprian. Bernhardt is left alone. After walking up and down, he sits at his desk, takes a sheet of paper, and with his ironical smile playing about his lips, he writes. A servant brings a card, and is directed to admit the visitor. Ebenwald enters and shakes hands.)

EBENWALD. I consider it my duty to inform you that there are things preparing against you—against our institution.

BERNHARDI. Oh! you mean the resignation of the Board? That will be arranged.

EBENWALD. I have just come from Parliament, where my cousin informed me that an indictment is going to be prepared against you. You will have to demonstrate that your actions were not prompted by anti-Catholic feelings.

BERNHARDI. Is it necessary to tell that to the people?

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EBENWALD. Tell it to them? No; you will prove it to them.

BERNHARDI. How? This is getting interesting. What kind of a proof would you furnish?

EBENWALD. It lies in your hands. Tomorrow Tugendvetter's successor is to be appointed.

BERNHARDI. Ah!

EBENWALD (*coldly*). Yes; there are two candidates.

BERNHARDI (*decidedly*). One who deserves the place and one who does not. I tell you to your face why you work for Hell, because he—is not a Jew.

EBENWALD. Then I reply to you, that your preference for Wenger—

BERNHARDI. You forget that three years ago I voted for you, Professor Ebenwald.

EBENWALD. I think you understand me, Doctor, that it will be best for you to consider this matter before the meeting tomorrow. I need not say that it is entirely confidential between us.

BERNHARDI. There is no occasion to ask for your discretion, Professor. Tell the gentleman who sent you—

EBENWALD. Eh!

BERNHARDI. That I do not lend myself to business of that kind.

EBENWALD. I was sent by no one; but I do not feel inclined to share the responsibility of your conduct towards His Reverence. I came in your interest and in that of our institution; but you have scorned the hand of a friend, Professor.

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BERNHARDI. And you leave as my enemy. I like it better so. It is more honest.

EBENWALD. As you choose. I have the honor—
(*Bernhardi is alone again. He walks up and down. Takes up the paper he has written and tears it. Servant enters and hands him a card.*)

BERNHARDI. What! His Excellency himself!
(*Enter Flint. Tall, slender, about fifty years old. Face and figure of a diplomat. Very amiable.*)

BERNHARDI. Your Excellency! Be seated.

FLINT. You are surprised to see me here?

BERNHARDI. Yes, pleasantly surprised. And I shall profit by this occasion to offer you my congratulations upon your new dignity.

FLINT. I have not come for the purpose of accepting your congratulations. I have come for the great work of reform—reform of medical education, of social hygiene, of general public education, for which my position offers me opportunity to work; I come to you, Bernhardi, to ask if I may count on you for assistance?

BERNHARDI. I wish you would have the kindness to explain in what particular field you want my assistance. Is it social hygiene—reform of medical education—have I forgotten something?

FLINT. You are just the same; but that is why I set my special hopes on you. There may be something between us—though I do not really know—

BERNHARDI (*very seriously*). The friendship of our youth and what became of it afterwards.

FLINT. Are you holding that against me? I know

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that I fought against your enterprise. I did not believe in your institution; but that was my conviction at that time; we all make mistakes; but there is one thing, I never act against my conviction—

BERNHARDI. Are you so sure of that?

FLINT. Bernhardi!!!

BERNHARDI. Let me tell you. I am thinking of a case—when you acted directly against your conviction.

FLINT. Now this is too much!

BERNHARDI. Wait! (*Walks up and down the room a few times, and suddenly stands still.*) We were both assistant physicians at Rappenweiler's. A young man was a patient in our clinic. I see him lie before me now; I even know his name, Engelhart Wagner. Our chief—we all—had made a false diagnosis of his case. The autopsy revealed the fact that another treatment would have saved him. And as we stood there, when the fact was made clear, you whispered to me; "I knew it." You knew what was the matter with the patient; you had the correct diagnosis.

FLINT. The only one.

BERNHARDI. Yes, you were the only one. Yet you carefully avoided, while he was alive, making it known. And why you did it is a question you may answer yourself. I do not suppose it was conviction.

FLINT. By Jove! you have a good memory. I remember the case, and I'll admit that I considered

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the other treatment the right one; and I will also admit that I kept silent because I did not want to hurt the chief's pride by showing that one of his assistants knew more about the case than he did. You have reason to reproach me with sacrificing a human life. But the motive, the deeper motive, you do not understand. What was one victim compared to the hundreds of other human lives which would be entrusted later to my skill?

BERNHARDI. And you think that Rappenweiler would have turned against you?

FLINT. That is very probable. You overrate humanity. You do not know how narrow-minded people are. It might have meant a long delay in my career, and I had to advance rapidly to gain the proper sphere of action for my capacities, which even you cannot deny. Therefore, my dear Bernhardt, I permitted Engelhart Wagner to die, and I am unable even to regret it. For it does not matter much, my dear Bernhardt, whether or not you may act correctly, or even be true to your convictions in some immaterial detail, the thing is to serve the one main idea of your life with faithfulness. It is interesting to me that you bring this poor Engelhart Wagner out of his oblivion; for suddenly I am enabled to recognize the essential differences in our two natures. You will be astonished, Bernhardt, to learn of their capacity to supplement each other, as it were. You, Bernhardt, are probably much more than I what the world calls "a respectable man." But

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whether you are more capable than I to do more for the general good seems very doubtful to me. You lack the eye for that which really counts, the universal viewpoint. For it is not the question whether you do right here and do right there, but whether you accomplish really big things. And to give up the possibility of doing some really big things, for the poor miserable satisfaction of having done the right thing in some non-essential, some unimportant matter, is a matter of indifference to me I must confess, and does not only seem small, but immoral, yes, immoral to me, my dear Bernhardi.

BERNHARDI. Well, now you might let me know the real purpose of your visit here?

FLINT. Yes, for the matter which brought me here is, I believe, already attracting wide-spread attention. You have forgotten to look a bit further in your dealings with His Reverence. You forgot one trifle, namely, that we live in a Christian community. Why are you smiling?

BERNHARDI. I am thinking of an article you were going to write, long ago, when we were both young men—"Churches versus Hospitals."

FLINT. Ah! one of the many articles I wanted to write, and which were never written. At any rate, since you committed the imprudence of forcibly preventing His Reverence—

BERNHARDI. Forcibly?—!!

FLINT. Well! I understand that you pushed him from the door, so it is told—

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BERNHARDI. What is told?

FLINT. Well—you pushed him away rather violently.

BERNHARDI. That is a lie! You'll believe me?

FLINT. Then you did not push him?

BERNHARDI. I barely touched him. To speak of force—They are inveterate liars!

FLINT. Do not get excited. Officially, nothing has been done. A simple declaration from you and that indictment will not be brought against you.

BERNHARDI. Is it for *my sake* that you want to save yourself from that indictment before Parliament?

FLINT. Certainly! There is so little that can be done in such a case. No matter what your intentions were, your behavior towards His Reverence was not wholly correct.

BERNHARDI. My dear Flint, you have no idea how you overrate your power.

FLINT. A—hem!

BERNHARDI. You evidently imagine that it lies with you to prevent that indictment.

FLINT. It lies with you, I assure you.

BERNHARDI. With me, yes. You have no idea how right you are. A half an hour ago I could have turned the danger of that indictment from your head and from mine.

FLINT. How is that?

BERNHARDI. Oh, very simple! Tugendvetter's vacancy is to be filled, you know. Tomorrow we have a meeting. If I had pledged my vote for

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Hell, instead of for Wenger, everything would have been all right.

FLINT. Pledged yourself? How? To whom?

BERNHARDI. Ebenwald was here just now. He was sent to me with that proposition.

FLINT (*walking up and down*). Ebenwald is very friendly with his cousin, who is the leader of the clerical party, and if he did not want the indictment it would not be made. Well, how did you deal with his proposal?

BERNHARDI. Flint!!!

FLINT. My dear Bernhardt, politics—

BERNHARDI. What do I care for politics, Flint. Even if you are a Minister now, you are also a physician, a man of science, a man of truth. What did you say a moment ago—to consider the essential—well, what counts here? Don't you see that the most capable man must be put at the head of this department; the man who can render the best service to humanity, to science. That, to my mind, is the important thing that counts in this situation. What does it matter if we save ourselves from an indictment which, after all, can be met with a proper defense.

FLINT. Tell me, Bernhardt, can you write me a letter, a statement of the whole affair? Then I could make a defense for you; for they listen to me, just as the students did in the clinic; they listen, and when they listen to a speaker who is in earnest they cannot entirely disagree with him.

BERNHARDI. That is right.

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FLINT. This would be an opportunity to touch on the general situation. I consider this case a symbol of our political conditions.

BERNHARDI. I suppose that is what it is.

FLINT. These things always occur to me. No matter how unimportant the case, for me, it is transformed into a symbol. That is how I have come to be destined for the political career.

BERNHARDI. Ah! Churches—versus Hospitals!

FLINT. You smile—Ah! I cannot make light of such matters.

BERNHARDI. Well, my dear Flint, from all that you have said just now I get the impression that you are inclined to be on my side in this affair; but I want you to consider one thing. The party that you have to oppose, is very strong, very obdurate; it is a question whether you will be able to rule without it, and if you care for your office—

FLINT. Not more than for you.

BERNHARDI. Than the truth—that is the important thing—as for me, do not risk anything for me.

FLINT. For you, no. I won't do that; but for the truth, for the great cause—yes. Whatever happens, I cannot think of a more beautiful death, than for a just cause; for someone, who, confess—was only an hour ago—my enemy.

BERNHARDI. I was not your enemy, and if I did you a wrong, I am willing to ask your pardon. But let me tell you now, Flint, even if this matter should not end favorably for you, my

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conscience will not prick me. You know where justice lies in this case, and I decline to admire you for doing your duty.

FLINT. I do not expect you to do that. (*Stretching out his hand.*) Farewell! I looked for a man; I have found him. Au revoir!

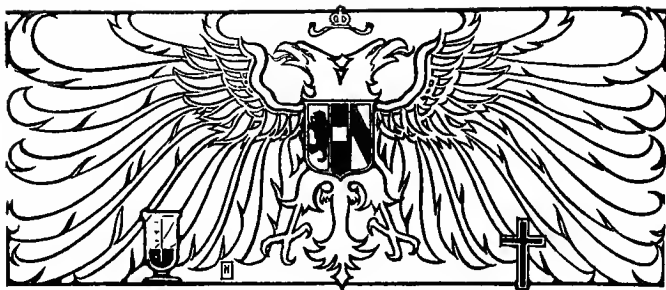
BERNHARDI. Good-bye, Flint. (*Hesitatingly.*) I thank you.

FLINT. You must not do that. Our sympathy rests on firmer ground.

(*Exit Flint.*)

BERNHARDI (*stands lost in thought*). Well—we shall see.

(*Curtain.*)



ACT III

Conference room in the Elizabethinum—Long green table, electric lights, pictures on walls. A portrait of the Empress Elizabeth over the door. It is the evening after the ball. Hochroitzpointner sits at the table, writing. Enter Doctor Schreimann, tall, bald, with martial black moustache. He is a baptized Jew. Enter Ebenwald.

EBENWALD (*to Hochroitzpointner, who rises with signs of great respect*). Do you know where you danced last night, Hochroitzpointner? On a volcano!

HOCHROITZPOINTNER. It was hot, Professor.

EBENWALD (*to Schreimann*). May I depend upon you when we meet afterwards?

SCHREIMANN. I told you before that I could not look at that affair from a religious standpoint. Even if I were a Jew, I would have to be against Bernhardi; and I assure you, that for one of my race, it takes more courage to profess Christianity than to keep the faith in which you were reared. I should have led an easier time as a Zionist.

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EBENWALD. Probably, you might have had a professorship in Jerusalem.

SCHREIMANN (*with a gesture*). Bunk!!

(*Enter Doctor Pflugfelder. About sixty-five years old. Type of a scientist. Wears spectacles.*)

PFLUGFELDER. Good-evening, gentlemen! Do you know that our Advisory Board has resigned in a body?

EBENWALD. You seem to be astonished; we were prepared for that.

PFLUGFELDER. Astonished? No, but disgusted! You must agree that the persecution instituted against Professor Bernhardi has no foundation whatever.

EBENWALD. I know of no persecution.

PFLUGFELDER. Oh, you don't; and that your cousin, Ottocar, is the leader? I suppose you don't know that either.

(*Enter Filitz, the handsome. General greetings.*)

FILITZ. Good-evening gentlemen! I'll tell you at once what I intend to do. I follow the example of the Advisory Board and resign.

EBENWALD. I beg your pardon! There is another way to demonstrate that we do not countenance the act of our principal. We cannot leave our institution; we must try to get the Board to reconsider this resignation.

FILITZ. That will never be done as long as Bernhardi is at the head.

(*Enter Adler.*)

ADLER. Have you seen the evening paper?

EBENWALD. What is the matter?

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ADLER. The indictment!

SCHREIMANN. Affair Bernhardi?

EBENWALD. We have read nothing.

(Wenger enters. Small, uncertain, depressed, sometimes too loud. Wears spectacles. Is carrying the evening paper. Schreimann pulls it out of his hand. All crowd around.)

PFLUGFELDER. Let Filitz read it.

FILITZ *(reading)*. "The undersigned consider it their duty to inform the Government of the following:

"His Reverence, Franz Reder, Priest of the Church of The Holy Florian was called by Sister Ludmilla to the death-bed of Philomena Beier, maiden, to give her the holy sacrament of the last ointment. In the ante-room he was met by several physicians, amongst them Professor Bernhardi, Director of the Elizabethinum, who in a rough manner, asked His Reverence to desist from his purpose, as the dying patient might suffer from the excitement.

PFLUGFELDER. No, no!

(The others cry "Silence.")

FILITZ *(continuing his reading)*. "Professor Bernhardi, who professes mosaic faith, was told by His Reverence, that he had come to fulfill a sacred duty, all the more important because the patient was dying from the result of her own act. Professor Bernhardi insolently asserted his rights as Superintendent of the institution, which, of course, was erected through the charitable gifts of

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noble donors. When His Reverence, refusing further discussion, attempted to enter the sick-room, Professor Bernhardi placed himself in front of the door, and the moment His Reverence seized the knob to enter the room to perform his sacred function, Professor Bernhardi dealt him a blow—

ADLER. An absolute falsehood!

PFLUGFELDER. Infamous!

EBENWALD. There were witnesses.

PFLUGFELDER. I know that you were a witness.

SCHREIMANN. Go on! Read!

FILITZ (*reading*). “During the scene in the ante-room, the patient died without having received the consolation of her faith, which, as Sister Ludmilla testified, she longed for. In bringing this incident to the attention of the Government, we desire especially to inquire how His Excellency, the Minister of Education, intends to make reparation for the severely injured feelings of the Christian population of Vienna, and what means His Excellency will take to prevent a repetition of such a revolting scene. Finally, if His Excellency does not deem it advisable in the future to disregard the claims of such persons to appointment of public offices, who, by reason of their origin, education and character, are not capable of understanding the religious feelings of our Christian population.

Signed:”

(*Great commotion.*)

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EBENWALD. Now we are in a fine position—

WENGER. Why “we”? Nothing has been said against the institute—

PFLUGFELDER. And our Director? This interpellation is nothing but a political maneuver of the clerical and anti-Semitic parties.

FILITZ. Nonsense!

SCHREIMANN. I object—

(Enter Bernhardi. He immediately takes his place at the head of the table. The others seat themselves.)

BERNHARDI. Good-evening, gentlemen! Please excuse me for being a little late. I hope that the gentlemen have passed the time pleasantly. We will open the meeting. Before reading the minutes, I take the liberty of welcoming our new member, Doctor Wenger, in the name of the Elizabethinum.

WENGER. Mr. President, Gentlemen! It would be inconsiderate on my part, were I to take up your valuable time—

EBENWALD AND SCHREIMANN. Correct.

WENGER. Permit me to express my heartfelt thanks for the greatest honor—

(Noise.)

SCHREIMANN *(rising)*. In consideration of the lateness of the hour, I move that we proceed with the business of the meeting.

BERNHARDI. Gentlemen! I took the liberty of calling this special meeting. I consider your presence here a proof of the great—let me say—

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patriotic interest you all take in our institution. It is a proof of the fraternal fellowship that unites us all, in spite of some occasional differences of opinion which cannot be altogether avoided amidst the staff of a big institution. But when it comes to vital questions, we have always been of one mind to the joy of our friends and the dismay of our enemies; we also have those!

Gentlemen! You all know why I have called you together; nevertheless, it is my duty to read to you the letter I received this morning by special delivery.

FILITZ. Hear! Hear!

BERNHARDI (*reading*). "To the Honorable—

I take the liberty of announcing to you that the members of the Advisory Board, etc., etc., have decided to resign from their honorary positions. In communicating this decision to you, Mr. President, I request that you notify the Board of Directors and the Staff.

Signed: Counselor Winkler, Secretary."

EBENWALD. I would ask our President if the cause of this action is known to him?

BERNHARDI. I shall answer the question of the Vice-President in all brevity. Yes, I know the cause; and it lies in the same incident of which you have just now read with more or less pleasure, in the form of a so-called indictment in the evening paper. As a certain party misrepresents this case—

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FILITZ. Which party?

PFLUGFELDER. The anti-Semitic—clerical party.

BERNHARDI. I, as President of this institution, desire to ask you how we should deal with this resignation? (*Cyprian rises.*) Professor Cyprian has the floor.

CYPRIAN. We all know the cause, or rather the pretext for this resignation. We all know that Bernhardt fulfilled his duty as a physician, when he refused admission to the priest. We all know that we would have acted as he did—

FILITZ. O-ho!

SCHREIMANN. No!

CYPRIAN (*continuing*). There is only one answer to this attack, and that is, to express our implicit confidence in our President, Professor Bernhardt.

PFLUGFELDER. Bravo!

(*Ebenwald rises.*)

BERNHARDI. Vice-President Ebenwald has the floor!

EBENWALD. Gentlemen! Do not be deceived. This resignation of the Committee would mean disaster for our institution. I am sorry, but Professor Bernhardt alone should have the responsibility of his action, of which we do not approve, I move that we request the reconsideration of this resignation on that ground.

(*Enter Loewenstein, looking very pale.*)

LOEWENSTEIN. Gentlemen! I come from Parliament. The indictment has been answered, and you, Bernhardt, will be prosecuted for religious disturbance.

(*Great commotion.*)

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PFLUGFELDER. Impossible! Tell us all about it.

(Amidst the great excitement Bernhardt stands unmoved.)

LOEWENSTEIN. What is there to tell? It's a disgrace! *(Looking at Ebenwald.)* You have succeeded. You'll read it in the papers tomorrow morning.

(Great commotion. All are shouting.)

ALL IN UNISON. Tell us! What happened?

LOEWENSTEIN. Well, at first, Flint took Bernhardt's part, and spoke of his great merits, and you felt sure that his accusers would be completely routed, Then there were cries of "Too much Jew." Somehow, the Minister lost his theme; got angry, confused, and then, to his own surprise, I am sure, he wound up that the law should take its course. That that would be the best way of clearing up the matter.

BERNHARDI *(composedly)*. Gentlemen, let us resume.

EBENWALD. I withdraw my first motion, and move for the suspension of President Bernhardt from the Elizabethinum, until the law has dealt with his case.

PFLUGFELDER. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Ebenwald.

LOEWENSTEIN. Bernhardt is the President of the Elizabethinum. No one can suspend him.

FILITZ. He is no longer that to me.

BERNHARDI. I wish to put a question to the Vice-President.

EBENWALD. Please—

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BERNHARDI. Is it known to you that I could have prevented this indictment?

SCHREIMANN (*calling out*). Do not answer.

BERNHARDI. If you are a man, Ebenwald, you will answer.

EBENWALD. Oh! I expected this question. You know, gentlemen—that the Elizabethinum has always had enemies. There are many people who do not think it right in an institution with a Prince and a Bishop on its Advisory Board, and eighty-five per cent of its patients Catholics, that the majority of the physicians of the staff should profess another religion. And that is why I moved for the appointment of a Catholic, Doctor Hell, instead of Doctor Wenger. (*Looking at Wenger, who professes Bernhardi's religion.*) I beg your pardon for this.

WENGER. Perfectly correct.

(*Laughter.*)

BERNHARDI. You do not expect me to defend myself for not making this deal, though it might have saved ourselves all this trouble. But I am willing to lay down my office as President of this institution.

CYPRIAN. What is the matter with you?

LOEWENSTEIN. Never!

PFLUGFELDER. Put it to a vote.

BERNHARDI. What for? Professors Ebenwald, Filitz, Adler and Schreimann will vote for my suspension. I would like to save Doctor Wenger a conflict. He might vote for me out of gratitude.

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But to such a motive I should not like to owe the questionable honor of being further your President.

EBENWALD. As Professor Bernhardi has just now resigned from his position as President, I shall, according to Article Seven of the By-Laws, take the chairmanship of this meeting.

LOEWENSTEIN. Infamous!

FILITZ. The first question will be: Who shall take charge of Professor Bernhardi's department?

BERNHARDI. Gentlemen! Even though I am no longer your President, I still am at the head of my department.

SCHREIMANN. He is suspended!

BERNHARDI (*losing his composure*). No one can suspend me. I shall take a leave of absence until my affair is settled, and I entrust my assistants, Doctor Kurt and Doctor Oscar with my department.

ADLER. Professor, I would be unhappy if you misinterpret my conduct; I wish to express to you in this hour, my admiration.

BERNHARDI. Whosoever is not for me, is against me, gentlemen. Good-evening, gentlemen.

(*Exit Bernhardi.*)

PFLUGFELDER. How can you let him go, gentlemen? Come to your senses! Think how this whole thing began—you must come to your senses! A poor young creature lies sick unto death in the hospital, paying for her youth and happiness and sin—if you want to call it so—with torture, agony,

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and even with her life. The last hours bring euphoria; she is well, happy, has no thought of death; dreams that her lover is coming to take her away from the place of suffering and misery, back to life and happiness. It was perhaps the happiest moment of her life, her last earthly dream, and from this dream, Bernhardt did not wish to awaken her to a terrible reality. That is his fault, the crime that he committed. He asked the priest to let the poor girl go peacefully to sleep. He asked him, you all know it. Had he even been less polite than he was, everybody would have to forgive him. What enormous hypocrisy it is, to look at this event other than as a purely humane action. Where does the creature exist, whose religious sentiments could, in reality be hurt in any way by Bernhardt's action. And if snobdom, graft and villainy were not at the bottom of it all—in short—vile politics, would it be possible, anywhere, to construe this case into a serious affair? Ah! I protest, gentlemen. This is the act of climbers, good-for-nothings! But we, gentlemen, *we* do not want to belong to any of these classes. Why should we, for petty political reasons, leave this man in the hour of his trial, when he has only done his duty? Far be it from me to praise him, or to represent him as a hero, simply because he has acted as a man! And from you, gentlemen, I ask nothing more than that you prove yourselves worthy of this modest title. Annul the actions of today's

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meeting, and ask Professor Bernhardi to again accept the position which cannot be filled by a worthier representative. Call him back, gentlemen; I implore you gentlemen, call him back.

EBENWALD. Permit me to ask Professor Pflugfelder if he has finished his tirade. If so, we will proceed with the business of the meeting.

PFLUGFELDER (*starting to leave*). Good-bye!

LOEWENSTEIN. You are insane!

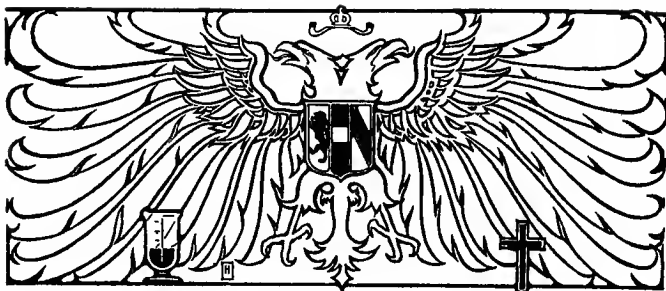
(Exit Cyprian and Loewenstein. As Pflugfelder opens the door, Hochroitzpointner enters.)

PFLUGFELDER. Ah! this happens opportunely. Doctor Hochroitzpointner, please come in; walk right in. Fine company. Have a good time.

(Exit Pflugfelder.)

EBENWALD. Close the door. Call the meeting to order, gentlemen.

(Curtain.)



ACT IV

Salon at Bernhardi's home. (Enter Pflugfelder, followed by Loewenstein.)

(Behind the scene.)

LOEWENSTEIN (*breathless*). Professor Pflugfelder?

PFLUGFELDER. Ah! Loewenstein—

LOEWENSTEIN. I have been running after you.

PFLUGFELDER. Were you not in court?

LOEWENSTEIN. I was called to a case, while they were debating about the term of punishment.

PFLUGFELDER. Two months.

LOEWENSTEIN. In spite of the testimony of the priest?

PFLUGFELDER. His testimony, that he felt only a slight touch on the shoulder, caused the prosecuting attorney to represent His Reverence as an example of Christian forbearance and kindness.

LOEWENSTEIN. Then Bernhardi has been convicted solely on the testimony of that hysterical Sister Ludmilla, and that rascal Hochroitzpointner. For all the other witnesses testified in his favor; I must apologize to Adler, for he acted splendidly,

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also Cyprian—not to mention your son.

(Enter Cyprian.)

PFLUGFELDER. Where is Bernhardt?

LOEWENSTEIN. Do you suppose they kept him at court?

CYPRIAN. He will come with Goldenthal.

LOEWENSTEIN. Goldenthal acted like a scrub. Well, what could you expect!

CYPRIAN. What do you mean?

LOEWENSTEIN. Those baptized ones!! His wife wears a cross—so big—his son is being educated by the Jesuits. That's the kind. With another counsel for the defense, this case would have had a different ending.

CYPRIAN. I doubt that very much; perhaps with another defendant.

(Enter Kurt.)

PFLUGFELDER *(embracing him)*. Kurt!

LOEWENSTEIN *(to Cyprian)*. What means this touching scene?

CYPRIAN. Don't you know? Kurt called Hochroitzpointner a liar, and was fined two hundred crowns for contempt of court.

(Enter Goldenthal, Bernhardt's attorney. Fat, about forty-five years old. Curly black hair streaked with gray; side-chops. Very pompous.)

GOLDENTHAL. Gentlemen! I desire to talk seriously with you. I am glad that I advised Bernhardt to leave court through the side doors. I want you all to assist me. Our dear Professor Bernhardt, is—what shall I say—a little stubborn. You

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know, his idea was to have His Excellency, the Minister, subpoenaed; and now he plays the insulted, and refuses to avail himself of the privileges the law offers him,

PFLUGFELDER (*to Goldenthal*). You want him to appeal?

GOLDENTHAL. Why most certainly!

PFLUGFELDER. One ought to appeal to the people.

LOEWENSTEIN. And in the interest of the cause. Bernhardt should serve his two months' term.

PFLUGFELDER. That would show up the infamy committed against him.

(*Enter Bernhardt and Oscar.*)

BERNHARDI. Excuse me, gentlemen; for letting you wait.

CYPRIAN. Did you receive an ovation?

BERNHARDI. Yes! They yelled "Down with the Jews"—"Down with the Masons!"

LOEWENSTEIN. Just think of that!

BERNHARDI. Gentlemen! I hope you will stay to supper. Oscar, please see that we are sufficiently provided. My housekeeper has left; her confessor declared that she could not stay in my house without danger to her soul's salvation. It will be a frugal meal. But what can you expect from the larder of a prospective jailbird. Oscar! why, the boy has tears in his eyes! Don't be sentimental, Oscar.

OSCAR. I am only furious.

(*Enter Adler.*)

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BERNHARDI. Welcome, Doctor Adler. There is more rejoicing over one repentant sinner than over ten just men.

ADLER. I was never a sinner, Professor. The trial of this case seemed a necessity to me from the beginning. Of course, I could not foresee that the court would rather believe the testimony of Mr. Hochroitzpointner, than Professor Cyprian's and mine.

PFLUGFELDER. One ought to get rid of Flint.

GOLDENTHAL. I always respect the convictions of my adversaries.

LOEWENSTEIN. The convictions of Flint?

GOLDENTHAL. He has to protect the convictions of others. Believe me, gentlemen, there are things one should not touch, and which should not be permitted to be touched.

PFLUGFELDER. Why—if I may ask? It is only because someone has had the courage to touch those things, that the world's progress is accomplished.

GOLDENTHAL. I think that our friend, Bernhardi, will gladly admit that he had no intention of contributing to the progress of the world.

LOEWENSTEIN. Some day it may be shown that he has done just that thing.

PFLUGFELDER. As matters stand now, your affair has to be handled from a general standpoint. The prosecuting attorney was not a bit bashful in beginning that way. Did you not notice that, Doctor?

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GOLDENTHAL. It is not my duty to do politics, but to defend—

PFLUGFELDER. If you had accomplished that task—

BERNHARDI. But I shall not permit—

GOLDENTHAL. Never mind, Professor. This is getting interesting. So you think that I did not defend my client?

PFLUGFELDER. According to my idea—no. Why, listening to you, one got an idea that all the religious sentiments of the whole world, from the Pope down to the humblest parish priest, had been deeply hurt by Bernhardi's wrong against the Church. And instead of contending that every physician should have acted as Bernhardi did, you blandly excused it as an act of carelessness. You treated those idiots in the jury-box, who, from the very first moment they entered it, were ready to convict Bernhardi—you treated them like the salt of the earth; and the judge presiding at the trial, who did everything to convict Bernhardi, you looked upon as the embodiment of human justice. Even that scoundrel, Hochroitzpointner, and Sister Ludmilla, you handled with kid gloves, and gave the impression that you really believed them. First a polite nod toward your client, and then a deep bow toward the side of the enemy; the representative of calumny and hypocrisy! If Bernhardi is satisfied with that, Doctor Goldenthal, that is his business; as for me, I do not understand that kind of a defense.

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GOLDENTHAL. I am glad that you have devoted your great gift to medicine, and not to the law; for with your temperament—your conception of the dignity of the court—you would have landed the most innocent of your clients in jail.

LOEWENSTEIN. You seem to manage that easily in spite of your lack of temperament.

GOLDENTHAL (*to Bernhardi*). My dear Professor, you are lucky to call such friends your own. But of course I shall offer no further advice, and leave it to you—

BERNHARDI. Doctor, what is the matter with you?

PFLUGFELDER. If anyone leaves, *I* go. I beg your pardon, Bernhardi, I permitted myself to go too far. I cannot take anything back—not another word, Bernhardi.

(Exit Pflugfelder.)

(The doors of the dining-room are opened. A servant enters and whispers to Bernhardi, who shows great embarrassment.)

BERNHARDI. I beg your pardon, gentlemen; a visitor whom I have to receive. Please dine—Oscar, have the kindness—

(All enter the dining-room. Bernhardi closes the door and pulls the portiere. Enter Priest.)

PRIEST. Good-evening, Professor!

BERNHARDI. A visit of condolence, Your Reverence?

PRIEST. Not exactly that, but I had a great desire to talk to you today.

BERNHARDI. I am at your disposal, Your Reverence.

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(Bernhardi offers a chair. Both seat themselves.)

PRIEST. In spite of the unfavorable ending of your trial, it must be clear to you that I am guiltless of your conviction.

BERNHARDI. If I should thank you for having told the truth on the witness stand, I might hurt your feelings.

PRIEST. I did not come to get your thanks, Professor, though I did more than my duty as a witness. You will kindly remember that I gave expression to my belief, in my testimony, that your behavior towards me was not prompted by hostile feelings towards the Catholic Church.

BERNHARDI. Thereby Your Reverence surely executed the measure of your responsibility; but perhaps the effect which this testimony produced, might be some reward.

PRIEST. I doubt, Professor, if its effect will be favorable to me outside of the court-room. But you can imagine, Professor, that I did not come here for the purpose of recapitulating my testimony before the court. That which prompts me to call upon you at this late hour, is the fact that I have a further admission to make to you.

BERNHARDI. A further admission?

PRIEST. Before the court, I expressed my conviction that you did not act with hostile intentions towards me or my church. Now I feel myself prompted to admit that in this special case—understand Professor, in this special case—you acted correctly in your capacity as a physician,

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and that you only obeyed your duty as I did mine.

BERNHARDI. Do I understand you aright? You admit that I could not have acted differently?

PRIEST. Not as a physician.

BERNHARDI. If this is your real opinion, Your Reverence, I must say that you had a better opportunity, or perhaps the only proper chance, to admit it a few hours ago.

PRIEST. I need not assure you that it was not lack of courage that sealed my lips; otherwise should I then be here, Professor?

BERNHARDI. What then?

PRIEST. I will tell you. That which silenced me in court was the conviction which came to me by holy inspiration, that one word more might cause infinite damage to a truly sacred cause; the most sacred in the world to me.

BERNHARDI. I cannot imagine, that for a courageous man like you, Your Reverence, there could be anything more sacred than the truth. Nothing.

PRIEST. What! Nothing more sacred than the intangible truth for which I might have stood until the end in this single case? You don't mean that. Should I have acknowledged that you had the right to send me away from the death-bed of a Christian—a sinner—the enemies of the church would certainly have abused such a declaration far beyond my responsibility. The slight truth that I had uttered would have been twisted and misinterpreted, so that it would have become a

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lie. And what would have been the result of that? I should have appeared as a renegade, a traitor, not only before those to whom I owe obedience, but even before my God.

BERNHARDI. Then why do you do it now?

PRIEST. Because at the very instant I received that inspiration, I pledged myself to make the confession to you personally, something which the public would have misunderstood and misconstrued.

BERNHARDI. I thank you for this, Your Reverence, and let me express the hope that you will never again be put into the position to have to testify publicly in a cause where greater things are at stake than my humble self. For it might happen, that what appears to me in this instance, as your own personal scruple, might strike you as being a message from on high—a holy inspiration—and that a higher grade of truth might be injured than that which you believe to have protected now.

PRIEST. There exists nothing higher for me, than my church, and the law of my church, which is obedience, by reason of which, infinite blessing is radiated over the whole world, and without which, my whole sphere of usefulness might be lost.

BERNHARDI. It seems to me, Your Reverence, that priests have existed, who only found their true sphere of activity, when they excluded themselves from the community, and spread that which they considered truth and justice, regardless of trouble and danger.

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PRIEST. And if I were one of them—

BERNHARDI. Well—?

PRIEST. Then God would have made me tell before the court today, what you alone are now hearing within these four walls.

BERNHARDI. Then it was God who sealed your lips in court today, and now it is the same God who sends you to me, to tell me, eye to eye, what he prevented you from saying in court. I must say that he makes it easy for you, your God.

PRIEST. Pardon me Professor. I did not come here to discuss matters which you and I will never understand the same way.

BERNHARDI. So you close the door, as it were, in my face, Your Reverence. Well, I do not consider this as proof that you are in and that I am on the outside. There is nothing further left for me to do, than to regret that you took the trouble of coming here in vain. For I cannot absolve you as completely as you may have expected, after such an extraordinary step.

PRIEST. Absolution! That is not what I wanted from you. I think that I have made a mistake; I see it now. The true reason you denied me admission to that death-bed, was not your sense of duty or responsibility—that was only a pretext. The real reason lies much deeper—it is—how shall I put it—an antipathy—an uncontrollable antipathy—nay, it is hostility—

BERNHARDI. You speak of hostility. Does not all that has happened to me justify the feeling you

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call hostility? Yes, I cannot deny that in the last weeks, I may have felt antipathy, not against you personally, but against the crowd that surrounds you. But I can assure you in perfect truth, that when I refused you admittance at the door, there was not a shadow of hostile feeling in my soul. I stood before you there in my capacity as a physician, with as clear a conscience as that of anyone of your vocation performing his holy rite at the altar; not less clear than yours when you came to bring the last consolation to my patient. You knew that when you entered the room now. You confessed it to me. You cannot suddenly change your opinion, because you feel the same as I do, and perhaps never felt it stronger than at this hour, that a certain something separates us, which even under the most favorable circumstances, we cannot deny.

PRIEST. And you never felt this stronger than at this moment?

BERNHARDI. Yes, at this hour, in the presence of one of the most liberal of his cloth. But "hostility"—that seems too small a word for that which separates us perhaps for all time—it is higher, loftier, more hopeless.

PRIEST. I think you are right. I have had occasion to have had similar conversations with men of your circles, scientists, and "enlightened" people; but it never seemed so utterly impossible to reach any kind of an understanding or agreement.

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BERNHARDI. And what about you, Your Reverence? Do you feel yourself free from all feelings of hostility towards men of my class? Can you find no milder word for the feeling you accuse me of?

PRIEST (*suppressing anger, but collecting himself with a slight smile*). I know myself to be free from it. My religion, Professor, commands me to love those who hate me.

BERNHARDI (*with feeling*). And mine, Your Reverence, or that which I possess in its stead, teaches me to understand even those who do not, or will not understand me.

PRIEST. I do not doubt your good-will, but understanding has its limitations. Wherever the human mind rules, there is error, there is deception. That which does not deceive, that which cannot deceive men of my kind—let me choose a word to which even you cannot have any objection—is the “innermost feeling.”

BERNHARDI. Let us call it so, even if this “innermost feeling” as you call it, flows from different sources in my soul, I also try to trust in it. What is there left for all of us to do? And if it is not so easy for us, as it is for men of your calling, God Almighty, who created us both, surely this incomprehensible God, has his reasons for it.

(The priest looks at him for a long time. Then in sudden decision, stretches out his hand.)

BERNHARDI (*hesitatingly, smiling a little*). Over the abyss, Your Reverence.

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PRIEST. Do not let us look down for a moment—
(*Bernhardi takes his hand.*)

PRIEST. Farewell, Professor!

(*Exit Priest. Bernhardi stands for awhile, lost in thought; then makes a movement as if to shake off something, draws the portiere and opens the door. Company at table, smoking.*)

CYPRIAN. At last!

ADLER. We have just arrived at the cigars.

CYPRIAN (*going up to Bernhardi*). What was the matter? A patient today—so late?

OSCAR. Here are some telegrams for you, father, but won't you first have some supper?

BERNHARDI (*opens one and reads*). Ah! that is nice. A poor patient assures me of his sympathy.

CYPRIAN (*receives the next telegram from Bernhardi, and reads aloud*). "We assure the noble fighter for liberty and free thought, of our admiration. He will always find us ready to support him.

Doctor Reiss, Walter Kœnig."

(*Enter servant with card.*)

BERNHARDI. What next?

OSCAR (*reading*). A deputation from "Brigittenau," the organization for free thought—

BERNHARDI (*to servant*). Tell the gentlemen that I am not at home.

GOLDENTHAL. But why?

BERNHARDI. I am already in prison—I have been sentenced.

SERVANT (*enters with card and hands it to Goldenthal*). The gentleman insists.

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GOLDENTHAL. Show him in.

(Enter Kulka. Reporter.)

KULKA. Ah, Doctor Goldenthal! If I am not mistaken?

GOLDENTHAL. That is my name—we know each other. Mr. Kulka, Professor Bernhardi is a little fatigued—

KULKA *(taking out his note-book)*. If you will have the kindness—may I ask, Doctor Goldenthal, if Professor Bernhardi intends to take an appeal?

GOLDENTHAL. I took the liberty—

BERNHARDI. With whom have I the pleasure—?

KULKA. Kulka of "The Latest News." My chief, Professor, offers you our paper. We will give expression to your just feelings against the Minister.

BERNHARDI. I do not want the protection of any paper. My regards to your chief.

KULKA. I thank you—I have the honor—
(Exit Kulka.)

CYPRIAN. I do not think that was necessary—

GOLDENTHAL. I must say, Professor—

BERNHARDI. I want to get through with this whole thing. This last month was lost for my work, my profession. It was bad enough as a law case, but I shall save myself from a political battle, if necessary in prison. It is my business to make people well, or at least make them believe that I do it. And I want to do that as soon as I am able.

LOEWENSTEIN. And your revenge—Flint, Ebenwald—are you going to let them go free?

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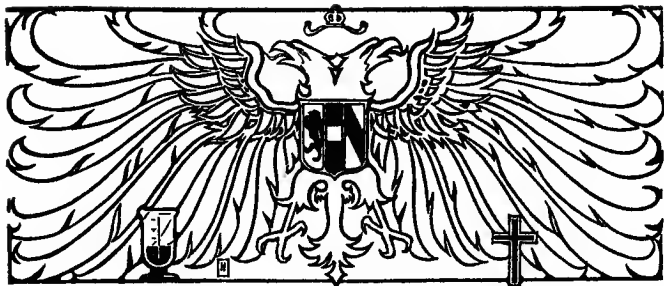
BERNHARDI. I want no revenge. Their time will come.

CYPRIAN. No matter how you intend to carry on this matter, whether legally, politically or privately, you should not have been so short with Kulka.

GOLDENTHAL. The friendship of such a newspaper—

BERNHARDI. My dear Doctor, you have to take your enemies how and where you find them. I prefer to choose my friends.

(Curtain.)



ACT V

Office in the Minister's Palace—Comfortably furnished. Privy Counselor Winkler, forty-five years old. Slender, young-looking, small moustache, short, blonde hair streaked with gray, sparkling blue eyes—(The telephone rings).

WINKLER (*at the telephone*). Yes, Counselor Winkler—Yes, Judge—What is that?—you don't say! Sister Ludmilla—what a strange coincidence. Well, because today he gets out—Professor Bernhardt—yes, just think of it! Of course, I must tell this to His Excellency, but, if you don't want me to—well, good-bye.

(He seems much moved. Enter Minister Flint.)

WINKLER. Permit me to tender my congratulations. Yesterday's speech—

FLINT. The speech—a few words improvised! I did not expect you among the congratulants. I was afraid of you. Are you not an anarchist, Counselor? Let me tell you, that is a dangerous condition of mind to be in. I tell you, I have made concessions. Everybody has to. Even an-

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archists like you, Counselor, else you could not have become Counselor. Or do you think it was easy for me to sacrifice my old friend Bernhardt to the people?

WINKLER. It must have been a satisfaction to you when the police broke up the meeting where Pflugfelder roasted you and the Archbishop.

FLINT. Why the Archbishop?

WINKLER. Because he transferred the priest, Reder, to a remote parish on the Polish border.

FLINT. And now the liberal papers are lauding Bernhardt—as a kind of a martyr, a political victim; as a medical Dreyfus. Did you read the article in “The News?” Sort of a festive greeting to Bernhardt to celebrate his liberation from prison? That’s too much.

WINKLER. Bernhardt cannot help that.

FLINT. I don’t know. He likes the part. You know, when in the third week of his imprisonment, you were commissioned to ask him to request his Majesty’s pardon?

WINKLER. I tried to convince him, but on the whole, I liked it that he did not desire any pardon.

FLINT. Well, the Government will not tolerate any spirit of that kind. I should be very sorry though, for Bernhardt acted foolishly and has given us nothing but trouble. But, I still feel a certain sympathy for him; can’t get rid of it.

WINKLER. Friendship of early days, I presume.

FLINT. Yes, that is it, but we should be free from

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such sentimentality. In our position, we should have no recollections, no heart; yes, my dear Counselor, no heart.

(Enter Ebenwald.)

EBENWALD. Good-morning Excellency!

FLINT. Good-morning Professor, or Director?

EBENWALD. Not yet. It is possible that Professor Bernhardt may be reelected; he has only been suspended; just now he has been triumphantly escorted from prison to his home, by a number of students.

FLINT. Let us discuss your request for the Elizabethinum in my private office.

(Exit Minister and Ebenwald.)

(Tugendvetter enters. A servant brings a card to Winkler.)

WINKLER *(astonished)*. Ah!

SERVANT. The gentleman wishes to see His Excellency.

(Bernhardt enters. Winkler shakes his hand.)

WINKLER. I am very glad to see you again, Professor.

BERNHARDI. I am very glad to see you.

TUGENDVETTER. Why, my dear Bernhardt, I had entirely forgotten that your punishment is over today. How quickly two months pass.

BERNHARDI. Especially under the open sky.

TUGENDVETTER. But you look splendid. Doesn't he? If you had been on the Riviera, you could not look better—rejuvenated.

WINKLER. Suppose you try a little blasphemy.

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Then I could guarantee you such a cheap, healthful vacation.

(*Enter Flint and Ebenwald.*)

FLINT. You wanted to see me, Bernhardi?

BERNHARDI. I shall only trouble you for a moment.

FLINT. I am glad to be able to offer my congratulations. I shall be delighted to be of some use to you, now that the affair is settled.

BERNHARDI (*very amiably.*) I want a favor of you. Prince Constantin is very ill and has sent for me. But since I disturbed religion, and have been in jail, I have lost my license to practice. Therefore, I come to you, my old friend, who, as has been shown in other cases, has such influence with the Minister of Justice; I want to ask you to have the matter hurried, so that the Prince will not be compelled to wait too long.

FLINT. Ah! you come here to make fun of me?

BERNHARDI. Why, I am only doing the correct thing.

FLINT. What you ask is granted. I take the responsibility. You can obey the call of the Prince at once. I give you my word that there will be nothing further necessary. Is that sufficient?

BERNHARDI. It may be, since in this instance, the keeping of your word does not involve any personal trouble for you.

FLINT. Bernhardi?

BERNHARDI. Your Excellency—

FLINT. Ah, now I know you. So you think that I am guilty of breaking my word.

BERNHARDI. Yes, my dear Flint.

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FLINT. I never break my word. For I never gave you any other than this—to stand for you. I could not have prevented the indictment; and by putting your case in the hands of the law, I did the best I could for you. And let me tell you, Bernhardt, there are higher ethics than the mere keeping of a pledge. Always keep your goal before your eyes. And I never felt that stronger than in that remarkable moment when the suspicions, the dismay, the anger of Parliament, came rushing up to me, as it were, like an angry wave. And when I succeeded in quieting the storm and pacifying the waves, and became master of the situation by a lucky turn—

BERNHARDI. Turn! that's right.

FLINT. My dear Bernhardt, I had the alternative of plunging down into the abyss with you, to commit a sort of a crime against my mission in life, or to surrender a man already lost.

(Bernhardt looks at him and then applauds.)

(Enter Winkler.)

WINKLER. I beg your pardon, Your Excellency, for taking the liberty, but I have just now received a very important message from the Minister of Justice, and, as it concerns the affair of Professor Bernhardt—

BERNHARDI. My affair?

WINKLER. Yes, just imagine! Sister Ludmilla, the chief witness in your case, has made an affidavit wherein she admits giving false testimony at the trial of your case.

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BERNHARDI. She, herself?

WINKLER. Why, yes. And of course you can demand a revision at once.

BERNHARDI. A revision? Never! I do not think of it. I am through with the entire business. I do not want to go through that farce again. What good would it do me to have her and her accomplice locked up? I want my peace. This matter is closed for me.

FLINT. Bernhardi, it will be necessary to take steps now; and it is perhaps good that one's ammunition has been saved.

BERNHARDI. What is that?

FLINT. A letter which will do service in this impending battle.

(Enter servant.)

SERVANT. Counselor Berman of the Department of Justice, wishes to speak to His Excellency.

FLINT. Bernhardi, please wait for me. Please, dear Counselor, keep him for half an hour.

(Exit Flint.)

WINKLER. Prince Constantin has already called you, today. That looks like him.

BERNHARDI. I shall ask him to dispense with my medical advice in the future. I shall get away from here; from all that is likely to develop now.

WINKLER. In course of time, you'll be proud of it.

BERNHARDI. Proud? You have no idea how ridiculous it all seems to me. This morning the reception at the prison, the article in "The Latest News!" All my plans have vanished.

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WINKLER. Plans? You mean your book?

BERNHARDI. When I started to write that, my wrath melted. From the accusations against Flint and consorts, I drifted into Austrian politics; then into philosophy and ethical responsibility, revelation and freedom of the will.

WINKLER. That is always the case, if you go to the root of the thing. It is better to put on the brakes sooner, for some fine day you begin to understand—to pardon everything—and then where is the charm of life, if you cannot love or hate any more?

BERNHARDI. Oh, one goes on loving and hating; but when I stood opposite Flint, really, my last vestige of resentment vanished. You should have heard him. I could not be angry with him.

WINKLER. The Minister always liked you, I assure you.

BERNHARDI. And now this confession of the Sister's, this revision. I have to flee from all this noise that is being made around me, simply because the people are beginning to realize that I was right.

WINKLER. Professor, what are you thinking of? That is only your imagination—that you were right.

BERNHARDI. Have the kindness to explain? According to your idea, I should have let His Reverence—

WINKLER. Certainly you should have, my dear Professor. You were not born to be a reformer—

BERNHARDI. Reformer?

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WINKLER. As little as I. For we both do not feel ready to go to the bitter end and risk all, even our life, for our convictions. That is why the only decent thing for us to do, is not to mix in such matters. There is nothing in it. What would you have gained, in the end, if you had saved that poor thing that last fright, on her death-bed. Seems like solving the social problem by presenting a villa to some poor starving devil.

BERNHARDI. But you forget that I did not want to solve a problem. I only did what I considered right in a special case.

WINKLER. That was just the mistake you made. If one always did the right thing—that is, in the abstract sense—began early in the morning and continued to do so all day long, without taking into consideration the surrounding circumstances, one would surely land in jail before nightfall.

BERNHARDI. And let me tell you, my dear friend, you would have acted exactly as I did.

WINKLER. Possibly—and then I would have been—excuse me—just such a fool as you.

(Curtain.)

Here ends PROFESSOR BERNHARDI—A Comedy by Arthur Schnitzler as adapted into English by Mrs. Emil Pohli. Printed from hand-set Caslon type, with decorations by D. H. Hilliker, at the Tomoyé Press under the direction of John Swart and published by Paul Elder and Company at the city of San Francisco in the month of September, the year nineteen hundred and thirteen

