



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



*Bell's British Theatre, Consisting of the
Most Esteemed English Plays...*

John Bell

Pa D 1451



IN MEMORY OF BESSIE HINCKS
BORN APRIL 11 1865 · DIED JULY 5 1885

Bell's
BRITISH THEATRE ;
COMÉDIES.



~ L O N D O N ~

*Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange in the
Strand and C. Ctherington at York, June 21st 1776.*

B E L L's

BRITISH THEATRE,

Consisting of the most esteemed

ENGLISH PLAYS.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

Being the First VOLUME of COMEDIES.

CONTAINING

The PROVOK'D WIFE, by Sir J. VANBRUGH.
EVERY MAN in his HUMOUR, by BEN JON-
SON.

The BEAUX STRATAGEM, by G. FARQUAHR,
Esq.

The OLD BATCHELOR, by W. CONGREVE,
Esq.

The COMMITTEE, by Sir R. HOWARD.

L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exeter Exchange*, in the
Strand, and C. ETHERINGTON, at *York*.

MDCCLXXVI.

2342.5

Bessie Hinchey fund

820.2

19

v. 2

*J. Roberts del.**Published for Wells Brighth Theatre June 7: 1776.*

M^r GARRICK in the Character of ST. JOHN BRUTE
— So! how d'ye like my Shakespear?

THE
PROFANE
MITHRAEUM

BY

THE

PROFANE

PROFANE

PROFANE

PROFANE



PROFANE

BELL'S EDITION.

THE
PROVOK'D WIFE.

A COMEDY, by Sir JOHN VANBURGH.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By *PERMISSION* of the *MANAGERS*,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exeter-Exchange*, in the *Strand*,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at *York*.

MDCCLXXVI.

P R O L O G U E.

*SINCE 'tis the intent and business of the stage,
 To copy out the follies of the age;
 To hold to ev'ry man a faithful glass,
 And shew him of what species he's an ass:
 I hope the next that teaches in the school,
 Will shew our author he's a scribbling fool.
 And that the satire may be sure to bite,
 Kind Heav'n! inspire some venom'd priest to write,
 And grant some ugly lady may indite.
 For I would have him lash'd, by Heav'n! I wou'd,
 Till his presumption swam away in blood.
 Three p'ays at once proclaim a face of brass,
 No matter what they are; that's not the case,
 To write three p'ays, e'en that's to be an ass.
 But what I least forgive, he knows it too,
 For to his cost he lately has known you.
 Experience shews, to many a writer's smart,
 You hold a court where mercy ne'er had part;
 So much of the old serpent's sting you have,
 You love to damn, as Heav'n delights to save.
 In foreign parts, let a bold volunteer,
 For public good, upon the stage appear,
 He meets ten thousand smiles to dissipate his fear.
 All tickle on th' adventuring young beginner,
 And only scourge the incorrigible sinner;
 They touch indeed his faults, but with a hand
 So gentle, that his merits still may stand:
 Kindly they buoy the follies of his pen,
 That he may shun 'em when he writes again.
 But 'tis not so in this good-natur'd town,
 All's one, an ox, a poet, or a crown:
 Old England's play was always knocking down.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CHRISTIANS.

Drury-Lane. Covent-Garden.

Constant, - - - Mr. Brereton. Mr. Ross
 Heartfree, - - . Mr. Bensley. Mr. Smith.
 Sir John Brute, - - Mr. Garrick. Mr. Woodward.
 Lord Rake, } *Comp. to*
 Col. Bully, } *Sir John* } Mr. Davis. Mr. R. Smith.
 Brute, } *Brute,* } Mr. Vernon
 Razor, *Valet de Cham-* }
bre to Sir John Brute, } Mr. Baddeley. Mr. Dyer.
 Justice of the Peace, Mr. Bransby.

Constable and Watch.

W O M E N.

Lady Brute, - - - Miss Young. Mrs. Ward.
 Belinda, - - - Mrs. Greville. Mrs. Mattocks.
 Lady Fancyful, - - Mrs. Abington. Mrs. Bellamy.
 Mademoiselle, - - Mrs. Bradshaw. Mrs. Green.
 Cornet, *Servant to Lady* }
 Fancyful, - - - }
 - - - }

THE

T H E

PROVOK'D WIFE.

A C T I.

S C E N E, Sir John Brute's House.

Enter Sir John, solus.

WHAT cloying meat is love——when matrimony's the sauce to it! Two years marriage has debauch'd my five senses. Every thing I see, every thing I hear, every thing I feel, every thing I smell, and every thing I taste——methinks has wife in't. No boy was ever so weary of his tutor, no girl of her bib, no nun of doing penance, or old maid of being chaste, as I am of being married. Sure there's a secret curse entail'd upon the very name of wife. My lady is a young lady, a fine lady, a witty lady, a virtuous lady—and yet I hate her. There is but one thing on earth I loath beyond her: that's fighting. Would my courage come up to a fourth part of my ill-nature, I'd stand buff to her relations, and thrust her out of doors. But marriage has funk me down to such an ebb of resolution, I dare not draw my sword, tho' even to get rid of my wife. But here she comes.

A 3

Enter

Enter Lady Brute.

L. B. Do you dine at home to-day, Sir John.

Sir J. Why, do you expect I should tell you what I don't know myself?

L. B. I thought there was no harm in asking you.

Sir J. If thinking wrong were an excuse for impertinence, women might be justify'd in most things they say or do.

L. B. I'm sorry I have said any thing to displease you.

Sir J. Sorry for things past, is of as little importance to me, as my dining at home or abroad ought to be to you.

L. B. My enquiry was only that I might have provided what you lik'd.

Sir J. Six to four you had been in the wrong there again; for what I lik'd yesterday I don't like to-day, and what I like to-day, 'tis odds I mayn't like to-morrow.

L. B. But if I had ask'd you what you lik'd—

Sir J. Why then there would be more asking about it than the thing is worth.

L. B. I wish I did but know how I might please you.

Sir J. Aye, but that sort of knowledge is not a wife's talent.

L. B. Whate'er my talent is, I'm sure my will has ever been to make you easy.

Sir J. If women were to have their wills, the world wou'd be finely govern'd.

L. B. What reason have I given you to use me as you do of late? It once was otherwise: you married me for love.

Sir J. And you me for money: so you have your reward, and I have mine.

L. B. What is it that disturbs you?

Sir J. A parson.

L. B. Why, what has he done to you?

Sir J. He has married me, and be damn'd to him.

[*Exit Sir John.*]

L. B.

L. B. The devil's in the fellow, I think.—I was told before I married him, that thus 'twould be : but I though I had charms enough to govern him ; and that where there was an estate, a woman must needs be happy : so my vanity has deceiv'd me, and my ambition has made me uneasy. But there's some comfort still ; if one would be reveng'd of him, these are good times ; a woman may have a gallant, and a separate maintenance too——The surly puppy——yet he's a fool for't : for hitherto he has been no monster : but who knows how far he may provoke me ? I never lov'd him, yet I have been ever true to him ; and that, in spite of all the attacks of art and nature upon a poor weak woman's heart, in favour of a tempting lover. Methinks so noble a defence as I have made, shou'd be rewarded with a better usage—Or who can tell——Perhaps a good part of what I suffer from my husband, may be a judgment upon me for my cruelty to my lover—But hold——let me go no further——I think I have a right to alarm this surly brute of mine—but if I know my heart,—it will never let me go so far as to injure him.

Enter Belinda.

L. B. Good-morrow, dear cousin.

Bel. Good-morrow, Madam, you look pleas'd this morning.

L. B. I am so.

Bel. With what, pray ?

L. B. With my husband.

Bel. Drown husbands ; for yours is a provoking fellow : as he went out just now, I pray'd him to tell me what time of day 'twas ; and he ask'd me if I took him for the church-clock, that was oblig'd to tell all the parish.

L. B. He has been saying some good obliging things to me too. In short, Belinda, he has us'd me so barbarously of late, that I cou'd almost resolve to play the downright wife—and cuckold him.

Bel. That wou'd be downright indeed.

L. B.

L. B. Why, after all, there's more to be said for't than you'd imagine, child. He is the first aggressor, not I.

Bel. Ah, but you know we must return good for evil.

L. B. That may be a mistake in the translation—Pr'ythee be of my opinion, Belinda; for I'm positive I'm in the right; and if you'll keep up the prerogative of a woman, you'll likewise be positive you are in the right, whenever you do any thing you have a mind to. But I shall play the fool and jest on, till I make you begin to think I'm in earnest.

Bel. I shan't take the liberty, Madam, to think of any thing that you desire to keep a secret from me.

L. B. Alas, my dear, I have no secrets. My heart cou'd never yet confine my tongue.

Bel. Your eyes, you mean; for I am sure I have seen them gadding, when your tongue has been lock'd up safe enough.

L. B. My eyes gadding! Pr'ythee after who, child?

Bel. Why, after one that thinks you hate him, as much as I know you love him.

L. B. Constant, you mean.

Bel. I do so.

L. B. Lord, what shou'd put such a thing into your head?

Bel. That which puts things into most people's heads, observation.

L. B. Why, what have you observ'd, in the name of wonder?

Bel. I have observ'd you blush when you met him; force yourself away from him; and then be out of humour with every thing about you: in a word, never was a poor creature so spurr'd on by desire, or so rein'd in with fear!

L. B. How strong is fancy!

Bel. How weak is woman!

L. B. Pr'ythee, niece, have a better opinion of your aunt's inclination.

Bel. Dear aunt, have a better opinion of your niece's understanding.

L. B. You'll make me angry.

Bel. You'll make me laugh.

L. B. Then you are resolv'd to persist !

Bel. Positively.

L. B. And all I can say——

Bel. Will signify nothing.

L. B. Tho' I should swear 'twere false——

Bel. I should think it true.

L. B. Then let us forgive, [*kissing her.*] for we have both offended : I, in making a secret, you, in discovering it.

Bel. Good-nature may do much : but you have more reason to forgive one, than I have to pardon t'other.

L. B. 'Tis true, Belinda, you have given me so many proofs of your friendship, that my reserve has been indeed a crime : ' but that you may more easily forgive me, remember, child, that when our nature prompts us to a thing our honour and religion have forbid us ; we wou'd (wer't possible) conceal, even from the soul itself, the knowledge of the body's weakness.

Bel. Well, I hope, to make your friend amends, you'll hide nothing from her for the future, tho' the body should still grow weaker and weaker.

L. B. ' No, from this moment I have no more reserve ; and as proof of my repentance, I own, Belinda, I'm in danger. ' Merit and wit assault me from without, nature and love solicit me within ; my husband's barbarous usage piques me to revenge ; and Satan catching the fair occasion, throws in my way that vengeance, which of all vengeance pleases woman best.

Bel. 'Tis well Constant don't know the weakness of the fortification ? for o' my conscience he'd soon come on to the assault.

L. B. ' Ay, and I'm afraid carry the town too.' But whatever you may have observ'd, I have dissembled so well as to keep him ignorant. So you see I'm no coquet,

coquet, Belinda: 'and if you follow my advice, you'll never be one neither. 'Tis true, coquetry is one of the main ingredients in the natural composition of a woman, and I, as well as others, cou'd be well enough pleas'd to see a crowd of young fellows ogling, and glancing, and watching all occasions to do forty foolish officious things: nay, should some of 'em push on, even to hanging or drowning: why——faith——if I should let pure woman alone, I shou'd e'en be but too well pleas'd with't.

Bel. I'll swear 'twould tickle me strangely.

L. B. But after all, 'tis a vicious practice in us, to give the least encouragement, but where we design to come to a conclusion.' For 'tis an unreasonable thing to engage a man in a disease, which we before-hand resolve we will never apply a cure to.

Bel. 'Tis true; but then a woman must abandon one of the supreme blessings of her life. For I am fully convinc'd, no man has half that pleasure in gallanting a mistress, as a woman has in jilting a gallant.

L. B. The happiest woman then on earth must be our neighbour.

Bel. O the impertinent composition! She has vanity and affectation enough to make her a ridiculous original, and in spite of all that art and nature ever furnish'd to any of her sex before her.

L. B. She concludes all men her captives; and whatever course they take, it serves to confirm her in that opinion.

Bel. If they shun her, she thinks 'tis modesty, and takes it for a proof of their passion.

L. B. And if they are rude to her, 'tis conduct, and done to prevent town-talk.

Bel. When her folly makes 'em laugh, she thinks they are pleas'd with her wit.

L. B. And when her impertinence makes 'em dull, concludes they are jealous of her favours.

Bel. All their actions and their words, she takes for granted, aim at her.

L. B.

L. B. And pities all other women, because she thinks they envy her.

Bel. Pray, out of pity to ourselves, let us find a better subject ; for I'm weary of this. Do you think your husband inclin'd to jealousy ?

L. B. O, no ; he does not love me well enough for that. Lord, how wrong men's maxims are ! They are seldom jealous of their wives, unless they are very fond of 'em : whereas, they ought to consider the women's inclinations, for there depends their fate. Well, men may talk ; but they are not so wise as we — that's certain.

Bel. At least in our affairs.

L. B. Nay, I believe we should out-do 'em in the business of the state too : for, methinks, they do and undo, and make but bad work on't.

Bel. Why then don't we get into the intrigues of government as well as they ?

L. B. Because we have intrigues of our own, that make us more sport, child. And so let's in and consider of 'em. [Exeunt.

SCENE, a dressing-room.

Enter Lady Fancyful, Mademoiselle, and Cornet.

L. F. How do I look this morning ?

Cor. Your ladyship looks very ill, truly.

L. F. Lard, how ill-natur'd thou art, Cornet, to tell me so, tho' the thing should be true. Don't you know that I have humility enough to be but too easily out of conceit with myself ? Hold the glass ; I dare swear that will have more manners than you have. Mademoiselle, let me have your opinion too.

Madem. My opinion pe, Matam, dat your Ladyship never look so well in your life.

L. F. Well, the French are the prettiest obliging people, they say the most acceptable, well-manner'd things — and never flatter.

Madem. Your ladyship say great justice inteed.

L. F. Nay, every thing's just in my house but
Cornet.

Cornet. The very looking-glass gives her the *dementi*. But I'm almost afraid it flatters me, it makes me look so very engaging. [*Looking affectedly in the glass.*]

Madem. Inteed, Matam, your face pe handiomer den all de looking-glass in de world, *croyez moy*.

L. F. But is it possible my eyes can be so languishing———and so very full of fire.

Madem. Matam, if de glass was burning-glass, I believe your eyes set de fire in de house.

L. F. You may take that night-gown, Mademoiselle; get out of the room, Cornet; I can't endure you. This wench, methinks, does look so insufferably ugly.

Madem. Every ting look ugly, Matam, dat stand by your laryship.

L. F. No really, Mademoiselle, methinks you look mighty pretty.

Madem. Ah Matam; de moon have no *eclat*, ven de sun appear.

L. F. O pretty expression! Have you ever been in love, Mademoiselle?

Madem. Ouy, Matam. [*Sighing.*]

L. F. And were you belov'd again?

Madem. No, Matam. [*Sighing.*]

L. F. O ye Gods! What an unfortunate creature should I be in such a case! But nature has made me nice for my own defence: I'm nice, strangely nice, Mademoiselle. I believe were the merit of whole mankind bestow'd upon one single person, I shou'd still think the fellow wanted something to make it worth my while to take notice of him: and yet, I cou'd love; nay, fondly love, were it possible to have a thing made on purpose for me: for I'm not cruel, Mademoiselle; I'm only nice.

Madem. Ah, Matam, I wish I was fine gentleman for your sake. I do all de ting in de world, to get a little way into your heart. I make song, I make verse, I give you de serenade, I give great many present to Mademoiselle; I no eat, I no sleep, I be lean, I be mad, I hang myself, I drown myself. Ah, *ma chere*

chere dame, que je vous aimerois! [*Embracing her.*

L. F. Well, the French have strange obliging ways with 'em; you may take those two pair of gloves, Mademoiselle.

Madem. Me humbly tank my sweet lady.

Enter Servant with a letter.

Ser. Madam, here's a letter for your ladyship.

L. F. 'Tis thus I am importun'd every morning, Mademoiselle. Pray, how do the French ladies when they are thus accablées?

Madem. Matam, dey never complain. Au contraire, when one Frense laty have got a hundred lover—den she do all she can—to get a hundred more.

L. F. Well, let me die, I think they have le goût bon. For 'tis an unutterable pleasure to be adored by all the men, and envy'd by all the women—Yet I'll swear I'm concern'd at the torture I give 'em. Lard, why was I form'd to make the whole creation uneasy? But let me read my letter. [*Reads.*

“ If you have a mind to hear of your faults, instead of being prais'd for your virtues, take the pains, to walk in the Green-walk in St. James's Park, with your woman, an hour hence. You'll there meet one, who hates you for some things, as he could love you for others, and therefore is willing to endeavour your reformation——If you come to the place I mention, you'll know who I am: if you don't, you never shall: so take your choice.”

This is strangely familiar, Mademoiselle; now have I a provoking fancy to know who this impudent fellow is.

Madem. Den take your scarf and your mask, and go to de rendezvous. De Frense laty do justement comme ça.

L. F. Rendezvous! What, rendezvous with a man, Mademoiselle?

Madem. Eh, pourquoy non?

L. F. What, and a man perhaps I never saw in my life!

14 *The PROVOK'D WIFE.*

Madem. Tant mieux : c'est donc quelque chose de nouveau.

L. F. Why, how do I know what designs he may have? He may intend to ravish me, for aught I know:

Madem. Ravish?—Bagatelle. I would-fain-see one impudent rogue ravish Mademoiselle. Oui, je le voudrois.

L. F. O but my reputation; Mademoiselle, my reputation; ah, ma chere reputation!

Madem. Matam — Quand on l'a une fois perdu — On n'en est plus embarrassée.

L. F. Fie, Mademoiselle, fie; reputation is a jewel.

Madem. Qui coute bien chere, Matam.

L. F. Why sure you would not sacrifice your honour to your pleasure.

Madem. Je suis philosophe.

L. F. Bless me, how you talk! Why, what if honour be a burden, Mademoiselle, must it not be borne?

Madem. Chaqu'un à sa façon — Quand quelque chose m'incommode, moi — je m'en defais, vite.

L. F. Get you gone, you little naughty French-woman you: I vow and swear I must turn you out of doors, if you talk thus.

Madem. Turn me out of doors! — turn yourself out of doors, and go see what de gentleman have to say to you — Tenez. Voilà [*giving her her things hastily.*] votre essharp, voilà votre coife, voilà votre masque, voilà tout. Hey, Mercure, coquin: call one chair for Matam, and one oder [*calling within.*] for me. Va t'en, vite.

[*Turning to her lady, and helping her on hastily with her things.*]

Allons, Matam; depechez vous donc. Mon dieu, quelles scrupules!

L. F. Well, for once, Mademoiselle, I'll follow your advice, out of the intemperate desire I have to know who this ill-bred fellow is. But I have too much delicatessè to make a practice on't.

Madem.

Madem. Belle chose vrayment que la delicatesse, lors qu'il s'agit de divertir — à ça — Vous voilà équipée, partons. — Hé bien ? — qu'avez vous donc !

L. F. J'ay peur.

Madem. Je n'en ai point moi.

L. F. I dare not go.

Madem. Demeurez donc.

L. F. Je suis poltrone.

Madem. Tant pis pour vous.

L. F. Curiosity's a wicked devil.

Madem. C'est une charmante sainte.

L. F. It ruin'd our first parents.

Madem. Elle a bien diverti leurs enfans.

L. F. L'honneur est contre.

Madem. Le plaisir est pour.

L. F. Must I then go ?

Madem. Must you go ? — must you eat, must you drink, must you sleep, must you live ? De nature bid you do one, de nature bid you do toder. Vous ne ferez enrager.

L. F. But when reason corrects nature, Mademoiselle.

Madem. Elle est donc bien insolente, c'est sa sœur aînée.

L. F. Do you then prefer your nature to your reason, Mademoiselle ?

Madem. Oui da.

L. F. Pourquoi ?

Madem. Because my nature make me merry, my reason make me mad.

L. F. Ah, la méchante Françoisse.

Madem. Ah, la belle Angloise.

[Forcing her lady off.]

END of the FIRST ACT.

B 2

ACT

A C T II.

SCENE, *St. James's Park.**Enter Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle.*

L. F. **W**ELL, I vow, Mademoiselle, I'm strangely impatient to know who this confident fellow is.

Enter Heartfree.

Look, there's Heartfree. But sure it can't be him : he's a profess'd woman-hater. Yet who knows what my wicked eyes may have done ?

Madem. Il nous approche, Matam.

L. F. Yes, 'tis he : now will he be most intolerably cavalier, tho' he should be in love with me.

Heartf. Madam, I'm your humble servant ; I perceive you have more humility and good-nature than I thought you had.

L. F. What you attribute to humility and good-nature, Sir, may perhaps be only due to curiosity. I had a mind to know who 'twas had ill manners enough to write that letter. *[Throwing him his letter.]*

Heartf. Well, and now I hope you are satisfied.

L. F. I am so, Sir ; good-by t'ye.

Heartf. Nay, hold there ; tho' you have done your business, I han't done mine : by your ladyship's leave, we must have one moment's prattle together. Have you a mind to be the prettiest woman about town, or not ? How she stares upon me ! What ! this passes for an impertinent question with you now, because you think you are so already.

L. F. Pray, Sir, let me ask you a question in my turn : by what right do you pretend to examine me ?

Heartf. By the same right that the strong govern the weak, because I have you in my power ; for you cannot get so quickly to your coach, but I shall have
time

time enough to make you hear every thing I have to say to you.

L. F. These are strange liberties you take, Mr. Heartfree.

Heartf. They are so, Madam, but there's no help for it; for know that I have a design upon you.

L. F. Upon me, Sir!

Heartf. Yes; and one that will turn to your glory, and my comfort, if you will but be a little wiser than you use to be.

L. F. Very well, Sir.

Heartf. I let me see—Your vanity, Madam, I take to be about some eight degrees higher than any woman's in the town, let t'other be who she will; and my indifference is naturally about the same pitch. Now cou'd you find the way to turn this indifference into fire and flame, methinks your vanity ought to be satisfy'd; and this, perhaps, you might bring about upon pretty reasonable terms.

L. F. And pray at what rate would this indifference be bought off, if one should have so depraved an appetite to desire it?

Heartf. Why, Madam, to drive a quaker's bargain, and make but one word with you, if I do part with it—you must lay down—your affectation.

L. F. My affectation, Sir!

Heartf. Why I ask you nothing but what you may very well spare.

L. F. You grow rude, Sir. Come, Mademoiselle, it is high time to be gone.

Madem. Allons, allons, allons.

Heartf. [*stopping them.*] Nay, you may as well stand still; for hear me you shall, walk which way you please.

L. F. What mean you, Sir?

Heartf. I mean to tell you, that you are the most ungrateful woman upon earth.

L. F. Ungrateful! to whom?

Heartf. To nature.

L. F. Why, what has nature done for me?

Heartf. What you have undone by art! It made you handsome; it gave you beauty to a miracle, a shape without a fault, wit enough to make them relish, and so turn'd you loose to your own discretion; which has made such work with you, that you are become the pity of our sex, and the jest of your own. There is not a feature in your face, but you have found the way to teach it some affected convulsion; your feet, your hands, your very fingers ends are directed never to move without some ridiculous air or other; and your language is a suitable trumpet, to draw people's eyes upon the raree-show.

Madem. [*aside*] Est ce qu'on fait l'amour en Angleterre comme ça?

L. F. [*aside*.] Now cou'd I cry for madness, but that I know he'd laugh at me for it.

Heartf. Now do you hate me for telling you the truth, but that's because you don't believe 'tis so; for were you once convinc'd of that, you'd reform, for your own sake.

L. F. Every circumstance of nice breeding must needs appear ridiculous, to one who has so natural an antipathy to good-manners.

Heartf. But suppose I cou'd find the means to convince you, that the whole world is of my opinion.

L. F. Sir, tho' you, and all the world you talk of, shou'd be so impertinently officious, as to think to persuade me I don't know how to behave myself; I shou'd still have charity enough for my own understanding, to believe myself in the right, and all you in the wrong.

Madem. Le voilà mort.

[*Exit Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle.*]

Heartf. [*gazing after her.*] There her single clapper has publish'd the sense of the whole sex. Well, this once I have endeavour'd to wash the black-moor white, but henceforward I'll sooner undertake to teach sincerity to a courtier, generosity to a usurer, honesty to

to a lawyer, than discretion to a woman I see has once
set her heart upon playing the fool,

Enter Constant.

Morrow, Constant.

Const. Good-morrow, Jack: What are you doing
here this morning?

Heartf. Doing! Guess, if you can.—Why I have
been endeavouring to persuade my lady Fanciful, that
she's the most foolish woman about town.

Const. A pretty endeavour truly.

Heartf. I have told her in as plain English as I
could speak, both what the town says of her, and
what I think of her. In short, I have us'd her as an
absolute king would do Magna Charta.

Const. And how does she take it?

Heartf. As children do pills; bite them, but can't
swallow them.

Const. But, pr'ythee, what has put it into your
head, of all mankind, to turn reformer?

Heartf. Why, one thing was, the morning hung
upon my hands, I did not know what to do with my-
self: and another was, that as little as I care for wo-
men, I cou'd not see with patience one that Heaven
had taken such wond'rous pains about, be so very
industrious to make herself the Jack-pudding of the
creation.

Const. Well, now cou'd I almost wish to see my cruel
mistress make the self-same use of what Heaven has
done for her, that so I might be cur'd of the same
disease that makes me so very uneasy; for love, love
is the devil, Heartfree.

Heartf. And why do you let the devil govern you?

Const. Because I have more flesh and blood than
grace and self-denial. My dear dear mistress, 'fdeath!
that so genteel a woman should be a saint, when reli-
gion's out of fashion.

Heartf. Nay, she's much in the wrong truly; but
who knows how far time and good example may pre-
vail?

Const.

Const. O! they have play'd their parts in vain already: 'tis now two years since the fellow her husband invited me to his wedding; and there was the first time I saw that charming woman, whom I have lov'd ever since; but she is cold, my friend, still cold as the northern star.

Heartf. So are all women by nature, which makes them so willing to be warm'd.

Const. O don't profane the sex; pr'ythee think them all angels for her sake; for she's virtuous even to a fault.

Heartf. A lover's head is a good accountable thing truly; he adores his mistress for being virtuous, and yet is very angry with her because she won't be kind.

Const. Well, the only relief I expect in my misery is to see thee some day or other as deeply engag'd as myself, which will force me to be merry in the midst of all my misfortunes.

Heartf. That day will never come, be assur'd, Ned: not but that I can pass a night with a woman, and for the time, perhaps, make myself as good sport as you can do. Nay, I can court a woman too, call her nymph, angel, goddess, what you please: but here's the difference between you and I; I persuade a woman she's an angel, and she persuades you she's one. But pr'ythee let me tell you how I avoid falling in love; that which serves me for prevention, may chance to serve you for a cure.

Const. Well, use the ladies moderately then, and I'll hear you.

Heartf. That using them moderately undoes us all: but I'll use them justly, and that you ought to be satisfied with. I always consider a woman, not as the taylor, the shoemaker, the tire-woman, the sempstress, and (which is more than all that) the poet makes her; but I consider her as pure nature has contrived her, and that more strictly than I should have done our old grandmother Eve, had I seen her naked in the garden; for I consider her turn'd inside out. Her heart well examin'd, I find there pride, vanity, covetousness, indiscretion; but above all things, malice: plots

plots eternally forging to destroy one another's reputations, and as honestly to charge the levity of men's tongues with the scandal; hourly debates how to make poor gentlemen in love with them, with no other intent but to use them like dogs when they have done; a constant desire of doing more mischief, and an everlasting war wag'd against truth and good-nature.

Const. Very well, Sir; an admirable composition truly!

Heartf. Then for her outside, I consider it meerly as an outside; she has a thin tiffany covering, just over such stuff as you and I are made on. As for her motion, her mien, her airs, and all those tricks, I know they affect you mightily. If you should see your mistress at a coronation, dragging her peacock's train, with all her state and insolence about her, 'twould strike you with all the awful thoughts that Heav'n itself could pretend to from you: whereas I turn the whole matter into a jest, and suppose her strutting in the self same stately manner, with nothing on but her stays, and her scanty quilted under petticoat.

Const. Hold thy profane tongue; for I'll hear no more.

Heartf. What, you'll love on then?

Const. Yes.

Heartf. Yet have no hopes at all.

Const. None.

Heartf. Nay, the resolution may be discreet enough; perhaps you have found out some new philosophy, that love, like virtue, is its own reward: so you and your mistress will be as well content at a distance, as others that have less learning are in coming together.

Const. No; but if she should prove kind at last, my dear Heartfree.

[Embracing him.]

Heartf. Nay, pr'ythee don't take me for your mistress; for lovers are very troublesome.

Const. Well, who knows what time may do?

Heartf. And just now he was sure time could do nothing.

Const.

Const. Yet not one kind glance in two years, is somewhat strange.

Heartf. Not strange at all; she don't like you, that's all the business.

Const. Pr'ythee don't distract me.

Heartf. Nay, you are a good handsome young fellow, she might use you better. Come, will you go see her; perhaps she may have chang'd her mind; there's some hopes, as long as she's a woman.

Const. O, 'tis in vain to visit her: sometimes to get a sight of her, I visit that beast her husband, but she certainly finds some pretence to quit the room as soon as I enter.

Heartf. It's much she don't tell him you have made love to her too; for that's another good-natur'd thing usual amongst women, in which they have several ends. Sometimes 'tis to recommend their virtue, that they may be kind with the greater security. Sometimes 'tis to make their husbands fight, in hopes they may be kill'd, when their affairs require it should be so: but most commonly 'tis to engage two men in a quarrel, that they may have the credit of being fought for; and if the lover's kill'd in the business, they cry, Poor fellow, he had ill luck—and so they go to cards.

Const. Thy injuries to women are not to be forgiven. Look to't, if ever you fall into their hands—

Heartf. They can't use me worse than they do you, that speak well of 'em. O ho! here comes the knight.

Enter Sir John Brute.

Heartf. Your humble servant, Sir John.

Sir J. Servant, Sir.

Heartf. How does all your family?

Sir J. Pox o' my family.

Const. How does your lady? I han't seen her abroad a good while.

Sir J. Do! I don't know how she does, not I; she was well enough yesterday; I han't been at home to-night.

Const.

Const. What, were you out of town?

Sir J. Out of town! No, I was drinking.

Const. You are a true Englishman; don't know your own happiness. If I were married to such a woman, I wou'd not be from her a night, for all the wine in France.

Sir J. Not from her!—'Oons—what a time should a man have of that!

Heartf. Why, there's no division, I hope.

Sir J. No; but there's a conjunction, and that's worse; a pox of the parson—Why the plague don't you two marry? I fancy I look like the devil to you.

Heartf. Why, you don't think you have horns, do you?

Sir J. No, I believe my wife's religion will keep her honest.

Heartf. And what will make her keep her religion?

Sir J. Persecution; and therefore she shall have it.

Heartf. Have a care, knight, women are tender things.

Sir J. And yet, methinks, 'tis a hard matter to break their hearts.

Const. Fy, fy? you have one of the best wives in the world, and yet you seem the most uneasy husband.

Sir J. Best wives!—the woman's well enough; she has no vice that I know of; but she's a wife, and—damn a wife; if I were married to a hogsthead of claret, matrimony would make me hate it.

Heartf. Why did you marry then? You were old enough to know your own mind.

Sir J. Why did I marry! I married because I had a mind to lay with her, and she would not let me.

Heartf. Why did you not ravish her?

Sir J. Yes, and so have hedg'd myself into forty quarrels with her relations, besides buying my pardon; but more than all that, you must know I was afraid of being damn'd in those days: for I kept sneaking cowardly company, fellows that went to church, said grace to their meat, and had not the least tincture of quality about them.

Heartf. But I think you are got into a better gang now.

Sir J. Zoons, Sir, my lord Rake and I are hand and glove: I believe we may get our bones broke together to-night. Have you a mind to share a frolic?

Const. Not I, truly; my talent lies in softer exercises.

Sir J. What, a down-bed and a strumpet? A pox of venery, I say. Will you come and drink with me this afternoon?

Const. I can't drink to-day; but we'll come and sit an hour with you if you will.

Sir J. Pough, pox, sit an hour! Why can't you drink?

Const. Because I'm to see my mistress.

Sir J. Who's that;

Const. Why do you use to tell?

Sir J. Yes.

Const. So won't I.

Sir J. Why?

Const. Because it is a secret.

Sir J. Would my wife knew it, 'twould be no secret long.

Const. Why, do you think she can't keep a secret?

Sir J. No more than she could keep Lent.

Heartf. Pr'ythee, tell it her to try, Constant.

Sir J. No, pr'ythee don't, that I mayn't be plagu'd with it.

Const. I'll hold you a guinea you don't make her tell it you.

Sir J. I'll hold you a guinea I do.

Const. Which way?

Sir J. Why, I'll beg her not to tell it me.

Heartf. Nay, if any thing does it, that will.

Const. But do you think, Sir—

Sir J. 'Oons, Sir, I think a woman and a secret are the two impertinentest themes in the universe: therefore pray let's hear no more of my wife nor your mistress. Damn 'em both with all my heart and

and every thing else that daggles a petticoat, except four generous whores who are drunk with my lord Rake and I ten times in a fortnight. [*Exit Sir John.*]

Const. Here's a dainty fellow for you ! and the veriest coward too. But his usage of his wife makes me ready to stab the villain.

Heartf. Lovers are short-sighted : all their senses run into that of feeling. This proceeding of his is the only thing on earth can make you fortunate. If any thing can prevail with her to accept a gallant, 'tis his usage of her. Pr'ythee, take heart, I have great hopes for you : and since I can't bring you quite off her, I'll endeavour to bring you quite on ; for a whining lover is the damnest companion upon earth.

Const. My dear friend, flatter me a little more with these hopes ; for whilst they prevail, I have Elysium within me, and could melt with joy.

Heartf. Pray no melting yet ; ' let things go farther first.' This afternoon perhaps we shall make some advance. In the mean while, let's go dine at Locket's, and let hope get you a stomach. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, *Lady Fancyful's House.*

Enter Lady Fancyful, and Mademoiselle.

L. F. Did you ever see any thing so importune, Mademoiselle ?

Madem. Inteed, Matam, to say de trute, he want leetel good-breeding.

L. F. Good-breeding ! He wants to be caned, Mademoiselle. An insolent fellow ! and yet, let me expose my weakness, 'tis the only man on earth I could resolve to dispense my favours on, were he but a fine gentleman. Well, did men but know how deep an impression a fine gentleman makes in a lady's heart, they would reduce all their studies to that of good-breeding alone.

VOL. II.

C

Enter

Enter Servant.

Serv. Will your Ladyship please to dine yet?

L. F. Yes, let 'em serve. [*Exit Servant.*] Sure this Heartfree has bewitch'd me, Mademoiselle. 'You can't imagine how oddly he mixt himself in my thoughts during my rapture e'en now.' I vow 'tis a thousand pities he is not more polish'd; don't you think so?

Madem. Matam, I think it so great pity, that if I was in your ladyship's place, I take him home in my house, I lock him up in my closet, and I never let him go, till I teach him every ting dat fine lady expect from fine gentleman.

L. F. Why truly I believe, I should soon subdue his brutality; for, without doubt, he has a strange penchant to grow fond of me, in spite of his aversion to the sex, else he would ne'er have taken so much pains about me. Lord, how proud wou'd some poor creatures be of such a conquest! But I, alas! I don't know how to receive as a favour, what I take to be so infinitely my due. But what shall I do to new mould him, Mademoiselle, for till then, he's my utter aversion?

Madem. Matem, you must laugh at him in all de place dat you meet him, and turn into de reticule all he say, and all he do.

L. F. Why truly satire has ever been of wond'rous use to reform ill-manners. Besides, 'tis my particular talent to ridicule folks. I can be severe, strangely severe, when I will, Mademoiselle—Give me the pen and ink—I find myself whimsical—I'll write to him—Or I'll let it alone, and be severe upon him that way. [*Sitting down to write, rising up again.*]—Yet active severity is better than passive. [*Sitting down.*]—'Tis as good to let it alone too; for every lash I give him, perhaps he'll take for a favour.—[*Rising.*] Yet 'tis a thousand pities so much satire should be lost. [*Sitting.*]—But if it should have a wrong effect upon him,

The PROVOK'D WIFE. 27

him 'twould distract me, [*Rising.*] — Well, I must write tho', after all. [*Sitting.*] — Or I'll let it alone, which is the same thing. [*Rising.*]

Madem. La voilà déterminée.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE opens. *Sir John, Lady Brute, and Belinda, rising from the table.*

Sir JOHN.

HERE; take away the things: I expect company. But first bring me a pipe: I'll smoke.
[*To a Servant.*]

L. B. Lord, Sir John, I wonder you won't leave that nasty custom.

Sir J. Pr'ythee don't be impertinent.

Bel. [*To Lady Brute.*] I wonder who those are he expects this afternoon.

L. B. I'd give the world to know. Perhaps 'tis Constant, he comes here sometimes; if it does prove him, I'm resolv'd I'll share the visit.

Bel. We'll send for our work, and sit here.

L. B. He'll choak us with his tobacco.

Bel. Nothing will choak us when we are doing what we have a mind to. Lovewell.

Enter Lovewell.

Lov. Madam.

L. B. Here; bring my cousin's work and mine hither. [*Exit Lov. and re-enters with their work.*]

Sir J. Why, pox, can't you work somewhere else?

C. 2.

L. B.

L. B. We shall be careful not to disturb you, Sir.

Bel. Your pipe would make you too thoughtful, uncle, if you were left alone; our prittle prattle will cure your spleen.

Sir J. Will it so, Mrs. Pert! Now I believe it will so increase it [*Sitting and smoking.*] I shall take my own house for a paper-mill.

L. B. [*to Bel. aside.*] Don't let's mind him; let him say what he will.

Sir J. A woman's tongue a cure for the spleen—'oons—[*Aside.*] If a man had got the head-ach, they'd be for applying the same remedy.

L. B. You have done a great deal, Belinda, since yesterday.

Bel. Yes, I have work'd very hard; how do you like it?

L. B. O! 'tis the prettiest fringe in the world. Well, cousin, you have the happiest fancy: pr'ythee advise me about altering my crimson petticoat.

Sir J. A pox o' your petticoat; here's such a prating, a man can't digest his own thoughts for you.

L. B. Don't answer him. [*aside.*] Well, what do you advise me?

Bel. Why, really, I wou'd not alter it at all. Me-thinks, 'tis very pretty as it is.

L. B. Ay, that's true: but you know one grows weary of the prettiest things in the world when one has had 'em long.

Sir J. Yes, I have taught her that.

Bel. Shall we provoke him a little?

L. B. With all my heart. Belinda, don't you long to be marry'd?

Bel. Why, there are some things in it which I could like well enough.

L. B. What do you think you shou'd dislike?

Bel. My husband, a hundred to one else.

L. B. O ye wicked wretch! Sure you don't speak as you think?

Bel. Yes, I do: especially if he smok'd tobacco.

[*He looks earnestly at them.*]

L. B.

L. B. Why, that many times takes off worse smells.

Bel. Then he must smell very ill indeed.

L. B. So some men will, to keep their wives from coming near em.

Bel. Then those wives shou'd cuckold 'em at a distance.

[He rises in a fury, throws his pipe at 'em, and drives 'em out. As they run off, Constant and Heartfree enter. Lady Brute runs against Constant.]

Sir J. 'Oons, get you gone up stairs, you confederating strumpets you, or I'll cuckold you with a vengeance!

L. B. O lord, he'll beat us, he'll beat us. Dear, dear Mr. Constant, save us. [Exeunt.]

Sir J. I'll cuckold you, with a pox.

Const. Heav'n! Sir John, what's the matter!

Sir J. Sure if women had been ready created, the devil, instead of being kick'd down into hell, had been marry'd.

Heartf. Why what new plagues have you found now?

Sir J. Why these two gentlewomen did but hear me say I expected you here this afternoon; upon which, they presently resolv'd to take up the room, w^o purpose to plague me and my friends.

Const. Was that all? Why we should have been glad of their company.

Sir J. Then I should have been weary of yours; for I can't relish both together. They found fault with my smoking tobacco too; and said men stunk. But I have a good mind—to say something.

Const. No, nothing against the ladies, pray.

Sir J. Split the ladies. Come, will you sit down? Give us some wine, fellow. You won't smoke!

Const. No, nor drink neither, at this time, I must ask your pardon.

Sir J. What, this mistress of yours runs in your head! I'll warrant it's some such squeamish minx as my wife, that's grown so dainty of late, she finds fault even with a dirty shirt.

Heartf. That a woman may do, and not be very dainty neither.

Sir J. 'Pox o' the women, let's drink.' Come, you shall take one glass, tho' I send for a box of lozenges to sweeten your mouth after it.

Const. Nay, if one glass will satisfy you, I'll drink it, without putting you to that expence.

Sir J. Why that's honest. Fill some wine, firrah. So here's to you, gentlemen—A wife's the devil. To your both being married. *[They drink.]*

Heartf. O, your most humble servant, Sir.

Sir J. Well, how do you like my wine?

Const. 'Tis very good, indeed.

Heartf. 'Tis admirable.

Sir J. Then give us t'other glass.

Const. No, pray excuse us now: we'll come another time, and then we won't spare it.

Sir J. This one glass, and no more. Come, it shall be your mistress's health: and that's a great compliment from me, I assure you.

Const. And 'tis a very obliging one to me: so give us the glasses.

Sir J. So; let her live. *[Sir John coughs in the glass.]*

Heartf. And be kind.

Const. What's the matter? Does it go the wrong way?

Sir J. If I had love enough to be jealous, I should take this for an ill omen: for I never drank my wife's health in my life, but I puk'd in my glass.

Const. O she's too virtuous to make any reasonable man jealous.

Sir J. Pox of her virtue. If I could catch her adulterating, I might be divorc'd from her by law.

Heartf. And so pay her a yearly pension, to be a distinguish'd cuckold.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's my Lord Rake, Colonel Bully, and some other gentlemen at the Blue Posts, desire your company.

3

Sir J.

Sir J. God's so, we are to consult about playing the devil to-night.

Heartf. Well, we won't hinder business.

Sir J. Methinks, I don't know how to leave you two: but for once I must make bold. Or, look you; may be the conference mayn't last long! So if you'll wait here half an hour, or an hour; if I don't come then—why then—I won't come at all.

Heartf. [*to Const.*] A good modest proposition, truly. [*Aside.*]

Const. But let's accept on't, however. Who knows what may happen!

Heartf. Well, Sir, to show you how fond we are of your company, we'll expect your return as long as we can.

Sir J. Nay, may be I mayn't stay at all; but business, you know, must be done. So your servant—Or, hark you, if you have a mind to take a frisk with us, I have an interest with my lord; I can easily introduce you.

Const. We are much beholden to you; but for my part, I'm engag'd another way.

Sir J. What! to your mistress, I'll warrant. Pr'y-thee, leave your nasty punk to entertain herself with her own wicked thoughts, and make one with us to-night.

Const. Sir, 'tis business that is to employ me.

Heartf. And me; and business must be done, you know.

Sir J. Ay, women's business, tho' the world were consum'd for't.

[*Exit Sir John.*]

Const. Farewel, beast; and now, my dear friend, would my mistress be but as complaisant as some men's wives, who think it a piece of good-breeding to receive the visits of their husband's friends in his absence!

Heartf. Why, for your sake, I could forgive her, tho' she should be so complaisant to receive something else in his absence. But what way shall we invent to see her?

Const.

Const. O ne'er hope it: invention will prove as vain as wishes.

Enter Lady Brute and Belinda.

Heartf. What do you think now, friend?

Const. I think I shall swoon.

Heartf. I'll speak first then, whilst you fetch breath.

L. B. We think ourselves oblig'd, gentlemen, to come and return you thanks for your knight-errantry. We were just upon being devour'd by the fiery dragon.

Bel. Did not his fumes almost knock you down, gentlemen?

Heartf. Truly, ladies, we did undergo some hardships; and should have done more, if some greater heroes than ourselves, hard by, had not diverted him.

Const. Tho' I am glad of the service you are pleas'd to say we have done you, yet I'm sorry we could do it in no other way, than by making ourselves privy to what you would perhaps have kept a secret.

Bel. For Sir John's part, I suppose he designed it no secret, since he made so much noise. And for myself, truly I'm not much concern'd, since 'tis fallen only into this gentleman's hands and yours; who, I have many reasons to believe, will neither interpret nor report any thing to my disadvantage.

Const. Your good opinion, Madam, was what I fear'd I never could have merited.

L. B. Your fears were vain then, Sir; for I'm just to every body.

Heartf. Pr'ythee, Constant, what is't you do to get the ladies good opinions; for I'm a novice at it?

Bel. Sir, will you give me leave to instruct you?

Heartf. Yes, that I will, with all my soul, Madam.

Bel. Why then, you must never be a sloven; never be out of humour, never smoke tobacco, nor drink but when you are dry.

Heartf. That's hard.

Conf. Nay, if you take his bottle from him, you break his heart, Madam.

Bel. Why, is it possible the gentleman can love drinking?

Heartf. Only by way of antidote.

Bel. Against what, pray?

Heartf. Against love, Madam.

L. B. Are you afraid of being in love, Sir?

Heartf. I shou'd, if there were any danger of it.

L. B. Pray why so?

Heartf. Because I always had an aversion to being us'd like a dog.

Bel. Why, truly, men in love are seldom us'd better.

L. B. But was you never in love, Sir?

Heartf. No, I thank Heav'n, Madam.

Bel. Pray, where got you your learning then?

Heartf. From other people's expence.

Bel. That's being a spunger, Sir, which is scarce honest: If you'd buy some experience with your own money, as 'twould be fairlier got, so 'twould stick longer by you.

Enter Footman.

Foot. Madam, here's my Lady Fancyful, to wait upon your ladyship.

L. B. Shield me, kind Heav'n! What an inundation of impertinence is here coming upon us!

Enter Lady Fancyful, who runs first to Lady Brute, then to Belinda, kissing 'em.

L. F. My dear lady Brute, and sweet Belinda, methinks, 'tis an age since I saw you.

L. B. Yet 'tis but three days; sure you have pass'd your time very ill, it seems so long to you.

L. F. Why really, to confess the truth to you, I am so everlastingly fatigued with the addresses of unfortunate gentlemen, that, were it not for the extravagancy of the example, I should c'en tear out these wicked eyes with my own fingers, to make both myself

myself and mankind easy. What think you on't, Mr. Heartfree, for I take you to be my faithful adviser?

Heartf. Why, truly, Madam,—I think—every project that is for the good of mankind, ought to be encourag'd.

L. F. Then I have your consent, Sir?

Heartf. To do what ever you please, Madam.

L. F. You had a much more limited complaisance this morning, Sir. Wou'd you believe it, ladies? the gentleman has been so exceeding generous, to tell me of above fifty faults, in less time than it was well possible for me to commit two of 'em.

Const. Why truly, Madam, my friend there is apt to be something familiar with the ladies.

L. F. He is indeed, Sir; but he's wond'rous charitable with it: he has had the goodness to design a reformation, e'en down to my fingers ends.—'Twas thus, I think, Sir, [*Opening her fingers in an awkward manner.*] you'd have 'em stand—My eyes to he did not like: how was't you wou'd have directed 'em? Thus I think. [*Staring at him.*]—Then there was something amiss in my gait too: I don't know well how 'twas! but as I take it, he would have me walk like him. Pray, Sir, do me the favour, to take a turn or two about the room, that the company may see you—He's fullen, ladies, and won't. But, to make short, and give you as true an idea as I can of the matter, I think 'twas much about this figure in general, he would have moulded me to: but I was an obstinate woman, and could not resolve to make myself mistress of his heart, by growing as awkward as his fancy.

[*She walks awkwardly about, staring and looking ungainly, then changes on a sudden to the extremity of her usual affectation.*]

Heartf. Just thus women do, when they think we are in love with 'em, or when they are so with us.

[*Here Constant and Lady Brute talk together apart.*]

L. F.

L. F. 'Twould however be less vanity for me to conclude the former, than you the latter, Sir.

Heartf. Madam, all I shall presume to conclude, is, that if I were in love, you'd find the means to make me soon weary on't.

L. F. Not by over-fondness, upon my word, Sir. But pr'ythee let's stop here.; for you are so much govern'd by instinct, I know you'll grow brutish at last.

Bel. [*Aside.*] Now am I sure she's fond of him: I'll try to make her jealous. Well, for my part, I should be glad to find some-body would be so free with me, that I might know my faults, and mend 'em.

L. F. Then pray let me recommend this gentleman to you: I have known him some time, and will be surety for him, that upon a very limited encouragement on your side, you shall find an extended impudence on his.

Heartf. I thank you, Madam, for your recommendation: but hating idleness, I'm unwilling to enter into a place where I believe there would be nothing to do. I was fond of serving your ladyship, because I knew you'd find me constant employment.

L. F. I told you he'd be rude, Belinda.

Bel. O, a little bluntness is a sign of honesty, which makes me always ready to pardon it. So, Sir, if you have no other objections to my service, but the fear of being idle in it, you may venture to list your self: I shall find you work, I warrant you.

Heartf. Upon those terms I engage, Madam; and this, with your leave, I take for earnest.

[*Offers to kiss her hand.*]

Bel. Hold there, Sir; I'm none of your earnest givers. But if I'm well serv'd, I give good wages, and pay punctually.

[*Heartf. and Bel. seem to continue talking familiarly.*]

L. F. [*Aside.*] I don't like this jesting between 'em—Methinks the fool begins to look as if he were in earnest,—but then he must be a fool indeed—Lard, what a difference there is between me and her. [*Looking*

ing at Bel. scornfully.] How I shou'd despise such a thing, if I were a man!—What a nose she has—What a chin—What a neck—Then her eyes—And the worst kissing lips in the universe—No, no, he can never like her, that's positive—Yet I can't suffer 'em together any longer. Mr. Heartfree, do you know, that you and I must have no quarrel for all this? I can't forbear being a little severe now and then : but women, you know, may be allowed any thing.

Heartf. Up to a certain age, Madam.

L. F. Which I'm not yet past, I hope.

Heartf. [*Aside.*] Nor never will, I dare swear.

L. F. [*To Lady Brute.*] Come, Madam, will your ladyship be witness to our reconciliation?

L. B. You are agreed then at last;

Heartf. [*Alightingly.*] We forgive.

L. F. [*Aside.*] That was a cold, ill-natur'd reply.

L. B. Then there's no challenges sent between you?

Heartf. Not from me, I promise. [*Aside to Const.*] But that's more than I'll do for her; for I know she can as well be hang'd as forbear writing to me.

Const. That I believe. But I think we had best be going, lest she should suspect something, and be malicious.

Heartf. With all my heart.

Const. Ladies we are your humble servant. I see Sir John is quite engag'd, 'twould be in vain to expect him. Come, Heartfree. [*Exit.*]

Heartf. Ladies, your servant. [*To Belinda.*] I hope, Madam, you won't forget our bargain; I'm to say what I please to you. [*Exit Heartfree.*]

Bel. Liberty of speech entire, Sir.

L. F. [*Aside.*] Very pretty, truly—But how the blockhead went out languishing at her; and not a look towards me—Well, people may talk, but miracles are not ceas'd. For 'tis more than natural, such a rude fellow as he, and such a little impertinent as she, should be capable of making a woman of my sphere uneasy. But I can bear her fight no longer—me-

—methinks, she's grown ten times uglier than Cornet. I must home and study revenge. [*To Lady Brute.*] Madam, your humble servant; I must take my leave.

L. B. What, going already, Madam!

L. F. I must beg you'll excuse me this once; for really I have eighteen visits to return this afternoon: so you see I'm importun'd by the women, as well as the men.

Bel. [*Aside.*] And she's quits with them both.

L. F. [*Going.*] Nay, you shan't go one step out of the room.

L. B. Indeed I'll wait upon you down.

L. F. No, sweet Lady Brute, you know I swoon at ceremony.

L. B. Pray give me leave.

L. F. You know I won't.

L. B. Indeed I must.

L. F. Indeed you shan't

L. B. Indeed I will.

L. F. Indeed you shan't.

L. B. Indeed I will.

L. F. Indeed you shan't. Indeed, indeed, indeed, you shan't. [*Exit Lady Fan. running; they follow.*]

Re-enter Lady Brute, sola.

This impertinent woman has put me out of humour for a fortnight—What an agreeable moment has her foolish visit interrupted! Lord, what a pleasure there is in doing what we should not do!

Re-enter Constant.

Ha! here again!

Const. Tho' the renewing my visit may seem a little irregular, I hope I shall obtain your pardon for it, Madam, when you know I only left the room, lest the lady who was here should have been as malicious in her remarks, as she is foolish in her conduct.

L. B. He who has discretion enough to be tender

VOL. II.

D

of

of a woman's reputation, carries a virtue about him that may atone for a great many faults.

Const. If it has a title to atone for any, its pretensions must needs be strongest, where the crime is love.

' I therefore hope I shall be forgiven the attempt I have made upon your heart, since my enterprize has been a secret to all the world but yourself.

' L. B. Secrecy indeed, in sins of this kind, is an argument of weight to lessen the punishment; but nothing's a plea, for a pardon entire, without a sincere repentance.

' *Const.* If sincerity in repentance consists in sorrow for offending, no cloister ever inclos'd so true a penitent as I should be. But I hope it can't be reckon'd an offence to love, where it is a duty to adore.

L. B. 'Tis an offence, a great one, where it would rob a woman of all she ought to be ador'd for; her virtue.

Const. Virtue!—That phantom of honour, which men in every age have so condemn'd; they have thrown it amongst the woman to scrabble for.

L. B. If it be a thing of so very little value, why do you so earnestly recommend it to your wives and daughters?

Const. We recommend it to our wives, Madam, because we wou'd keep 'em to ourselves; and to our daughters, because we wou'd dispose of 'em to others.

L. B. 'Tis then of some importance, it seems, since you can't dispose of them without it.

' *Const.* That importance, Madam, lies in the humour of the country, not in the nature of the thing. Pray what does your Ladyship think of a powder'd coat for deep mourning?

' L. B. I think, Sir, your sophistry has all the effect that you can reasonably expect it should have; it puzzles, but don't convince.

' *Const.* I'm sorry for it.

' L. B. I'm sorry to hear you say so.

' *Const.* Pray why?

' L. B. Because if you expected more from it, you have a worse opinion of my understanding than I desire you should have,

' *Const.* [*Aside.*] I comprehend her : she would have me set a value upon her chastity, that I might think myself the more oblig'd to her, when she makes me a present of it.' [*To her.*] I beg you will believe I did but rally, Madam ; ' I know you judge too well of right and wrong, to be deceiv'd by arguments like those. 'And I hope you will have so favourable an opinion of my understanding too, to believe the thing call'd virtue has worth enough with me, to pass for an eternal obligation where'er 'tis sacrificed.

L. B. It is, I think, so great a one, as nothing can repay.

Const. Yes ; the making the man you love your everlasting debtor.

L. B. When debtors once have borrowed all we have to lend, they are very apt to grow shy of their creditor's company.

Const. That, Madam, is only when they are forc'd to borrow of usurers, and not of a generous friend. Let us chuse our creditors, and we are seldom so ungrateful as to shun 'em.

L. B. What think you of Sir John, Sir ? I was his free chdise.

Const. I think he's married, Madam.

L. B. Does marriage then exclude men from your rule of constancy ?

Const. It does. Constancy's a brave, free, haughty, generous agent, that cannot buckle to the chains of wedlock.

' L. B. Have you no exceptions to this general rule, as well as to t'other ?

' *Const.* Yes, I wou'd, after all, be an exception to it myself, if you were free in power and will to make me so.

' L. B. Compliments are well plac'd, where 'tis impossible to lay hold on 'em.

D 2

' *Const.*

' *Const.* I wou'd to Heav'n 'twere possible for you
' to lay hold on mine, that you might see it is no
' compliment at all. But since you are already dis-
' pos'd of, beyond redemption, to one who does not
' know the value of the jewel you have put into
' his hands, I hope you wou'd not think him greatly
' wrong'd, tho' it shou'd sometimes be look'd on
' by a friend, who knows how to esteem it as he
' ought.

' *L. B.* If looking on't alone wou'd serve his turn,
' the wrong perhaps might not be very great.

' *Const.* Why, what if he should wear it now and
' then a day, so he gave good security to bring it
' home again at night?

' *L. B.* Small security, I fancy, might serve for
' that. One might venture to take his word.

' *Const.* Then where's the injury to the owner?

' *L. B.* 'Tis an injury to him, if he think is one.
' For if happiness be seated in the mind, unhappiness
' must be so too.

' *Const.* Here I close with you, Madam, and
' draw my conclusive argument from your own po-
' sition: If the injury lie in the fancy, there needs
' nothing but secrecy to prevent the wrong.

' *L. B.* [*Going.*] A surer way to prevent it, is to
' hear no more arguments in its behalf.

Const. [*following her.*] But, Madam——

L. B. But, Sir, 'tis my turn to be discreet now,
and not suffer too long a visit.

Const. [*catching her hand.*] By Heaven, you shall
not stir, till you give me hopes that I shall see you
again at some more convenient time and place.

L. B. I give you just hopes enough—[*breaking from*
him.] to get loose from you: and that's all I can afford
you at this time.

[*Exit running.*]

Const. Now, by all that's great and good, she's a
charming woman. In what extasy of joy she has left
me! For she gave me hope. Did she not say she gave
me hope?—Hope! Ay; what hope?—enough to
make me let her go—Why that's enough in conscience.

Or,

Or, no matter how 'twas spoke; hope was the word, it came from her, and it was said to me.

Enter Heartfree.

Ha, Heartfree! Thou hast done me noble service in prattling to the young genlewoman without there: come to my arms, thou venerable bawd, and let me squeeze thee [*embracing him eagerly.*] as a new pair of stays does a fat country girl, when she's carried to court to stand for a maid of honour.

Heart. Why, what the devil's all this rapture for?

Const. Rapture! There's ground for rapture, man? There's hopes, my Heartfree, hopes, my friend.

Heartf. Hopes! of what?

Const. Why, hopes that my lady and I together, (for 'tis more than one body's work) should make Sir John a cuckold.

Heartf. Pr'ythee, what did she say to thee?

Const. Say! What did she not say? she said that—says she—she said—Zooks, I don't know what she said: but she look'd as if she said every thing I'd have her; and so if thou'lt go to the tavern, I'll treat thee with any thing that gold can buy; I'll give all my silver among the drawers, make a bonfire before the door; I wear that the pope's turn'd protestant, and that all the politicians in England are of one mind.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE opens; *Lord Rake, Sir John, &c. at a table, drinking.*

All. Huzza!

L. R. Come, boys, charge again—So—Confusion to all order. Here's liberty of conscience.

All. Huzza!

L. R. Come, sing the song I made this morning, to this purpose.

Sir J. 'Tis wicked, I hope.

L. R. Don't I tell you that I made it.

Sir J. My Lord, I beg your pardon for suspecting you of any virtue. Come begin.

D 3

SONG

S O N G *by Col. BULLY.*

I.

We're gayly yet, we're gayly yet,
 And we're not very fow, but we're gayly yet.
 Then sit ye a while, and tiddle a bit,
 For we's not very fow, but we're gayly yet,
 And we're gayly yet, &c. &c.

II.

There was a lad, and they cau'd him Dicky,
 He ga'me a kifs, and I bit his lippy,
 Then under my apron he shew'd me a trick ;
 And we's not very fow, but we're gayly yet,
 And we're gayly yet, &c. &c.

III.

There were three lads and they were clad,
 There were three lasses and them they had.
 Three trees in the orchard are newly sprung,
 And we's a' git geer enough, we're but young.
 And we're gayly yet, &c. &c.

IV.

Then up went Ailey, Ailey, up went Ailey now ;
 Then up with Ailey, quo' Crumma, we's get a roar-
 ing fow.
 And one was kifs'd in the barn, another was kifs'd
 on the green,
 And t'other behind the pease-stack, till the mow flew
 up to her eyn.
 Then up went Ailey, Ailey, &c. &c.

V.

Now fye, John Thompson, run,
 Gin ever ye run in your life,

De'el

De'el get ye ; but hye, my dear Jack,
There's a mon got to bed with your wife.
Then up went Ailey, &c. &c.

VI.

Then away John Thompson ran,
And e'gad he ran with speed,
But before he had run his length
The false loon had done the deed.
Then up went Ailey, &c. &c.

' L. R. Well, how do you like it, gentlemen ?

' All. O, admirable !

' Sir J. I would not give a fig for a song that is
' not full of fin and impudence.

' L. R. Then my muse is to your taste. But drink
' away ; the night steals upon us ; we shall want
' time to be lewd in.' Hey, page ! sally out, firrah,
and see what's doing in the camp ; we'll beat up their
quarters presently.

Page. I'll bring your lordship an exact account.

[Exit Page.]

' L. R. Now let the spirit of clary go round.
' Here's to our forlorn hope.' Courage, knight ! vic-
tory attends you.

Sir J. And laurels shall crown me. Drink away,
and be damn'd.

L. R. Again, boys ; t'other glafs, and no mora-
lity.

Sir J. [*drunk.*] Ay—no morality—and damn the
watch. And let the constable be married.

All. Huzza !

Re-enter Page.

L. R. How are the streets inhabited, firrah ?

Page. My lord, it's Sunday-night, they are full of
drunken citizens.

L. R. Along then, boys, we shall have a feast.

C. B. Along, noble knight.

Sir. J.

Sir J. Ay—along bully; and he that says Sir John Brute is not as drunk and as religious as the drunkenest citizen of them all—is a liar, and the son of a whore.

C. B. Why, that was bravely spoke, and like a free-born Englishman.

Sir J. What's that to you, Sir, whether I am an Englishman or a Frenchman!

C. B. Zoons, you are not angry, Sir?

Sir J. Zoons, I am angry, Sir—for if I am a free-born Englishman, what have you to do, even to talk of my privileges?

L. R. Why, pr'ythee knight don't quarrel here; leave private animosities to be decided by daylight; let the night be employ'd against the public enemy.

Sir J. My lord, I respect you, because you are a man of quality. But I'll make that fellow know I am within a hair's breadth as absolute by my privileges, as the king of France is by his prerogative. He by his prerogative takes money where it is not his due; I by my privilege refuse paying it where I owe it. Liberty and property, and old England. Huzza!

All. Huzza! [Exit Sir John reeling, all following him.]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T

A C T IV.

S C E N E, *A Bed-chamber.*

Enter Lady Brute and Belinda.

L. BRUTE.

SURE it's late, Belinda, I begin to be sleepy.

Bel. Yes, 'tis near twelve. Will you go to Bed?

L. B. To bed, my dear! And by that time I am fallen into a sweet sleep, (or perhaps a sweet dream, which is better and better) Sir John will come home roaring drunk, and be overjoy'd he finds me in a condition to be disturb'd.

Bel. O you need not fear him, he's in for all night. The servants say he's gone to drink with my Lord Rake.

L. B. Nay, 'tis not very likely, indeed, such suitable company should part presently. What hogs men turn to, Belinda, when they grow weary of women.

Bel. And what owls they are, whilst thy are fond of 'em.

L. B. But that we may forgive well enough, because they are so upon our accounts. But pr'ythee one word of poor Constant 'before we go to bed, if it 'be but to furnish matter for dreams.' I dare swear he's talking of me now, or thinking of me at least.

Bel. So he ought, I think; for you were pleas'd to make him a good round advance to-day, Madam.

L. B. Why, I have e'en plagu'd him enough to satisfy any reasonable woman: he has besieged me these two years to no purpose.

Bel. And if he besieg'd you two years more he'd 'be

' be well enough paid, so he had the plundering of
' you at last.

' *L. B.* That may be; but I'm afraid the town
' won't be able to hold out much longer: for to con-
' fess the truth to you, Belinda, the garrison begins
' to grow mutinous.

' *Bel.* Then the sooner you capitulate, the better.

' *L. B.* Yet, methinks, I would fain stay a little
' longer to see you fix'd too, that we might start
' together, and see who cou'd love longest.' What
think you, if Heartfree should have a month's mind
to you?

Bel. Why I could almost be in love with him, for
despising that foolish, affected Lady Fancyful; ' but
' I'm afraid he's too cold ever to warm himself by
' my fire.

' *L. B.* Then he deserves to be frozen to death.
' Wou'd I were a man for your sake, dear rogue.
' [*Kissing her.*]

' *Bel.* You'd wish yourself a woman for your own,
' or the men are mistaken. But if I could make a
' conquest of this son of Bacchus, and rival his bot-
' tle, what shou'd I do with him? He has no for-
' tune, I can't marry him; and sure you wou'd not
' have me do I don't know what with him.

' *L. B.* Why, if you did, child, 'twou'd be but
' a good friendly part; if 'twere only to keep me
' in countenance, whilst I play the fool with Con-
' stant.

' *Bel.* Well, if I can't resolve to serve you that way,
' I may perhaps some other, as much to your satis-
' faction.' But pray how shall we contrive to see these
blades again quickly?

L. B. We must e'en have recourse to the old way;
make 'em an appointment 'twixt jest and earnest;
' twill look like a frolic, and that you know is a very
good thing to save a woman's blushes.

Bel. You advise well; but where shall it be?

L. B. In Spring Garden. But they shan't know
their women, till they pull off their masks; for a sur-
prize

prize is the most agreeable thing in the world: 'and
' I find myself in a very good humour, ready to do
' 'em any good turn I can think on.

Bel. Then pray write 'em the necessary billet, without farther delay.

L. B. Let's go into your chamber then, and whilst you undress I'll do it, child. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *Covent-Garden.*

Enter Lord Rake, Sir John, &c. with swords drawn.

L. R. Is the dog dead?

C. B. No, damn him, I heard him wheeze.

L. R. How the witch his wife howl'd.

C. B. Ay, she'll alarm the watch presently.

L. R. Appear, knight, then; come, you have a good cause to fight for, there's a man murder'd.

Sir J. Is there! then let his ghost be satisfy'd; for I'll sacrifice a constable to it presently, and burn his body upon his wooden chair.

Enter a Taylor, with a bundle under his arm.

C. B. How now! what have we got here? a thief!

Tay. No, an't please you, I'm no thief.

L. R. That we'll see presently. Here; let the general examine him.

Sir J. Ay, ay, let me examine him, and I'll lay a hundred pounds I find him guilty in spite of his teeth—for he looks—like a—sneaking rascal. Come, firrah, without equivocation or mental reservation, tell me of what opinion you are, and what calling; for by them—I shall guess at your morals.

Tay. An't please you, I'm a dissenting journeyman woman's taylor.

Sir J. Then, firrah, you love lying by your religion, and theft by your trade: and so, that your punish-

punishments may be suitable to your crimes—I'll have you first gagged—and then hanged.

Tay. Pray, good worthy gentlemen, don't abuse me : indeed I'm an honest man, and a good workman, tho' I say it, that shou'd not say it.

Sir J. No words, firrah, but attend your fate.

L. R. Let me see what's in that bundle.

Tay. An't please you, it's my lady's short cloak and wrapping gown.

Sir J. What lady, you reptile, you ?

Tay. My lady Brute, an't please your honour.

Sir J. My lady Brute ! my wife ! the robe of my wife—with reverence let me approach it. The dear angel is always taking care of me in danger, and has sent me this suit of armour to protect me in this day of battle ; on they go.

All. O brave knight !

L. R. Live, Don Quixote the second.

Sir J. Sancho, my 'squire, help me on with my armour.

Tay. O dear gentlemen ! I shall be quite undone if you take the sack.

Sir J. Retire, firrah ! and since you carry off your skin, go home and be happy.

Sir J. So ! how d'ye like my shapes now ?

L. R. To a miracle ! He looks like a queen of the Amazons—But to your arms, gentlemen ! The enemy's upon their march—here's the watch—

Sir J. 'Oons ! if it were Alexander the Great, at the head of his army, I wou'd drive him into a horse-pond.

All. Huzza ! O brave knight !

Enter Watchman.

Sir J. See ! Here he comes, with all his Greeks about him—follow me, boys.

Watch. Hey-day ! Who have we got here ?—stand.

Sir J. May-hap not.

Watch. What are you all doing here in the streets
at

at this time o'night? And and who are you, Madam, that seems to be at the head of this noble crew?

Sir J. Sirrah! I am Bonduca, queen of the Welchmen; and with a leek as long as my pedigree, I will destroy your Roman legions in an instant—Britons, strike home. [*Snatches a watchman's staff. Strikes at the watch, and falls down, his party drove off.*]

Watch. So! We have got the queen, however! We'll make her pay well for her ransom—Come, Madam, will your Majesty please to walk before the constable?

Sir J. The constable's a rascal! And you are a son of a whore!

Watch. A most noble reply, truly! If this be her royal style, I'll warrant, her maids of honour prattle prettily: but we'll teach you some of our court-dialect before we part with you, princess—Away with her to the round-house.

Sir J. Hands off, you ruffians! My honour's dearer to me than my life; I hope you won't be uncivil. [*Exeunt.*]

Watch. Away with her.

S C E N E, *A bed chamber.*

Enter Heartfree solus.

What the plague ails me?—Love! No, I thank you for that, my heart's rock still—Yet 'tis Belinda that disturbs me, that's positive—Well, what of all that! Must I love her for being troublesome? at that rate I might love all the women I meet, e-gad. But hold!—tho' I don't love her for disturbing me, yet she may disturb me, because I love her,—Ay, that may be, faith. I have dreamt of her, that's certain—Well, so I have of my mother; therefore what's that to the purpose? Ay, but Belinda runs in my mind waking—and so does many a damn'd thing, that I don't care a farthing for—Methinks tho', I would fain be talking to her, and yet I have no business—

VOL. II.

E

Wel.,

Well, am I the first man that has had a mind to do an impertinent thing?

Enter Constant.

Const. How now, Heartfree? What makes you up and dress'd so soon! I thought none but lovers quarrell'd with their beds; I expected to have found you snoring, as I us'd to do.

Heart. Why, faith, friend, 'tis the care I have of your affairs, that makes me so thoughtful; I have been studying all night how to bring your matter about with Belinda.

Const. With Belinda!

Heart. With my lady, I mean: and faith I have mighty hopes on't. Sure you must be very well satisfied with her behaviour to you yesterday!

Const. So well, that nothing but a lover's fears can make me doubt of success. But what can this sudden change proceed from?

Heartf. Why, you saw her husband beat her, did you not?

Const. That's true: a husband is scarce to be borne upon any terms, much less when he fights with his wife. Methinks she shou'd e'en have cuckolded him upon the spot, to shew that after the battle she was master of the field.

Heartf. A council of war of women wou'd infallibly have advis'd her to it. But I confess so agreeable a woman as Belinda deserves better usage.

Const. Belinda again!

Heartf. My lady, I mean. What a pox makes me blunder so to-day? [*Aside.*] A plague of this treacherous tongue.

Const. Pr'y thee, look upon me seriously, Heartfree.—Now answer me directly: is it my lady, or Belinda, employs your careful thoughts thus?

Heartf. My lady, or Belinda!

Const. In love, by this light; in love.

Heartf.

Heartf. In love!

Const. Nay, ne'er deny it; for thou'lt do it so awkwardly, 'twill but make the jest fit heavier about thee. My dear friend, I give you much joy.

Heartf. Why, pr'ythee, you won't persuade me to it, will you?

Const. That she's mistress of your tongue, that's plain; and I know you are so honest a fellow, your tongue and heart always go together. But how---but how the devil! Pha, ha, ha, ha, ha,—

Heartf. Hey-day! why sure you don't believe it in earnest!

Const. Yes, I do, because I see you deny it in jest.

Heartf. Nay, but look you, Ned—a—deny in jest—a—gadzooks, you know I say—a—when a man denies a thing in jest—a—

Const. Pha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

Heartf. Nay, then we shall have it: what, because a man stumbles at a word—Did you never make a blunder?

Const. Yes; for I am in love, I own it.

Heartf. Then so am I—Now laugh, till thy soul's glutted with mirth. [*Embracing him.*] But, dear Constant, don't tell the town on't.

Const. Nay then, 'twere almost pity to laugh at thee, after so honest a confession. 'But tell us a little, Jack, by what new invented arms has this mighty stroke been given?

Heartf. E'en by that unaccountable weapon call'd Je-ne-scai-quoy: for every thing that can come within the verge of beauty, I have seen it with indifference.

Const. So, in few words then; the Je-ne-scai-quoy has been too hard for the quilted petticoat.

Heartf. I'gad, I think the Je-ne-scai-quoy is in the quilted petticoat; at least 'tis certain I never think on't without—a—a Je-ne-scai-quoy in every part about me.

E 2

Const.

50 *The PROVOK'D WIFE.*

‘ *Const.* Well, but have all your remedies lost their virtue? Have you turn’d her inside out yet?

‘ *Heartf.* I dare not so much as think on’t.

‘ *Const.* But don’t the two years fatigue I have had, discourage you?

‘ *Heartf.* Yes: I dread what I foresee; yet cannot quit the enterprize: like some soldiers, whose courage dwells more in their honour than their nature, on they go, tho’ the body trembles at what the soul makes it undertake.

‘ *Const.* Nay, if you expect your mistress will use you, as your profanations against her sex deserve, you tremble justly. But how do you intend to proceed, friend?

‘ *Heartf.* Thou know’st. I am but a novice; be friendly and advise me.

‘ *Const.* Why, look you then; I’d have you—serenade and a—write a song—Go to church; look like a fool—be very officious: ogle, write, and lead out: and who knows, but in a year or two’s time, you may be—call’d a troublesome puppy, and sent about your business.

‘ *Heartf.* That’s hard.

‘ *Const.* Yet thus it oft falls out with lovers, Sir.

‘ *Heartf.* Pox on me, for making one of the number.

‘ *Const.* Have a care! say no saucy things; ’twill but augment your crime; and if your mistress hears on’t, increase your punishment.

‘ *Heartf.* Pr’ythee say something then, to encourage me; you know I help’d you in your distress.

‘ *Const.* Why then, to encourage you to perseverance, that you may be thoroughly ill us’d for your offences; I’ll put you in mind, that even the coyest ladies of ’em all, are made up of desires, as well as we; and tho’ they do hold out a long time, they will capitulate at last; for that thundering engineer, nature, does make such havock in the town, they must surrender at long run, or perish in their own flames.

Enter

Enter Footman.

Foot. Sir, there's a porter without, with a letter; he desires to give into your own hands.

Const. Call him in.

Enter Porter.

Const. What, Joe! Is it thee?

Port. An't please you, Sir, I was order'd to deliver this into your own hands, by two well-shap'd ladies, at the New-Exchange. I was at your honour's lodgings, and your servants sent me hither.

Const. 'Tis well, are you to carry any answer?

Port. No, my noble master. They gave me my orders, and whip, they were gone, 'like a maiden-head at fifteen.

Const. Very well; there. *[Gives him money.]*

Port. God blefs your honour. *[Exit Porter.]*

Const. Now let's see what honest, trusty Joe has brought us. *[Reads.]*

If you and your play-fellow can spare time from your business and devotions: don't fail to be at Spring-Garden about eight in the evening. You'll find nothing there but women, so you need bring no other arms than what you usually carry about you.

So, play-fellow: here's something to stay your stomach, till your mistress's dish is ready for you.

Heartf. Some of our old batter'd acquaintance. I won't go, not I.

Const. Nay, that you can't avoid; there's honour in the case; 'tis a challenge, and I want a second.

Heartf. I doubt I shall be but a very useless one to you; for I'm so dishearten'd by this wound Belinda has given me, I don't think I shall have courage enough to draw my sword.

Const. O, if that be all, come along; I'll warrant you'll find sword enough for such enemies as we have to deal withal.

[Excunt.]
SCENE.

SCENE, *A Street.*

Enter Constable and Watchmen, with Sir John.

Const. Come, forfooth, come along, if you please !
I once in compassion thought to have seen you safe home this morning: but you have been so rampant and abusive all night, I shall see what the justice of peace will say to you.

Sir J. And you shall see what I'll say to the justice of peace, Sirrah. [*Watchman knocks at the door.*]

Enter Servant.

Const. Is Mr. Justice at home ?

Serv. Yes.

Const. Pray acquaint his worship we have got an unruly woman here, and desire to know what he'll please to have done with her.

Serv. I'll acquaint my master. [*Exit Serv.*]

Sir J. Hark you, Constable, what cuckoldy justice is this ?

Const. One that knows how to deal with such romps as you are, I'll warrant you.

Enter Justice.

Just. Well, Mr. Constable, what is the matter there ?

Const. An't please your worship, this here comical sort of a gentlewoman has committed great outrages to-night. She has been frolicking with my Lord Rake and his gang ; they attacked the watch, and I hear there has been a man kill'd : I believe 'tis they have done it.

Sir J. Sir, there may have been murder, for ought I know ; and 'tis a great mercy there has not been a rape too—that fellow wou'd have ravished me.

2d. Watch. Ravish ! ravish ! O lud ! O lud ! O lud ! ravish her ! Why, please your worship, I heard Mr. Constable say, he believed she was little better than a maphrodite.

Just. Why truly, she does seem a little masculine about the mouth.

2d. Watch. Yes, and about the hands too, an't please your worship. I did but offer, in mere civility, to help her up the steps into our apartment, and with her gripen fist thus.

[Sir John knocks him down.]

Sir J. Ay, just so, Sir, I fell'd him to the ground, like an ox.

Just. Out upon this boisterous woman! out upon her!

Sir J. Mr. Justice, he would have been uncivil: it was in defence of my honour, and I demand satisfaction.

2d. Watch. I hope your worship will satisfy her honour in Bridewell; that fist of hers will make an admirable hump-beater.

Sir J. Sir, I hope you will protect me against that libidinous rascal. I am a woman of quality and virtue too, for all I am in an undress this morning.

Just. Why, she really has the air of a sort of a woman, a little somethingish out of the common. Madam, if you expect I should be favourable to you, I desire I may know who you are.

Sir J. Sir, I am any body, at your service.

Just. Lady, I desire to know your name.

Sir J. Sir, my name's Mary.

Just. Ay, but your surname, Madam.

Sir J. Sir, my surname's the very same with my husband's.

Just. A strange woman this! Who is your husband, pray?

Sir J. Sir John——

Just. Sir John who?

Sir J. Sir John Brute.

Just. Is it possible, Madam, you can be my Lady Brute?

Sir J. That happy woman, Sir, am I; only a little in my merriment to-night.

Just. I am concern'd for Sir John.

Sir J.

Sir J. Truly, so am I.

Just. I have heard he's an honest gentleman.

Sir J. As ever drank.

Just. Good lack! Indeed, lady, I'm sorry he has such a wife.

Sir J. I am sorry he has any wife at all.

Just. And so perhaps may he—I doubt you have not given him a very good taste of matrimony.

Sir J. Taste, Sir! Sir, I have scorn'd to stint him to a taste, I have given him a full meal of it.

Just. Indeed, I believe so! But pray, fair lady, may he have given you any occasion for this extraordinary conduct—Does he not use you well?

Sir J. A little upon the rough sometimes.

Just. Ay, any man may be out of humour now and then.

Sir J. Sir, I love peace and quiet, and when a woman don't find that at home, she's apt sometimes to comfort herself with a few innocent diversions abroad.

Just. I doubt he uses you but too well. Pray how does he as to that weighty thing, money? Does he allow you what is proper of that?

Sir J. Sir, I have generally enough to pay the reckoning, if this son of a whore of a drawer wou'd but bring his bill.

Just. A strange woman this—Does he spend a reasonable portion of his time at home, to the comfort of his wife and children?

Sir J. He never gave his wife cause to repine at his being abroad in his life.

Just. Pray, Madam, how may he be in the grand matrimonial point.—Is he true to your bed?

Sir J. Chaste! Oons! This fellow asks so many impertinent questions! E'gad I believe it is the Justice's wife, in the Justice's cloaths.

Just. 'Tis great pity he shou'd have been thus dispos'd of. Pray, Madam, (and then I've done) what may be your ladyship's common method of life? If I may presume so far.

Sir.

Sir J. Why, Sir, much that of a woman of quality.

Just. Pray how may you generally pass your time, Madam? Your morning, for example.

Sir J. Sir, like a woman of quality,——I wake about two o'clock in the afternoon—I stretch—and make a sign for my chocolate—When I have drank three cups—I slide down again upon my back, with my arms over my head, while my two maids put on my stockings—Then hanging upon their shoulders, I am trail'd to my great chair, where I sit—and yawn—for my breakfast—If it don't come presently, I lie down upon my couch to say my prayers, while my maid reads me the play-bills.

Just. Very well, Madam.

Sir J. When the tea is brought in, I drink twelve regular dishes, with eight slices of bread and butter—And half an hour after, I send to the cook, to know if the dinner is almost ready.

Just. So, Madam!

Sir J. By that time my head is half drest, I hear my husband swearing himself into a state of perdition; that the meat's all cold upon the table; to amend which, I come down in an hour more, and have it sent back to the kitchen, to be all drest over again.

Just. Poor man!

Sir J. When I have din'd, and my idle servants are presumptuously set down at their ease, to do so too, I call for my coach, to go visit fifty dear friends, of whom I hope I never shall find one at home, while I shall live.

Just. So! there's the morning and afternoon pretty well dispos'd of——Pray how, Madam, how do you pass your evenings?

Sir J. Like a woman of spirit, Sir; a great spirit. Give me a box and dice—Seven's the main, Oons! Sir, I set you a hundred pound! Why, do you think women are married now a-days, to sit at home and mend-napkins! Oh, the lord help your head!

Just.

33 *The PROVOK'D WIFE.*

Just. Mercy upon us, Mr. Constable! what will this age come to?

Const. What will it come to, indeed, if such women as these are not set in the stocks!

Sir J. Sir, I have a little urgent business calls upon me; and therefore I desire the favour of you to bring matters to a conclusion.

Just. Madam, if I were sure that business were not to commit more disorders, I would release you.

Sir J. None—By my virtue.

Just. Then, Mr. Constable, you may discharge her.

Sir J. Sir, your very humble servant. If you please to accept of a bottle—

Just. I thank you kindly, Madam; but I never drink in a morning. Good-by-t'ye, Madam, good-by-t'ye.

Sir J. Good-by-t'ye, good Sir. [*Exit Justice.* So—now, Mr. Constable, shall you and I go pick up a whore together?

Const. No, thank you, Madam; my wife's enough to satisfy any reasonable man.

Sir J. [*Aside.*] He, he, he, he—the fool is married then. Well, you won't go!

Const. Not I, truly.

Sir J. Then I'll go by myself; and you and your wife may go to the devil. [*Exit Sir John.*

Constable gazing after her. Why, God-a-mercy lady. [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E, *Spring-Garden.*

Constant and Heartfree cross the stage. As they go off, enter Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle mask'd, and dogging 'em.

Const. So; I think we are about the time appointed. Let us walk up this way. [*Exeunt.*

L. F. Good: thus far I have dogg'd 'em without being discover'd. 'Tis infallibly some intrigue that brings them to Spring-Garden: How my poor heart is torn

torn and wrack'd with fear and jealousy ! Yet let it be any thing but that flirt Belinda, and I'll try to bear it. But if it proves her, all that's woman in me shall be employ'd to destroy her.

[*Ex. after Constant and Heartfree.*]

Re-enter Constant and Heartfree. Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle, still following at a distance.

Const. I see no females yet, that have any thing to say to us. I'm afraid we are banter'd.

Heartf. I wish we were ; for I'm in no humour to make either them or myself merry.

Const. Nay, I'm sure you'll make them merry enough, ' if I tell 'em why you are dull. But pr'y-thee, why so heavy and sad before you begin to be ' ill-us'd ?

Heartf. For the same reason, perhaps, that you ' are so brisk and well pleas'd ; because both pains ' and pleasures are generally more considerable in ' prospect, than when they come to pass.

Enter Lady Brute and Belinda, mask'd, and poorly dress'd.

Const. How now ! who are these ? Not our game, I hope.

Heartf. If they are, we are e'en well enough serv'd, to come a hunting here, when we had so much better game in chase elsewhere.

L. F. [*To Mademoiselle.*] So, those are their ladies, without doubt. But I'm afraid that Doily stuff is not worne for want of better cloaths. They are the very shape and size of Belinda and her aunt.

Madem. So dey be inteed, Matam.

L. F. We'll slip into this close arbour, where we may hear all they say.

[*Exeunt Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle.*]

L. B. What, are you afraid of us, gentlemen ?

Heartf. Why, truly, I think we may, if appearance don't lie.

Bel.

60 *The PROVOK'D WIFE.*

Bel. Do you always find women what they appear to be, Sir?

Heartf. No, forsooth; but I seldom find 'em better than they appear to be.

Bel. Then the outside's best, you think?

Heartf. 'Tis the honestest.

Const. Have a care, Heartfree; you are relapsing again.

L. B. Why, does the gentleman use to rail at women?

Const. He has done formerly.

Bel. I suppose he had very good call for't. They did not use you so well, as you thought you deserv'd, Sir?

L. B. They made themselves merry, at your expence, Sir?

Bel. Laugh'd when you sigh'd?

L. B. Slept while you were waking?

Bel. Had your porter beat?

L. B. And threw your billet-doux in the fire?

Heartf. Hey-day, I shall do more than rail, presently.

Bel. Why you won't beat us, will you?

Heartf. I don't know but I may.

Const. What the devil's coming hear? Sir John ---and drunk, i'faith.

Enter Sir John.

Sir J. What a pox---here's Constant, Heartfree ---and two whores e'gad---O, you covetous rogues! ---what have you never a spare punk for your friend? ---But I'll share with you.

Heartf. Why what the plague have you been doing, knight?

[He seizes both the women.]

Sir J. Why, I have been beating the watch, and scandalizing the women of quality.

Heartf. A very good account, truly.

Sir J. And what do you think I'll do next?

Const. Nay, that no man can guess.

Sir J.

Sir J. Why, if you'll let me sup with you, I'll treat both your strumpets.

L. B. [*Afide.*] O lord ! we're undone.

Heartf. No, we can't sup together, because we have some affairs elsewhere. But if you'll accept of these two ladies, we'll be so complaisant to you, to resign our right in 'em.

Bel. [*Afide.*] Lord, what shall we do ?

Sir J. Let me see, their cloaths are such damn'd cloaths, they won't pawn for the reckoning.

Heartf. Sir John, your servant. Raptures attend you.

Const. Adieu, ladies, make much of the gentleman.

L. B. Why sure you won't leave us in the hands of a drunken fellow to abuse us.

Sir J. Who do you call a drunken fellow, you slut you ? I'm a man of quality ; the king has made me a knight.

Heartf. Aye, aye, you are in good hands ; adieu, adieu. [*Heartf. runs off.*]

L. B. The devil's hands ! Let me go, or I'll--- For Heaven's sake protect us. !

[*She breaks from him, runs to Constant, twitching off her mask, and clapping it on again.*]

Sir J. I'll devil you, you jade you. I'll demolish your ugly face.

[*Re-enter Heartfree. Behind a runs to him, and shows her face.*]

Heartf. Hold, thou mighty man ! Look ye, Sir, we did but jest with you. These are ladies of our acquaintance that we had a mind to frighten a little, but now you must leave us.

Sir J. Oons, I won't leave you, not I.

Heartf. Nay but you must though ; and therefore make no words on't.

Sir J. Then you are a couple of damn'd uncivil fellows. And I hope your punks will give you sauce to your mutton. [*Exit Sir John.*]

L. B. Oh, I shall never come to myself again, I'm so frighten'd !

Const. 'Tis a narrow 'scape, indeed.

Bel. Women must have frolicks, you see, whatever they cost 'em.

Heartf. This might have prov'd a dear one tho'.

L. B. You are the more oblig'd to us for the risk we run upon your accounts.

Const. And I hope you'll acknowledge something due to our knight-errantry, ladies. This is the second time we have deliver'd you.

L. B. 'Tis true; and since we see fate has design'd you for our guardians, 'twill make us the more willing to trust ourselves in your hands. But you must not have the worse opinion of us for our innocent frolick.

Heartf. Ladies, you may command our opinions in every thing that is to your advantage.

Bel. Then, Sir, I command you to be of opinion, that women are sometimes better than they appear to be. [*Lady Brute and Constant talk apart.*]

Heartf. Madam, you have made a convert of me in every thing. I'm grown a fool. I cou'd be fond of a woman.

Bel. I thank you, Sir, in the name of the whole sex.

Heartf. Which sex nothing but yourself could ever have atton'd for.

Bel. Now has my vanity a devilish itch to know in what my merit consists.

Heartf. In your humility, Madam, that keeps you ignorant it consists at all.

Bel. One other compliment, with that serious face, and I hate you for ever after.

Heartf. Some women love to be abus'd: is that it you wou'd be at?

Bel. No, not that neither; But I'd have men talk plainly what's fit for women to hear, without putting 'em either to a real or an affected blush.

Heartf. Why then, in as plain terms as I can find to express myself, I could love you even to matrimony itself almost, I'gad.

Bel. Just as Sir John did her ladyship there--'What think you? Don't you believe one month's time
4 might

' might bring you down to the same indifference, only
' clad in a little better manners, perhaps? Well, you
' men are unaccountable things, mad till you have your
' mistresses, and then stark mad till you are rid of 'em
' again. Tell me honestly, is not your patience put to
' a much severer trial after possession than before?

' *Heartf.* With a great many, I must confess it is, to
' our eternal scandal; but I'---dear creature, do but
try me.

Bel. That's the surest way, indeed, to know, but not
the safest. [*To Lady Brute.*] Madam, are not you for
taking a turn in the great walk? It's almost dark,
nobody will know us.

L. B. Really I find myself something idle, Belinda:
besides I doat upon this little odd private corner. But
don't let my lazy fancy confine you. [*Const. Aside.*]
So, she wou'd be left alone with me; that's well.

Bel. Well, we'll take one turn, and come to you
again. [*To Heartf.*] Come, Sir, shall we go pry into
the secrets of the garden? Who knows what disco-
veries we may make.

Heartf. Madam, I am at your service.

Const. [*To Heartf. aside.*] Don't make too much
haste back; for, d'ye hear——' I may be busy.

Heartf. Enough. [*Exeunt Belinda and Heartfree.*]

L. B. Sure you think me scandalously free, Mr. Con-
stant, I'm afraid I shall lose your good opinion of me.

Const. My good opinion, Madam, is like your cru-
elty, never to be remov'd.

L. B. Indeed I doubt you much: why, suppose
you had a wife, and she should entertain a gallant?

Const. If I gave her just cause, how should I justly
condemn her?

L. B. Ah; but you differ widely about just causes.

Const. But blows can bear no dispute.

L. B. Nor ill-manners much, truly.

Const. Then no woman upon earth has so just a
cause as you have.

' *L. B.* But can a husband's faults release my duty?

' *Const.* In equity, without doubt. And where laws
' dispense with equity, equity should dispense with laws.

' L. B. Pray let us leave this dispute ; for you men have as much witchcraft in your arguments, as women have in their eyes.

' *Const.* But whilst you attack me with your charms, 'tis but reasonable I assault you with mine.

' L. B. The case it not the same. What mischief we do we can't help, and therefore are to be forgiven.

' *Const.* Beauty soon obtains pardon for the pain that it gives, when it applies the balm of compassion to the wound : but a fine face and a hard heart is almost as bad as an ugly face and a soft one ; both very troublesome to many a poor gentleman.

' L. B. Yes, and to many a poor gentlewoman too, I can assure you. But pray, which of 'em is it that most afflicts you ?

' *Const.* Your glass and conscience will inform you, Madam.' But for Heaven's sake (for now I must be serious) if pity, or if gratitude can move you, [*Taking her hand.*] if constancy and truth have power to tempt you : if love, if adoration can affect you, give me at least some hopes, that time may do, what you perhaps mean never to perform ; 'twill ease my sufferings, tho' not quench my flame.

L. B. Your sufferings eas'd, your flame wou'd soon abate : and that I would preserve, not quench it, Sir.

Const. Would you preserve it, nourish it with favours ; for that's the food it naturally requires.

L. B. Yet on that natural food, 'twould surfeit soon, shou'd I resolve to grant all you would ask.

Const. And in refusing all, you starve it. Forgive me therefore, since my hunger rages, if I at last grow wild, and in my frenzy force at least this from you. [*Kissing her hand.*] Or if you'd have my flame soar higher still, then grant me this, and this, and thousands more ; [*Kissing first her hand and then her neck.*] [*Aside.*] for now's the time she melts into compassion.

L. B. O heavens ! Let me go.

Const. Ay, go, ay : where shall we go, my charming angel——into this private harbour——Nay, let's lose no time——moments are precious——

L. B.

L. B. And lovers wild. Pray let us stop here; at least for this time.

Const. 'Tis impossible; he that has power over you, can have none over himself.

[As he is forcing her into the arbour, Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle bolt out upon them, and run over the stage.]

L. B. Ah! I'm lost.

L. F. Fe, fe, fe, fe, fe.

Madem. Fe, fe, fe, fe, fe.

Const. Death and furies, who are these?

L. B. O heavens! I'm out of my wits; if they know me, I am ruin'd.

Const. Don't be frighten'd: ten thousand to one they are strangers to you.

L. B. Whatever they are, I won't stay here a moment longer.

Const. Whither will you go!

L. B. Home, as if the devil were in me. Lord, where's this Belinda now?

Enter Belinda and Heartfree.

O! 'tis well you are come; I'm so frighten'd, ' my hair stands an end.' Let's begone, for Heaven's sake.

Bil. Lord, what's the matter?

L. B. The devil's the matter; here's a couple of women have done the most impertinent thing. Away, away, away, away, away, [Exeunt running.]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE, *Lady Fancyful's House.*

Enter Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle.

L. FANCYFUL.

WELL, Mademoiselle; did you dodge the filthy things?

Madem. O que ouy, Madame.

L. F. And where are they?

Madem. Au logis.

L. F. What, men and all?

F 3

Madem.

Madem. Tous ensemble.

L. F. O confidence! What, carry their fellows to their own house!

Madem. C'est que le mari n'y est pas.

L. F. No, so I believe, truly. But he shall be there, and quickly too, if I can find him out. Well, 'tis a prodigious thing, to see when men and women get together, how they fortify one another in their impudence. But if that drunken fool, her husband, be to be found in e'er a tavern in town, I'll send him among 't 'em; I'll spoil their sport.

Madem. En vérité, Madame, ce seroit damage.

L. F. 'Tis in vain to oppose it, Mademoiselle; therefore never go about it. For I am the steadiest creature in the world——when I have determin'd to do mischief. So come along. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *Sir John Brute's House.*

Enter Constant, Heartfree, *Lady Brute*, Belinda, and Lovewell.

L. B. But are you sure you don't mistake, Lovewell?

Lov. Madam, I saw 'em all go into the tavern together, and my master so drunk he cou'd scarce stand.

L. B. Then, gentlemen, I believe we may venture to let you stay, and play at cards with us an hour or two: for they'll scarce part till morning.

Bel. I think, 'tis pity they should ever part.

Const. The company that's here, Madam.

L. B. Then, Sir, the company that's here must remember to part itself in time.

Const. Madam, we don't intend to forfeit your future favours, by an indiscreet usage of this. The moment you give us the signal, we shan't fail to make our retreat.

L. B. Upon those conditions then let us sit down to cards.

Enter Lovewell.

Lov. O lord, Madam! here's my Master just staggering in upon you; he has been quarrelsome yonder, and they have kick'd him out of the company.

L. B.

L. B. Into the closet, gentlemen, for Heaven's sake; I'll wheedle him to-bed, if possible.

[Const. and Heartf. run into the closet.]

Enter Sir John, all dirt and bloody.

L. B. Ah——Ah——he's all over blood.

Sir J. What the plague does the woman squall for? Did you never see a man in pickle before?

L. B. Lord, where have you been?

Sir J. I have been at——cuffs.

L. B. I fear that is not all. I hope you are not

Sir J. Sound as a roach, wife. [wounded.]

L. B. I'm mighty glad to hear it.

Sir J. You know—I think you lie.

L. B. You do me wrong to think so. For Heaven's my witness, I had rather see my own blood trickle down, than yours.

Sir J. Then will I be sacrific'd.

L. B. 'Tis a hard fate I shou'd not be believ'd.

Sir J. 'Tis a damn'd atheistical age, wife.

L. B. I am sure I have given you a thousand tender proofs how great my care is of you. But, spite of all your cruel thoughts, I'll still persist, and at this moment, if I can, persuade you to lie down and sleep a little.

Sir J. Why--do you think I am drunk--you slut, you?

L. B. Heaven forbid I shou'd: but I'm afraid you are feverish. Pray let me feel your pulse.

Sir J. Stand off, and be damn'd.

L. B. Why, I see your distemper in your very eyes. You are all on fire. Pray, go to bed; let me intreat you.

Sir J.——Come, kiss me, then.

L. B. [Kissing him.] There: now go. [Aside.] He stinks like poison.

Sir J. I see it goes damnably against your stomach. —And therefore—kiss me again.

L. B. Nay, now you fool me.

Sir J. Do't, I say.

L. B. [Aside.] Ah, lord have mercy upon me. Well; there: now will you go?

Sir J. Now, wife, you shall see my gratitude. You gave me two kisses—I'll give you——two hundred.

[Kisses and tumbles her.]

L. B.

L. B. O lord! pray, Sir John be quiet. Heavens, what a pickle am I in!

Bel. [*Aside.*] If I were in her pickle, I'd call my gallant out of the closet, and he shou'd cudgel him foundly.

Sir J. So, now you being as dirty and as nasty as myself, we may go pig together. But first I must have a cup of your cold tea, wife. [*Going to the closet.*]

L. B. O I'm ruin'd! There's none there, my dear.

Sir J. I'll warrant you, I'll find some, my dear.

L. B. You can't open the door, the lock's spoil'd; I have been turning and turning the key this half hour to no purpose. I'll send for the smith to-morrow.

Sir J. There's ne'er a smith in Europe can open a door with more expedition than I can do---As for example---Pou. [*He bursts open the door with his foot.*]---How now! What the devil have we got here?---Constant,---Heartfree,---and two whores again, e'gad---This is the worst cold tea---that ever I met with in my life---
 Enter Constant and Heartfree.

L. B. [*Aside.*] O lord, what will become of us?

Sir J. Gentlemen---I am your very humble servant---I give you many thanks---I see you take care of my family---I shall do all I can to return the obligation.

Const. Sir, how oddly soever this business may appear to you, you'd have no cause to be uneasy, if you knew the truth of all things? Your lady is the most virtuous woman in the world, and nothing has past, but an innocent frolick.

Heartf. Nothing else, upon my honour, Sir.

Sir J. You are both very civil gentlemen---And my wife, there, is a very civil gentlewoman; therefore I don't doubt but many civil things have past between you. Your very humble servant.

L. B. [*Aside to Const.*] Pray begone: he's so drunk he can't hurt us to-night, and to-morrow morning you shall hear from us.

Const. I'll obey you, Madam. Sir, when you are cool, you'll understand reason better. So then I shall take the pains

pains to inform you. If not---I wear a sword, Sir, and so good-by-t'ye. Come along, Heartfree. [*Exeunt.*]

Sir J. Wear a sword, Sir---And what of all that, Sir? He comes to my house; eats my meat; lies with my wife; dishonours my family; gets a bastard to inherit my estate---And when I ask a civil account of all this---Sir, says he, I wear a sword.---Wear a sword, Sir? Yes, Sir, says he, I wear a sword.---It may be a good answer at cross purposes; but 'tis a damn'd one to a man in my whimsical circumstances---Sir, says he, I wear a sword! [*To Lady Brute.*] And what do you wear now? Ha! tell me, [*Sitting down in a great chair.*] What you are modest, and can't---Why then I'll tell you, you slut you. You wear---an impudent lewd face---A damn'd, designing heart---and a tail---and a tail full of---

[*He falls fast asleep snoring.*]

L. B. So, thanks to kind Heaven, he's fast for some hours.

Bel. 'Tis well he is so, that we may have time to lay our story handsomely; for we must lie like the devil, to bring ourselves off.

L. B. What shall we say, Belinda?

Bel. [*musing.*] --I'll tell you: it must all light upon Heartfree and I. We'll say he has courted me some time, but for reasons unknown to us, has ever been very earnest the thing might be kept from Sir John. That therefore hearing him upon the stairs, he run into the closet, tho' against our will, and Constant with him, to prevent jealousy. And to give this a good impudent face of truth, (that I may deliver you from the trouble you are in) I'll e'en, if he pleases, marry him.

L. B. I'm beholden to you, cousin; but that wou'd be carrying the jest a little too far, for your own sake: you know he's a younger brother, and has nothing.

Bel. 'Tis true; but I like him, and have fortune enough to keep above extremity: I can't say I wou'd live with him in a cell, upon love and bread and butter: but I'd rather have the man I love, and a middle state of life, than that gentleman in the chair there, and twice your ladyship's splendor.

L. B.

L. B. In truth, niece, you are in the right on't : but 'tis late : let's end our discourse for to-night, and out of an excess of charity, take a small care of that nasty drunken thing there--do but look at him, Belinda.

Bel. Ah--'tis a savoury dish.

L. B. As savoury as 'tis, I'm cloy'd with't. Pr'ythee call the butler to take away.

Bel. Call the butler?---call the scavenger ! [*To a servant within.*] Who's there ? Call Rasor ! Let him take away his master, scour him clean with a little soap and sand, and so put him to bed.

L. B. Come, Belinda, I'll e'en lie with you to-night : and in the morning we'll send for our gentlemen to set this matter even.

Bel. With all my heart.

L. B. Good night, my dear.

[*Making a low curtesey to Sir John.*

Both. Ha, ha, ha.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Rasor.

Ras. My lady there's a wag---My master there's a cuckold. Marriage is a slippery thing--Women have deprav'd appetites---My lady's a wag ; I have heard all ; I have seen all ; I understand all ; and I'll tell all ; for my little Frenchwoman loves news dearly. This story will gain her heart, or nothing will. [*To his Master.*] Come, Sir, your head's too full of fumes at present, to make room for your jealousy ; but I reckon we shall have rare work with you, when your pate's empty. Come to your kennel, you cuckoldy, drunken sot, you.

[*Carries him on his back.*

My master's asleep, in his chair, and a snoring,

My lady's abroad, and---Oh rare matrimony !

SCENE, Lady Fancyful's House.

Enter Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle.

L. F. But, why did not you tell me before, Mademoiselle, that Rasor and you were fond ?

Madem. De modesty hinder me, Matam.

L. F. Why, truly modesty does often hinder us from doing things we have an extravagant mind to. But does he love you well enough yet, to do any thing

thing you bid him? Do you think, to oblige you, he wou'd speak scandal?

Matem. Matam, to oblige your ladyship, he shall speak any thing.

L. F. Why then, Mademoiselle, I'll tell you what you shall do. You shall engage him to tell his master, all that past at Spring Garden: I have a mind he shou'd know what a wife and a niece he has got.

Madem. Il le fera, Madame.

Enter a Footman, who speaks to Mademoiselle apart.

Foot. Mademoiselle, yonder's Mr. Rafor desires to speak with you.

Madem. Tell him I come presently. [*Exit. Footman.*] Rafor be dere, Madam,

L. F. That's fortunate: well, I'll leave you together. And if you find him stubborn, Mademoiselle---hark you---don't refuse him a few reasonable little liberties, to put him in humonr.

Madem. Laissez moi faire. [*Exit Lady Fan.*

[*Rafor peeps in; and seeing Lady Fancyful gone, turns to Mademoiselle, takes her about the neck and kisses her.*

Madem. How now, confidence!

Raf. How now, modesty!

Madem. Who make you so familiar, firrah?

Raf. My impudence, hussy.

Madem. Stand off, rogue-face.

Raf. Ah---Mademoiselle---great news at our house.

Madem. Why, vat be de matter?

Raf. The matter?---why uptails all's the matter.

Madem. Tu te moque de moi.

Raf. Now do you long to know the particulars: the time when: the place where: the manner how. But I won't tell you a word more.

Madem. Nay, den dou kill me, Rafor.

Raf. Come, kifs me, then.

Madem. Nay, prideetellme. [*Clapping bis hands behind.*

Raf. Good-by-t'ye. [*Going.*

Madem. Hold, hold: I will kifs dee. [*Kissing him.*

Raf. So, that's civil: Why now, my pretty Poll; my goldfinch; my little waterwagtail---you must know, that---Come kifs me again.

Madem.

Madem. I won't kifs de no more.

Raf. Good-by-t'ye.

[*Going.*

Madem. Doucement; dere; estu content? [*Kissing him.*

Raf. So: now I'll tell thee all. Why the news is, that cuckoldom in folio is newly printed; and matrimony in quarto, is just going into the press. Will you buy any books, Mademoiselle.

Madem. Tu parle comme un libraire; de devil, no understand dee.

Raf. Why then, that I may make myself intelligible to a waiting-woman, I'll speak like a valet de chamber. My lady has cuckolded my master.

Madem. Bon.

Raf. Which we take very ill from her hands, I can tell her that. We can't yet prove matter of fact upon her,

Madem. N'importe.

Raf. But we can prove that matter of fact had like to have been upon her.

Madem. Ouy-da.

Raf. For we have such terrible circumstances.

Madem. Sans doute.

Raf. That any man of parts may draw tickling conclusions from 'em.

Madem. Fort bien.

Raf. We found a couple of tight well-built gentlemen, stuf into her ladyship's closet.

Madem. Le diable!

Raf. And I, in my particular person, have discover'd a 'most damnable' plot, how to persuade my poor master, that all this hide and seek, this Will in the Wisp, has no other meaning than a christian marriage for sweet Mrs. Belinda.

Madem. Une marriage? Ah, les drolefs.

Raf. Don't you interrupt me, huffy; 'tis agreed, I say; and my innocent lady, to wriggle herself out at the back-door of the business, turns marriage-bawd to her niece, and resolves to deliver up her fair body, to be tumbled and mumbled, by that young liquorish whifster, Heartfree. Now are you satisfy'd?

Madem. No.

Raf. Right woman; always gaping for more.

Madem.

Madem. Dis be all den, dat you know?

Raf. All! Ay, and a great deal too, I think.

Madem. Dou be foot, dou know nothing.---Ecoute, mon pauvre Rasor. Dou sees des two eyes?---Des two eyes have see de devil.

Raf. The woman's mad.

Mad. In Spring Garden, dat rogue Constant meet dy lady,

Raf. Bon.

Madem. ---I'll tell dee no more.

Raf. Nay, pr'ythee, my swan.

Madem. Come, kifs me den.

[Clapping her hands behind her, as he did before.]

Raf. I won't kifs you, not I.

Madem. Adieu.

[Going.]

Raf. Hold---Now proceed. [Gives her a hearty kiss.]

Madem. A ça---I hide myself in one cunning place, where I hear all, and see all. First dy drunken master come mal à propos? but de sot no know his own dear wife, so he leave her to her sport.--Den de game begin. De lover say soft ting; de lady look upon de ground. [As she speaks, Rasor still acts the man, and she the woman.] He take her by de hand: she turn her head on oder way. Den he squeeze very hard: den she pull---very softly. Den he take her in his arms: den she give him littel pat. Den he kifs her tettons. Den she say--pish, nay fie. Den he tremble: den she sigh. Den he pull her into de arbor: den she pinch him.

Raf. Ay, but not so hard, you baggage you.

Madem. Den he grow bold: she grow weake, he tro her down, il tombe dessus, le Diable assist, il emport tout; [Rasor struggles with her, as if he would throw her down.] stand off, firrah.

Raf. You have set me a-fire, you jade, you.

Madme. Den go to de river and quench dyself.

Raf. What an unnatural harlot this!

Madem. Rasor. [Looking languishingly on him]

Raf. Mademoiselle.

Madem. Dou no love me?

Raf. Not love thee?---More than a Frenchman does soup.

Madem. Den you will refuse nothing dat I bid dee?

VOL. II.

G

Raf

Raf. Don't bid me hang myself then.

Madem. No, only tell dy master, all I have tell dee of dy laty.

Raf. Why, you little malicious strumpet, you ; thou'd you like to be serv'd so ?

Madem. Dou dispute den ?—Adieu.

Raf. Hold---But why wilt thou make me be such a rogue, my dear ?

Madm. Voilà un vrai Anglois ! il est amoureux, et cependant il veut raisonner. Va t'en au diable.

Raf. Hold once more : in hopes thou'lt give me up thy bedy, I'll make a present of my honesty.

Madem. Bon, écoute donc ;---if dou fail me---I never see dee more---if dou obey me--Je m'abandonne à toy à toy. [*She takes him about the neck, and gives him a smacking kiss.*] [*Exit Mademoiselle.*]

Raf. [*Licking his lips.*] Not be a rogue !---*Amor vincit omnia.* [*Exit Rasor.*]

Enter Lady Fanciful and Mademoiselle.

L. F. Marry, say ye ! Will the two things marry ?

Madem. On le va faire, Madame.

L. F. Look you, Mademoiselle, in short I can't bear it--No ; I find I can't--If once I see 'em a-bed together I shall have ten thousand thoughts in my head will make me run distracted. Therefore run and call Rasor back immediately ; for something must be done to stop this impertinent wedding. If I can but defer it four and twenty hours, I'll make such work about town, with that little pert slut's reputation, he shall as soon marry a witch.

Madem. [*Aside.*] La voilà bien intentionnée. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, Constant's Lodgings.

Enter Constant and Heartfree.

Const. But what dost think will become of this business ?

Heartf. 'Tis easier to think what will not become on't.

Const. What's that ?

Heartf. A challenge. I know the knight too well for that ; his dear body will always prevail upon his noble soul to be quiet.

Const. But though he dare not challenge me, perhaps he may venture to challenge his wife.

Heartf. Not if you whisper him in the ear, you won't have

have him do't, and there's no other way left that I see, For as drunk as he was, he'll remember you and I were where we shou'd not be; and I don't think him quite blockhead enough yet, to be persuaded we were got into his wife's closet only to peep into her prayer-book.

Enter a Servant with a letter.

Serv. Sir, here's a letter, a porter brought it.

Const. O ho, here's instructions for us. [*Reads.*

The accident that has happen'd has touch'd our invention to the quick. We would fain come off without your help; but find that's impossible. In a word the whole business must be thrown upon a matrimonial intrigue between your friend and mine. But if the parties are not fond enough to go quite through with the matter, 'tis sufficient for our turn, they own the design. We'll find pretences enough to break the match. Adieu.

—Well, women for invention! How long wou'd my blockhead have been producing this!—Hey, Hear-free! What musing, man! Pr'ythee be chearful: what say'st thou, friend, to this matrimonial remedy?

Heartf. Why, I say, it's worse than the disease.

Const. Here's a fellow for you: There's beauty and money on her side: and love up to the ears on his: and yet—

Heartf. And yet, I think, I may reasonably be allow'd to boggle at marrying the niece, in the very moment that you are deluding the aunt.

Const. Why, truly, there may be something in that. But have not you a good opinion enough of your own parts, to believe you could keep a wife to yourself?

Heartf. I shou'd have, if I had a good opinion enough of hers, to believe she cou'd do as much by me. But pr'ythee advise me in this good and evil, this life and death, this blessing and curse, that is set before me. For to do 'em right, after all, the wife seldom rambles, till the husband shews her the way.

Const. 'Tis true, a man of real worth scarce ever is a cuckold, but by his own fault. Women are not naturally lewd; there must be something to urge 'em to it. They'll cuckold a churl, out of revenge; a fool, because they despise him; a beast, because

76 *The PROVOK'D WIFE.*

' they loath him. But when they make bold with a
' man they once had a well grounded value for, 'tis
' because they first see themselves neglected by him.

Heart. Shall I marry or die a maid?

Const. Why faith, Heartfree, matrimony is like an army, going to engage. Love's the forlorn hope, which is soon cut off; the marriage knot is the main body, which may stand buff a long long time; and repentance is the rear-guard, which rarely gives ground, as long as the main body has a being.

Heartf. Conclusion then; you advise me to rake on as you do.

Const. That's not concluded yet. For tho' marriage be a lottery, in which there are wond'rous many blanks; yet there is one inestimable lot, in which the only heaven on earth is written. Wou'd your kind fate but guide your hand to that, tho' I were wrap'd in all that luxury itself could cloath me with, I still shou'd envy you.

Heartf. And justly too; for to be capable of loving one, doubtless, is better than to possess a thousand. But how far that capacity's in me, alas, I know not!

Const. But you wou'd know.

Heartf. I wou'd so.

Const. Matrimony will inform you. Come, one flight of resolution carries you to the land of experience; where in a very moderate time you'll know the capacity of your soul and your body both, or 'I'm mistaken.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *Sir John Brute's House.*

Enter Lady Brute and Belinda.

Bel. Well, Madam, what answer have you from 'em?

L. B. That they'll be here this moment. I fancy 'twill end in a wedding: I'm sure he's a fool if it don't. Ten thousand pounds, and such a lass as you are, is no contemptible offer to a younger brother.
' But are not you under strange agitations? Pry'thee,
' how does your pulse beate?

Bel. High and low, I have much a-do to be valiant; is it not very strange to go to bed with a man?

L. B.

L. B. Um—it is a little odd at first, but it will soon grow easy to you.

Enter Constant and Heartfree.

Good-morrow, gentlemen: how have you slept after your adventure?

Heartf. Some careful thoughts, ladies, on your accounts, have kept us waking.

Bel. And some careful thoughts on your own, I believe, have hinder'd you from sleeping. Pray how does this matrimonial project relish with you?

Heartf. Why, faith, e'en as storming towns does with soldiers, where the hopes of delicious plunder banishes the fear of being knock'd on the head.

Bel. Is it then possible, after all, that you dare think of downright lawful wedlock?

Heartf. Madam, you have made me so fool-hardy, I dare do any thing.

Bel. Then, Sir, I challenge you; and matrimony's the spot where I expect you.

Heartf. 'Tis enough; I'll not fail. [*Aside.*] So, now I am in for Hobbe's voyage; a great leap in the dark.

L. B. Well, gentlemen, this matter being concluded then, have you got your lessons ready? for Sir John is grown such an atheist of late, he'll believe nothing upon easy terms.

Const. We'll find means to extend his faith, Madam. But pray how do you find him this morning?

L. B. Most lamentably morose, chewing the cud after last night's discovery, of which however he has but a confus'd notion e'en now. But I'm afraid the valet de chambre has told him all; for they are very busy together at this moment. When I told him of Belinda's marriage, I had no other answer but a grunt: from which, you may draw what conclusions you think fit. But to your notes, gentlemen, he's here.

Enter Sir John and Rasor.

Const. Good-morrow, Sir.

Heartf. Good-morrow, Sir John; I'm very sorry my indiscretion should cause so much disorder in your family.

Sir J.

Sir J. Disorders generally come from indiscretion, Sir ; 'tis no strange thing at all.

L. B. I hope, my dear, you are satisfied there was no wrong intended you.

Sir J. None, my dove.

Bel. If not, I hope, my consent to marry Mr. Heart-free will convince you. For, as little as I know of amours, Sir, I can assure you, one intrigue is enough to bring four people together, without further mischief.

Sir J. And I know too, that intrigues tend to procreation of more kinds than one. One intrigue will beget another, as soon as beget a son or a daughter.

Const. I am very sorry, Sir, to see you still seem unsatisfy'd with a lady, whose more than common virtue, I am sure, were she my wife, shou'd meet a better usage.

Sir J. Sir, if her conduct has put a trick upon her virtue, her virtue's the bubble, but her husband's the loser.

Const. Sir, you have received a sufficient answer already, to justify both her conduct and mine. You'll pardon me for meddling in your family-affairs ! but I perceive I am the man you are jealous of, and therefore it concerns me.

Sir J. Wou'd it did not concern me, and then I should not care who it concern'd.

Const. Well, Sir, if truth and reason won't content you, I know but one way more, which, if you think fit, you may take.

Sir J. Lord, Sir, you are very hasty: if I had been found at prayers in your wife's closet, I should have allow'd you twice as much time to come to yourself in.

Const. Nay, Sir, if time be all you want, we have no quarrel.

Heartf. I told you how the sword wou'd work upon him.

[Sir John muses.

Const. Let him muse; however, I'll lay fifty pounds our foreman brings us in, not guilty.

Sir J. [*Aside.*] 'Tis well—'tis very well—In spite of that young jade's matrimonial intrigue, I am a downright stinking cuckold—Here they are—Boo—

[Putting

[*Putting his Hand to his Forehead.*] Methinks, I could butt with a bull. What the plague did I marry her for? I knew she did not like me; if she had, she wou'd have lain with me; for I wou'd have done so, because I lik'd her; but that's past, and I have her. And now, what shall I do with her?—If I put my horns into my pocket, she'll grow insolent—if I don't, that goat there, that stallion, is ready to whip me thro' the guts—the debate then is reduc'd to this; shall I die a hero, or live a rascal?—Why, wiser men than I have long since concluded, that a living dog is better than a dead lion. [*To Const. and Heartf.*] Gentlemen, now my wine and my passion are governable, I must own, I have never observ'd any thing in my wife's course of life, to back me in my jealousy of her: but jealousy's a mark of love; so she need not trouble her head about it, as long as I make no more words on't.

L. Fancyful enters disguis'd, and addresses Belinda apart.

Const. I'm glad to see your reason rule at last. Give me your hand: I hope you'll look upon me as you us'd to do.

Sir J. Your humble servant. [*Aside.*] A wheedling son of a whore!

Heartf. And that I may be sure you are friends with me too, pray give me your consent to wed your niece.

Sir J. Sir, you have it, with all my heart; damn me if you han't. [*Aside.*] 'Tis time to get rid of her: a young pert pimp: she'll make an incomparable bawd in a little time.

Enter a Servant, who gives Heartfree a Letter.

Bel. Heartfree your husband, say you? 'Tis impossible!

L. F. Wou'd to kind heaven it were; but 'tis too true; and in the world their lives not such a wretch. I'm young; and either I have been flatter'd by my friends, as well as glass, or nature has been kind and generous to me. I had a fortune too was greater far than he could ever hope for; but with my heart I am robb'd of all the rest. I am slighted and I'm beggar'd both at once; I have scarce a bare subsistence from the villain, yet dare complain to none; for he has sworn, if ever 'tis known I am his wife, he'll murder me. [*Weeping.*
Bel.

Bel. The traitor.

L. F. I accidentally was told he courted you : charity soon prevailed upon me to prevent your misery ; and, as you see, I'm still so generous even to him, as not to suffer he should do any thing, for which the law might take away his life. *[Weeping.]*

Bel. Poor creature ! how I pity her !

[They continue talking aside.]

Heartf. [Aside.] Death and the devil—Let me read it again. *[Reads.]* “*Tho’ I have a particular reason not to let you know who I am till I see you ; yet you’ll easily believe ’tis a faithful friend that gives you this advice. I have lain with Belinda (Good !)—I have a child by her (Better and better !) which is now out at nurse ; (Heaven be prais’d !) and I think the foundation laid for another ; (Ha !—old true-penny !)—no rack cou’d have tortur’d this story from me ; but friendship has done it. I heard of your design to marry her, and cou’d not see you abus’d. Make use of my advice, but keep my secret till I ask you for’t again. Adieu.*” *[Exit Lady Fancyful.]*

[Const. to Bel.] Come, Madam, shall we send for the parson ? I doubt here’s no business for the lawyers ; younger brothers have nothing to settle but their hearts, and that I believe my friend here has already done very faithfully.

Bel. [Scornfully.] Are you sure, Sir, there are no old mortgages upon it ?

Heartf. [Coldly.] If you think there are, Madam, it mayn’t be amiss to defer the marriage till you are sure they are paid off.

Bel. We’ll defer it as long as you please, Sir.

Heartf. The more time we take to consider on’t, Madam, the less apt we shall be to commit oversights : therefore, if you please, we will put it off for just nine months.

Bel. Guilty consciences make men cowards.

Heartf. And they make women desperate.

Bel. I don’t wonder you want time to resolve.

Heartf. I don’t wonder you are so quickly determined.

Bel. What does the fellow mean ?

Heartf. What does the lady mean ?

Sir,

Sir J. Zoons, what do you both mean ?

Heartf. and Bel. *walk chafing about.*

Raf. [*Aside*] Here is so much sport going to be spoil'd it makes me ready to weep again. A pox o' this impertinent Lady Fancyful, and her plots, and her Frenchwoman too ; — she's a whimsical, ill-natur'd " bitch, and when I have got my bones broke in her " service, 'tis ten to one but my recompense is a clap ; I hear them tittering without still. I-cod, I'll e'en go lug them both in by the ears, and discover the plot, to secure my pardon. [*Exit Rasor,*

Const. Pr'ythee explain, Heartfree.

Heartf. A fair deliverance ; thank my stars and my friend.

Bel. 'Tis well it went no farther ; a base fellow !

L. B. What can be the meaning of all this ?

Bel. What's his meaning, I don't know ; but mine is, that if I had married him—I had had no husband.

Heartf. And what's her meaning, I don't know ; but mine is, that if I had married her—I had had wife enough.

Sir J. Your people of wit have got such cramp ways of expressing themselves, they seldom comprehend one another. Pox take you both, will you speak that you may be understood ?

Enter Rasor in sackcloth, pulling in Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle.

Rasor. If they won't, here comes an interpreter.

L. B. Heavens ! What have we here ?

Rasor. A villain—but a repenting villain.

All. Rasor !

L. B. What means this ?

Rasor. Nothing without my pardon.

L. B. What pardon do you want ?

Rasor. *Imprimis.* Your ladyship's ; for a damnable lie made upon your spotless virtue, and set to the tune of Spring Garden. [*To Sir John.*] Next at my generous master's feet I bend, for interrupting his more noble thoughts with phantoms of disgraceful cuckoldom. [*To Const.*] Thirdly, I to this gentleman ap-
ply for making him the hero of my romance. [*To*
Heartf.

Heartf.] Fourthly, your pardon, noble Sir, I ask, for clandestinely marrying you, without either bidding of banns, bishop's licence, friends consent---or your own knowledge. [*To Bel.*] And, lastly, to my good young lady's clemency I come, for pretending the corn was sow'd in the ground, before ever the plough had been in the field.

Sir J. [*Aside.*] So that after all, 'tis a moot point, whether I am a cuckold or not.

Bel. Well, Sir, upon condition you confess all, I'll pardon you myself, and try to obtain as much from the rest of the company. But I must know then who 'tis has put you upon all this mischief.

Raf. Satan and his equipage; woman tempted me, vice weakened me---and so the devil overcame me; as fell Adam, so fell I.

Bel. Then pray, Mr. Adam, will you make us acquainted with your Eve?

Raf. [*To Madem.*] Unmask, for the honour of France.

All. Mademoiselle!

Madem. Me ask ten thousand pardon of all de good company.

Sir J. Why this mystery thickens instead of clearing up. [*To Rasor.*] You son of a whore you, put us out of our pain.

Rasor. One moment brings sunshine. [*Shewing Madem.*] 'Tis true, this is the woman that tempted me, but this is the serpent that tempted the woman; and if my prayers might be heard, her punishment for so doing should be like the serpent's of old---[*Pulls of Lady Fancyful's mask.*] she should lie upon her face all the days of her life.

All. Lady Fancyful!

Bel. Impertinent!

L. B. Ridiculous!

All. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Bel. I hope your ladyship will give me leave to wish you joy, since you have own'd your marriage yourself.---[*To Heartf.*] I vow 'twas strangely wicked in you to think of another wife, when you had one already so charming as her ladyship.

All.

All. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

L. F. [*Aside.*] Confusion seize 'em, as it seizes me!

'Madem. Que le diable étouffe ce maraut de Rafor!

Bel. Your ladyship seems disorder'd: a breeding qualm, perhaps, Mr. Heartfree: your bottle of Hungarian water to your lady. Why, Madam, he stands as unconcern'd as if he were your husband in earnest.

L. F. Your mirth's as nauseous as yourself. Belinda, you think you triumph over a rival now: hélas! ma pauvre fille. Where'er I'm rival, there's no cause for mirth. No, my poor wretch, 'tis from another principle I have acted. I knew that thing there would make so perverse a husband, and you so impertinent a wife, that lest your mutual plagues should make you both run mad, I charitably would have broke the match. He! he! he! he! he!

[*Exit, laughing affectedly, Mademoiselle following her.*]

Madem. He! he! he! he! he!

All. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Sir J. [*Aside.*] Why now, this woman will be married to somebody too.

Bel. Poor Creature! What a passion she is in! but I forgive her.

Heartf. Since you have so much goodness for her, I hope you'll pardon my offence too, Madam.

Bel. There will be no great difficulty in that, since I am guilty of an equal fault.

'Heartf. So, Madam, now had the parson but done his business——

'Bel. You'd be half weary of your bargain.'

'Heartf. No, sure, I might dispense with one night's lodging.

'Bel. I'm ready to try, Sir.'

Heartf. Then let's to church:

And if it be our chance to disagree——

Bel. Take heed---the surly husband's fate you see.

Sir J. Surly I may be, stubborn I am not,
For I have both forgiven and forgot;
If so, be these our judges, Mrs. Pert,
'Tis more by my goodness, than your desert.

END of the FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by Lady *Brute* and *Belinda*.

L. B. *NO Epilogue!*

Bel. *I swear I know of none.*

L. B. *Lord! How shall we excuse it to the town?*

Bel. *Why, we must e'en say something of our own.*

L. B. *Our own! Ay, that must needs be precious stuff.*

Bel. *I'll lay my life they'll like it well enough.*

Come, faith, begin———

L. B. *Excuse me, after you.*

Bel. *Nay, pardon me for that, I know my cue—*

L. B. *O for the world, I wou'd not have precedence.*

Bel. *O lord!*

L. B. *I swear———*

Bel. *O fy!*

L. B. *I'm all obedience.*

First then, know all, before our doom is fixt.

The third day is for us———

Bel. *Nay and the sixth.*

L. B. *We speak not from the poet now, nor is it*

His cause---(I want a Rhyme)

Bel. *That we solicit.*

L. B. *Then sure you cannot have the hearts to be severe,*

And damn us———

Bel. *Damn us! Let 'em, if they dare.*

L. B. *Why, if they should, what punishment remains?*

Bel. *Eternal exile from behind our scenes.*

L. B. *But if they're kind, that sentence we'll recall.*

We can be grateful———

Bel. *And have wherewithall.*

L. B. *But as grand treaties hope not to be trusted,*

Before preliminaries are adjusted.

Bel. *You know the time, and we appoint this place;*

Where, if you please, we'll meet, and sign the peace.





etc del.

Published for Balls, Drury Lane, June 20. 1776.

Thornhill's Sculp.

*.M. WOODWARD in the Character of BOBADIL.
'I was planet-struck certainly':*

BELL'S EDITION.

Every Man in his Humour.

A COMEDY, by BEN JOHNSON.

With Alterations and Additions,

By D. GARRICK,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane,

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCCLXXVI.

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

CRITICKS, your favour is our author's right—
*The well-known scenes we shall present to-night
 Are no weak efforts of a modern pen,
 But the strong touches of immortal Ben;
 A rough old Bard, whose honest pride disdain'd
 Applause itself, unless by merit gain'd—
 And wou'd to-night your loudest praise disclaim,
 Shou'd his great shade perceive the doubtful fame,
 Not so his labours granted, but his name.* }
*Boldly he wrote, and boldly told the age,
 "He dar'd not prostitute the useful stage,
 "Or purchase their delight at such a rate,
 "As, for it, he himself must justly hate:
 "But rather begg'd they wou'd be pleas'd to see
 "From him, such plays as other plays shou'd be:
 "Wou'd learn from him to scorn a motley scene,
 "And leave their monsters, to be pleas'd with men."*
*Thus spoke the bard – And tho' the times are chang'd,
 Since his free muse for fools the city rang'd;
 And satire had nat then appear'd in state,
 To lash the finer follies of the great,
 Yet let not prejudice infect your mind,
 Nor slight the gold, because not quite refin'd;
 With no false niceness this performance view,
 Nor damn for low, what'er is just and true:
 Sure to those scenes some honour shou'd be paid,
 Which Cambden patroniz'd, and Shakespeare play'd:
 Nature was Nature then, and still survives:
 The garb may alter, but the substance lives.
 Lives in this play—where each may find complete,
 His pictur'd self—Then favour the deceit—
 Kindly forget the hundred years between;
 Become old Britons, and admire old Ben.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Drury-Lane. Covent-Garden.

Kitely, a merchant,	Mr. Garrick.	Mr. Smith.
Captain Bobadil, - -	Mr. King.	Mr. Woodward.
Kno'well, an old gentle-		
man - - - - -	Mr. Hurst.	Mr. Hull.
Ed. Kno'well, his son	Mr. Aickin.	Mr. L. Lewes.
Brain-worm, the father's		
man, - - - - -	Mr. Baddeley.	Mr. Dunstall.
Mr. Stephen, a country		
Gull, - - - - -	Mr. Dodd.	Mr. Shuter.
Downright, a plain		
Squire, - - - - -	Mr. Bransby.	Mr. Gardiner.
Well-bred, his half		
brother, - - - - -	Mr. Palmer.	Mr. Mattocks.
Justice Clement, an old		
merry magistrate -	Mr. Parsons.	Mr. Kniveton.
Roger Formal, his Clerk,	Mr. Wright.	Mr. Baker.
Mr. Matthew, the town		
Gull, - - - - -	Mr. Burton.	Mr. Cushing.
Cash, Kitely's Man	Mr. Brereton.	Mr. Thompson.
Cob, a Water-bearer,	Mr. Moody.	Mr. Bays.

W O M E N.

Dame Kitely, - - -	Mrs. Greville.	Mrs. Bulkeley.
Mrs. Bridget, sister to		
Kitely, - - -	Mrs. Davies.	Mrs. Baker.
Tib, his Wife.	Mrs. Bradshaw.	Mrs. Pitt.

Scene, London.

EVERY

Every Man in his Humour.

A C T I.

SCENE, *A Court-yard before KNO'WELL's House.*

Enter KNO'WELL and BRAINWORM.

KNO'WELL.

A GOODLY day toward! and a fresh morning!
Brain-worm,
Call up young master. Bid him rise, Sir.
Tell him I have some business to employ him.

Bra. I will, Sir, presently.

Kno. But hear you, firrah.

If he be at his book, disturb him not.

Bra. Well, Sir.

[Exit.]

Kno. How happy, yet, should I esteem myself,
Could I, by any practise, wean the boy
From one vain course of study he affects.
He is a scholar, if a man may trust
The liberal voice of Fame in her report,
Of good account, in both our universities;
Either of which have favoured him with graces:
But their indulgence must not spring in me
A fond opinion, that he cannot err.
Myself was once a student; and, indeed,
Fed with the self-same humour, he is now,
Dreaming on nought but idle poetry.

A 3.

That

That fruitless, and unprofitable art,
 Good unto none, but least to the professors,
 Which, then, I thought the mistress of all knowledge :
 But since time, and the truth have wak'd my judg-
 -ment,
 And reason taught me better to distinguish
 The vain from th' useful learnings —

Enter Master Stephen.

Cousin Stephen !

What news with you 'that you are here so early ?

Step. Nothing, but e'en come to see how you do, uncle.

Kno. That's kindly done, you are welcome, Coz.

Step. Ay, I know that, Sir, I would not ha' come else. How doth my cousin Edward, uncle ?

Kno. O, well, Coz, go in and see : I doubt he be scarce stirring yet.

Step. Uncle, afore I go in, can you tell me' an' he have e'er a book of the sciences of hawking and hunting ? I would fain borrow it.

Kno. Why, I hope you will not a hawking now, will you ?

Step. No wofse, but I'll practise against the next year, uncle. I have bought me a hawk, and a hood, and bells, and all ; I lack nothing, but a book to keep it by.

Kno. O, most ridiculous !

Step. Nay, look you now, you are angry, uncle. Why, you know, an' a man have not skill in the hawking and hunting languages now-a-days, I'll not give a rush for him. They are more studied than the Greek, or the Latin. He is for no gallant's company without 'em. And by Gad's lid I scorn it, I, so I do, to be a consort for every hum-drum, hang 'em scroyls, there's nothing in 'em, i' the world. What do you talk on it ? Because I dwell at Floggsden, I shall keep company with none but the archers of Finsbury ! or the citizens, that come a ducking to Islington ponds ! A fine jest i' faith ! lid, a gentleman

IN HIS HUMOUR.

7

leman man show himself like a gentleman. Uncle,
I pray you be not angry. I know what I have to do,
I trow, I am no novice.

Kno. You are a prodigal, absurd coxcomb: go to!
Nay, never look at me, it's I that speak.

Take't as you will, Sir, I'll not flatter you.

Ha' you not yet found means enow, to waste

That, which your friends have left you, but you must

Go cast away your money on a kite,

And know not how to keep it, when you've done?

O, it's comely! this will make you a gentleman!

Well, cousin, well! I see you are e'en past hope

Of all reclaim. Ay, so, now you're told on it,

You look another way.

Step. What would you ha' me do?

Kno. What would I have you do! I'll tell you,
kinsman;

Learn to be wise, and practise how to thrive;

That would I have thee do: and not to spend

Your coin on every bawble that you fancy,

Or every foolish brain that humours you.

I would not have you to invade each place,

Nor thrust yourself on all societies,

Till men's affections, or your own desert,

Should worthily invite you to your rank.

He that is so respectless in his courses,

Oft sells his reputation at cheap market.

Nor would I, you should melt away yourself

In flashing bravery, lest while you affect

To make a blaze of gentry to the world,

A little puff of scorn extinguish it,

And you be left, like an unsavory snuff,

Whose property is only to offend.

I'd ha' you sober and contain yourself:

Not, that your sail be bigger than your boat:

But moderate your expences now (at first)

As you may keep the same proportion still.

Nor stand so much on your gentility.

Which is an airy, and mere borrow'd thing.

From

From dead men's dust, and bones : and none of yours
Except you make, or hold it. Who comes here ?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Save you, gentlemen.

Step. Nay, we do not stand much on our gentility, friend ; yet, you are welcome ; and I assure you mine uncle here is a man of a thousand a year, Middlesex land : he has but one son in all the world, I am his next heir (at the common law) master Stephen, as simple as I stand here ; if my cousin die (as there's hope he will.) I have a pretty living o' my own too, beside, hard by here.

Serv. In good time, Sir.

Step. In good time, Sir ? why ? and in very good time, Sir. - You do not flout, friend, do you !

Serv. Not I, Sir.

Step. Not you, Sir ! you were not best, Sir ; an' you should, here be them can perceive it, and that quickly too : go to. And they can give it again foundly too, an' need be.

Serv. Why, Sir, let this satisfy you : good faith, I had no such intent.

Step. Sir, an' I thought you had, I would talk with you, and that presently.

Serv. Good master Stephen, so you may, Sir, at your pleasure.

Step. And so I would, Sir, good my faucy companion ? an' you were out o' my uncle's ground, I can tell you ; though I do not stand upon my gentility neither in't.

Kno. Cousin ! cousin ! will this ne'er be left ?

Step. Whorson base fellow ? a mechanical serving man ! By this cudgel, and 'twere not for shame, I would -

Kno. What would you do, you peremptory gull ? If you cannot be quiet, get you hence.

You see, the honest man demeans himself

Modestly towards you, giving no reply

To your unseason'd, quarrelling, rude fashion :

And

IN HIS HUMOUR.

And still you huff it, with a kind of carriage,
As void of wit, as of humanity.

Go, get you in; 'fore heaven, I am asham'd
Thou hast a kinsman's interest in me. *[Exit Step.]*

Serv. I pray you, Sir, is this Master Kno'well's house?

Kno. Yes, marry; is't, Sir.

Serv. I should enquire for a gentleman here, one Master Edward Kno'well: do you know any such, Sir, I pray you?

Kno. I should forget myself else, Sir.

Serv. Are you the gentleman: cry you mercy, Sir: I was requir'd by a gentleman i' the city, as I rode out at this end of the town, to deliver you this letter, Sir.

Kno. To me Sir! *[To his most selected friend, master Edward Kno'well.]* What might the gentleman's name be, Sir, that sent it?

Serv. One master Well-bred, Sir.

Kno. Master Well-bred! A young gentleman? Is he not?

Serv. The same, Sir; Master Kiteby married his sister: the rich merchant i' the Old Jewry.

Kno. You say very true. Brain-worm.

Enter Brain-worm.

Brain. Sir.

Kno. Make this honest friend drink here. Pray you go in. *[Exeunt Brain. and servant.]*

This letter is directed to my son:

Yet I am Edward Kno'well too, and may,
With the safe conscience of good-manners, use
The fellow's error to my satisfaction.

Well, I will break it ope (old men are curious)

Be it but for the stile's sake, and the phrase,

To see, if both do answer my son's praises,

Who is, almost, grown the idolater

Of this young Well-bred: What have we here?

What's this?

The

[The Letter.]

Why, Ned, I beseech thee, hast thou forsworn all thy friends i' th' Old Jewry? or dost thou think us all Jews that inhabit there? Leave thy vigilant father alone, to lumber over his green apricots, evening and morning, o' the north west wall: an' I had been his son, I had sav'd him the labour long since; if, taking in all the young wenches that pass by, at the back door, and coddling every kernel of the fruit for 'em would ha' served. But pr'ythee, come over to me, quickly, this morning: I have such a present for thee (our Turkey company never sent the like to the Grand Signior.) One is a rhimer, Sir, o' your own batch, your own leaven; but doth think himself poet-major o' the town; willing to be shewn, and worthy to be seen. The other—I will not venture his description with you till you come, because I would ha' you make hisher with an appetite. If the worst of 'em be not worth your journey, draw your bill of charges, as unconscionable as any Guild-hall verdict will give it you, and you shall be allow'd your Viaticum.

From the Wind-mill.

From the Burdello, it might come as well;
 The Spittal: is this the man,
 My son hath sung so, for the happiest wit,
 The choicest brain, the times hath sent us forth?
 I know not what he may be, in the arts;
 Nor what in schools: but surely, for his manners,
 I judge him a profane, and dissolute wretch:
 Worse, by profession of such great good gifts,
 Being the master of so loose a spirit.
 Why, what unhallow'd ruffian would have writ,
 In such a scurrilous manner, to a friend?
 Why should he think, I tell my apricots?
 Or play th' Hesperian dragon with my fruit,
 To watch it? Well, my son, I 'ad thought
 You'd had more judgment, 't have made election
 Of your companions, ' than t' have ta'en on trust
 ' Such petulant, jeering gamesters, that can spare
 ' No argument, or subject from their jest.'

But

But I perceive, affection makes a fool
Of any man, too much the father. *Brain-worm.*

Enter Brain-worm.

Brain. Sir.

Kno. Is the fellow gone that brought this letter?

Brain. Yes, Sir, a pretty while since.

Kno. And where's your young master?

Brain. In his chamber, Sir.

Kno. He spake not with the fellow, did he?

Brain. No, Sir, he saw him not.

Kno. Take you this letter, seal it and deliver it my son;

But with no notice that I have open'd it on your life.

Brain. O lord, Sir, that were a jest, indeed!

Kno. I am resolv'd, I will not stop his journey;

Nor practise any violent means to stay

The unbridled course of youth in him: for that,

Restrain'd, grows more impatient; 'and, in kind,

' Like to the eager, but the generous grey-hound,

' Who ne'er so little from his game with-held,

' Turns head, and leaps up at his holder's throat.

There is a way of winning, more by love,

And urging of the modesty, than fear:

Force works on servile natures, not the free,

He, that's compell'd to goodness, may be good;

But, 'tis but for that fit: where others drawn

By softness, and example, get a habit.

Then if they stray, but warn 'em: and, the same

They would for virtue do, they'll do for shame.

SCENE, *Young Kno'well's study.*

Enter Edward Kno'well and Brain-worm.

E. Kno. Did he open it, say'st thou?

Brain. Yes, o' my word, Sir, and read the contents.

E. Kno. That's bad. What countenance, pray thee, made he i' the reading of it? Was he angry, or pleas'd?

Brain. Nay, Sir, I saw him not read it, nor open it, I assure your worship.

E. Kno. No! How know'st thou then, that he did either?

Brain. Marry, Sir, because he charg'd me, on my life, to tell nobody that he open'd it: which, unless he had done, he would never fear to have it reveal'd.

E. Kno. That's true: well, I thank thee, Brain-worm.

Enter Master Stephen.

Step. O! Brain-worm, didst thou not see a fellow here, in a what-sha'-call him doublet? He brought mine uncle a letter e'en now.

Brain. Yes, Master Stephen, what of him?

Step. O! I ha' such a mind to beat him—where is he? canst thou tell?

Brain. Faith, he is not of that mind: he is gone, Master Stephen.

Step. Gone! which way? When went he? How long since?

Brain. He is rid hence. He took horse at the street door.

Step. And I stay'd i' the fields! Whorson, Scanderbeg rogue; O that I had but a horse to fetch him back again.

Brain. Why, you may ha' my master's gelding to save your longing, Sir.

Step. But I ha' no boots, that's the spite on't.

Brain. Why, a fine whisp of hay, roll'd hard, Master Stephen.

Step. No, faith, it's no boot to follow him now; let him e'en go and hang. Pr'ythee, help to truss me a little. He does so vex me——

Brain. You'll be worse vex'd, when you are truss'd, Master Stephen. Best keep unbrac'd, and walk yourself till you be cold, your choler may founder you else.

Step. By my faith, and so I will, now thou tell'st me on't. How dost thou like my leg, Brain-worm?

Brain.

Brain. A very good leg, Master Stephen; but the woollen stocking does not commend it so well.

Step. Foh, the stockings be good enough, now summer is coming on, for the dust: I'll have a pair of silk against winter, that I go to dwell i' the town. I think my leg would shew in a silk hose.

Brain. Believe me, Master Stephen, rarely well.

Step. In sadness, I think it would; I have a reasonable good leg.

Brain. You have an excellent good leg, Master Stephen; but I cannot stay to praise it longer now; I am very sorry for't. [Exit.]

Step. Another time will serve, Brain-worm. Gramercy, for this.

Enter young Kno'well.

E. Kno. Ha, ha, ha!

Step. 'Slid! I hope he laughs not at me; an' he do—

E. Kno. Here was a letter, indeed, to be intercepted by a man's father! He cannot but think most virtuously both of me and the sender, sure, that make the careful coster-monger of him in our familiar epistles. I wish I knew the end of it, which now is doubtful, and threatens—What! my wise cousin! Nay, then I'll furnish our feast with one gull more tow'rd the mess. He writes to me of a brace, and here's one, that's three: O, for a fourth! Fortune! if ever thou'lt use thine eyes, I intreat thee—

Step. O, now I see who he laughs at. He laughs at somebody in that letter. By this good light, an' he had laugh at me—

E. Kno. How now, cousin Stephen, melancholy?

Step. Yes, a little. I thought you had laugh at me, cousin.

E. Kno. Why, what an' I had, Coz, what would you ha' done?

Step. By this light, I would ha' told mine uncle.

E. Kno. Nay, if you would ha' told your uncle, I did laugh at you, Coz.

Step. Did you, indeed?

E. Kno. Yes, indeed.

Step. Why, then—

VOL. II.

B

E. Kno.

E. Kno. What then?

Step. I am satisfied; it is sufficient.

E. Kno. Why, be so, gentle Coz. And I pray you, let me intreat a courtesy of you. I am sent for, this morning, by a friend i' the Old Jewry, to come to him: it's but crossing over the fields to Moor-gate: will you bear me company? I protest, it is not to draw you into bond, or any plot against the state, Coz.

Step. Sir, that's all one, an 'twere; you shall command me, twice so far as Moor-gate to do you good, in such a matter. Do you think I would leave you? I protest——

E. Kno. No, no, you shall not protest, Coz.

Step. By my fackins, but I will, by your leave; I'll protest more to my friend, than I'll speak of at this time.

E. Kno. You speak very well, Coz.

Step. Nay, not so, neither; you shall pardon me: but I speak to serve my turn.

E. Kno. Your turn, Coz! Do you know what you say? A gentleman of your sort, parts, carriage, and estimation, to talk o' your turn i' this company, and to me, alone, like a water-bearer at a conduit! 'fie! A wight, that, hitherto, his every step hath left the stamp of a great foot behind him, at every word the favour of a strong spirit; and he! this man, so graced, so gilded, or, as I may say, so 'tinfoyl'd by nature.'—Come, come, wrong not the quality of your desert, with looking downward, Coz; but hold up your head, so; and let the idea of what you are, be portray'd i' your face, that men may read i' your physiognomy: *here, within this place, is to be seen the true, and accomplished monster, or miracle of nature*, which is all one. What think you of this, Coz?

Step. Why, I do think of it; and I will be more proud, and melancholy, and gentleman-like, than I have been, I'll assure you.

E. Kno. Why, that's resolute, Master Stephen!
Now,

Now, if I can but hold him up to his height, as it is happily begun, it will do well for a suburb-humour: we may hap have a match with the city, and play him for forty pounds. Come, Coz.

Step. I'll follow you.

E. Kno. Follow me; you must go before.

Step. Nay, an' I must, I will. Pray you, shew me, good cousin. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *the Street before Cob's House.*

Enter Mr. Matthew.

Mat. I think this be the house. What, ho!

Enter Cob, from the House.

Cob. Who's there? O, Master Matthew! gi' your worship good morrow.

Mat. What, Cob! How dost thou, good Cob? Dost thou inhabit here, Cob?

Cob. Ay, Sir, I and my lineage ha' kept a poor house here in our days.

Mat. Cob, canst thou shew me of a gentleman, one captain Bobadil, where his lodging is?

Cob. O, my guest, Sir, you mean!

Mat. Thy guest! Alas! ha, ha.

Cob. Why do you laugh, Sir? Do you not mean captain Bobadil?

Mat. Cob, pray thee, advise thyself well: do not wrong the gentleman and thyself too. I dare be sworn he scorns thy house. He! he lodge in such a base, obscure place as thy house! Tut, I know his disposition so well, he would not lie in thy bed, if thou'dst gi't him.

Cob. I will not give it him, though, Sir. Mafs, I thought somewhat was in't we could not get him to-bed, all night! Well, Sir, though he lie not o' my bed, he lies o' my bench. An't please you to go up, Sir, you shall find him with two cushions under his head, and his cloak wrapped about him, as though
C 2 he

he had neither won nor lost; and yet, I warrant, he ne'er cast better in his life, than he has done, to-night.

Mat. Why, was he drunk?

Cob. Drunk, Sir! you hear not me say so. Perhaps he swallowed a tavern-token, or some such device, Sir: I have nothing to do withal. I deal with water, and not with wine. Gi' me my bucket there, ho. God b'wi'you, Sir, it's fix o'clock: I should ha' carried two turns by this. What ho! my stopple! come.

Mat. Lie in a water-bearer's house! A gentleman of his havings! Well, I'll tell him my mind.

Cob. What Tib, shew this gentleman up to the captain. [*Tib shews Master Mat. into the house.* You should ha' some now, would take this Mr. Matthew to be a gentleman at the least. His father is an honest man, a worshipful fishmonger, and so forth; and now does he creep, and wriggle into acquaintance with all the brave gallants about the town, such as my guest is. O, my guest is a fine man! he does swear the legiblest of any man christened: by St. George—the foot of Pharoah,—the body of me,—as I am a gentleman—and a soldier; such dainty oaths! and withal, he does take this same filthy roguish tobacco, the finest and cleanliest! it would do a man good to see the fume come forth out at's tonnels! Well, he owes me forty shillings, my wife lent him out of her purse by six-pence a time, besides his lodging; I would I had it. I shall ha' it he says, the next action. Helter skelter, hang sorrow, care'll kill a cat, up-tails all, and a louse for the hang-man.

[*Exit.*

SCENE, *a room in Cob's House.*

Bobadil discovered upon a Bench. Tib enters to him.

Bob. Hostess, hostess!

Tib. What say you, Sir?

Bob. A cup o' thy small-beer, sweet hostess.

Tib

Tib. Sir, there's a gentleman below, would speak with you.

Bob. A gentleman ! 'ods so, I am not within.

Tib. My husband told him you were, Sir.

Bob. What a plague——what meant he ?

Mat. [*within.*] Captain Bobadil !

Bob. Who's there !—Take away the bafon, good hostefs. Come up, Sir.

Tib. He would desire you to come up, Sir. You come into a cleanly house here.

Enter Mr. Matthew.

Mat. 'Save you, Sir ; 'save you, captain.

Bob. Gentle Master Matthew ! is it you, Sir ? Please you, sit down.

Mat. Thank you, good captain ; you may see I am somewhat audacious.

Bob. Not so, Sir. I was requested to supper, last night, by a sort of gallants, where you were wish'd for, and drank to, I assure you.

Mat. Vouchsafe me by whom, good captain.

Bob. Marry, by young Well-bred, and others. Why, hostefs ! a stool here for this gentleman.

Mat. No haste, Sir, 'tis very well.

Bob. Body of me ! It was so late ere we parted last night, I can scarce open my eyes yet : I was but new risen, as you came. How passes the day abroad, Sir ? you can tell.

Mat. Faith, some half hour to seven. Now, trust me, you have an exceeding fine lodging here, very neat, and private !

Bob. Ay, Sir : sit down. I pray you, Master Matthew, in any case, possess no gentlemen of our acquaintance with notice of my lodging.

Mat. Who ? I Sir ? No.

Bob. Not that I need to care who know it, for the cabin is convenient ; but in regard I would not be too popular and generally visited, as some are.

Mat. True, captain, I conceive you.

Bob. For, do you see, Sir, by the heart of valour in me, except it be to some peculiar and choice spirits,

to whom I am extraordinarily engaged, as yourself, or so, I could not extend thus far.

Mat. O lord, Sir, I resolve so.

[Pulls out a paper, and reads.]

Bob. I confess, I love a cleanly and quiet privacy, above all the tumult and roar of fortune. What new piece ha' you there? Read it.

Mat. *[reads.]* To thee, the purest object of my sense,
The most refined essence Heaven covers,

Send I these lines, wherein I do commence
The happy state of turtle-billing lovers.

Bob. 'Tis good; proceed, proceed. Where's this?

Mat. This, Sir? a toy o' mine own, in my nonage: the infancy of my muses. But, when wilt you come and see my study? Good faith, I can shew you some very good things I have done of late——That boot becomes your leg, passing well, captain, methinks.

Bob. So, so: it's the fashion gentlemen now use.

Mat. Troth, captain, and now you speak o' the fashion, Master Well-bred's elder brother and I are fall'n out exceedingly: this other day, I happen'd to enter into some discourse of a hanger, which I assure you, both for fashion and workmanship, was most peremptory-beautiful, and gentleman-like; yet he condemn'd, and cry'd it down, for the most pidd and ridiculous that ever he saw.

Bob. Squire Downright, the half-brother, was't not?

Mat. Ay, Sir, George Downright.

Bob. Hang him, rook! He! why, he has no more judgment than a malt-horse. By St. George, I wonder you'd lose a thought upon such an animal! The most peremptory absurd clown of Christendom, this day, he is holden. I protest to you, as I am a gentleman and a soldier, I ne'er chang'd words with his like. By his discourse, he should eat nothing but hay. He was born for the manger, pannier, or pack-saddle! He has not so much as a good phrase in his belly, but all old iron and rusty proverbs! a good commodity for some smith to make hob-nails of.

Mat. Ay, and he thinks to carry it away with his manhood still, where he comes. He brags he will gi' me the bastinado, as I hear.

Bob.

Bob. How! he the bastinado! how came he by that word, trow?

Mat. Nay, indeed, he said cudgel me; I term'd it so, for my more grace.

Bob. That may be: for I was sure, it was none of his word. But when? when said he so?

Mat. Faith, yesterday, they say: a young gallant, a friend of mine, told me so.

Bob. By the foot of Pharoah, an' 'twere my case now, I should send him a challenge, presently. The bastinado! A most proper, and sufficient dependence, warranted by the great Caranza. Come hither, you shall challenge him. I'll shew you a trick or two, you shall kill him with, at pleasure: the first stoccata, if you will, by this air.

Mat. Indeed, you have absolute knowledge i' the mystery, I have heard, Sir.

Bob. Of whom? Of whom ha' you heard it, I beseech you?

Mat. Troth, I have heard it spoken of by divers, that you have very rare and un-in-one-breath-utterable skill, Sir.

Bob. By heaven, no, not I; no skill i' the earth: some small rudiments i' the science, as to know my time, distance, or so. I have profess'd it more for noble-men, and gentlemen's use than mine own practice, I assure you. I'll give you a lesson. Look you, Sir. Exalt not your point above this state, at any hand; so Sir. Come on! O, twine your body more about, that you may fall to a more sweet, comely, gentleman-like guard. So, indifferent. Hollow your body more, Sir, thus. Now, stand fast o' your left leg; note your distance; keep your due proportion of time—Oh, you disorder your point most irregularly! Come, put on your cloak, and we'll go to some private place, where you are acquainted, some tavern, or so—and have a bit—What money ha' you about you, Mr. Matthew?

Mat. Faith, I ha' not past a two shillings, or so.

Bob. 'Tis somewhat with the least: but come,
we

we will have a bunch of raddishes, and salt, to taste our wine; and a pipe of tobacco, to close the orifice of the stomach: and then we'll call upon young Well-bred. Perhaps we shall meet the Corydon, his brother, there, and put him to the question. Come along, Mr. Matthew. [*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, a *Wharehouse, belonging to Kitley.*

Enter Kitley, Cash, and Downright.

KITLEY.

THOMAS, come hither.

There lies a note within, upon my desk,
Here take my key——It is no matter, neither.
Where is the boy?

Cash. Within, Sir, i'the warehouse.

Kite. Let him tell over, straight, that Spanish gold,
And weigh it, with the pieces of eight. Do you
See the delivery of those silver stuffs
To Mr. Lucar. Tell him, if he will,
He shall ha' the grograns at the rate I told him,
And I will meet him, on the Exchange, anon.

Cash. Good, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

Kite. Do you see that fellow, brother Downright?

Down. I, what of him?

Kite. He is a jewel, brother,——

I took him of a child, up, at my door,
And christened him; gave him my own name, Thomas;
Since bred him, at the hospital; where proving
A toward imp, I call'd him home, and taught him
So much, as I have made him my cashier,
And find him, in his place, so full of faith,

That

That I durst trust my life into his hands.

Dow. So would not I in any bastard's brother,
As, it is like, he is, although I knew
Myself his father. But you said you'd somewhat
To tell me, gentle brother, what is't? what is't?

Kite. Faith, I am very loth to utter it,
As fearing it may hurt your patience:
But that I know your judgment is of strength,
Against the nearness of affection——

Dow. What need this circumstance? Pray you
be direct.

' *Kite.* I will not say how much I do ascribe
' Unto your friendship; nor, in what regard
' I hold your love: but let my past behaviour,
' And usage of your sister, but confirm
' How well I've been affected to your——

' *Dow.* You are too tedious,' come to the matter;
the matter.

Kite. Then, without further ceremony, thus.
My brother, Well-bred, Sir, I know not how,
Of late, is much declin'd in what he was,
And greatly alter'd in his disposition.
When he came first to lodge here in my house,
Ne'er trust me, if I were not proud of him:
' Methought he bare himself in such a fashion,
' So full of man, and sweetness in his carriage,
' And, what was chief, it shew'd not borrowed in him,
' But all he did; became him as his own,
' And seem'd as perfect, proper, and posselt,
' As breath with life, or colour with the blood:
But now his course is so irregular,
So loose, affected, and depriv'd of grace,
' And he himself withal so far fall'n off
' From that first place, as scarce no note remains,
' To tell men's judgments where he lately stood.
' He's grown a stranger to all due respect;
' Forgetful of his friends, and not content
' To stale himself in all societies,
He makes my house here, common, as a mart,
A theatre, a public receptacle

For

For giddy humour, and diseased riot ;
 And here, as in a tavern or a stew,
 He, and his wild associates, spend their hours,
 In repetition of lascivious jests :
 Swear, leap, drink, dance, and revel night by night,
 Controul my servants ; and indeed what not !

Dow. 'Sdains, I know not what I should say to him
 i' the whole world ! he values me at a crack'd three-
 farthings, for ought I see. It will never out o' the
 flesh that's bred i' the bone ! I have told him enough,
 one would think, if that would serve. Well ! he
 knows what to trust to, for George. Let him spend
 and spend, and domineer, till his heart ake ; an' he
 think to be relieved by me, when he is got into one
 o' your city-pounds, the counters ; he has the wrong
 sow by the ear, i' faith, and claps his dish at a wrong
 man's door. I'll lay my hand o' my halfpenny, ere
 I part with't, to fetch him out, I'll assure him.

Kite. Nay, good brother, let it not trouble you,
 thus.

Dow. S'death, he made me—I could eat my very
 spur-leathers, for anger ! But, why are you so tame ?
 Why do not you speak to him, and tell him how he
 disquiets your house ?

Kite. O, there are divers reasons to dissuade, brother ;
 But, would yourself vouchsafe to travail in it,
 Though but with plain and easy circumstance,
 It would both come much better to his sense,
 And savour less of stomach, or of passion.
 You are his elder brother, and that title
 Both gives and warrants you authority :
 Whereas, if I should intimate the least,
 It would but add contempt to his neglect.
 Heap worse on ill, make up a pile of hatred,
 That, in the rearing, would come tott'ring down,
 And, in the ruin, bury all our love.
 Nay, more than this, brother ; if I should speak,
 He would be ready, from his heat of humour,
 And over-flowing of the vapour, in him,
 To blow the ears of his familiars

With

With the false breath of telling what disgraces
 And low disparagements I had put upon him.
 Whilst they, Sir, to relieve him in the fable,
 Make their loose comments upon ev'ry word,
 Gesture, or look, I use; mock me all o'er;
 And, out of their impetuous rioting phant'ies,
 Beget some slander, that shall dwell with me.
 And what would that be, think you? Marry, this:
 They would give out, because my wife is fair,
 Myself but newly married, and my sister
 Here sojourning a virgin in my house,
 That I were jealous! Nay, as sure as death,
 That they would say. And how that I had quarrell'd
 My brother purposely, thereby to find
 An apt pretext to banish them my house.

Dow. Mafs, perhaps so: they're like enough to do it.

Kite. Brother, they would, believe it: so should I,
 Like one of these penurious quack-salvers,
 But set the bills up to mine own disgrace,
 And try experiments upon myself:
 Lend scorn and envy, opportunity
 To stab my reputation and good name.—

Enter Matthew and Bobadil.

Mat. I will speak to him——

Bob. Speak to him! Away! by the foot of Pharaoh,
 you shall not; you shall not do him that grace.

Kite. What's the matter, Sirs?

Bob. The time of day, to you, gentleman o' the
 house. Is Mr. Well-bred stirring?

Dow. How then? what should he do?

Bob. Gentleman of the house, it is you: is he
 within, Sir?

Kite. He came not to his lodging to-night, Sir, I
 assure you.

Dow. Why, do you hear? you!

Bob. The gentleman-citizen hath satisfy'd me, I'll
 talk to no scavenger. [*Exeunt Bob and Matt.*]

Dow. How, scavenger! stay, Sir, stay!

Kite. Nay, brother Downright.

Dow. Heart! stand you away, and you love me.

Kite. You shall not follow him now, I pray you, brother; good faith you shall not: I will over-rule you.

Dow. Ha! scavenger! Well, go to, I say little: but by this good day (God forgive me I should swear) if I put it up so, say, I am the rankest coward ever liv'd. 'Sdains, an' I swallow this, I'll ne'er draw my sword in the fight of Fleet-street again, while I live; I'll fit in a barn with Madge howlet, and catch mice first. Scavenger!

Kite. Oh, do not fret yourself thus, never think on't.

Dow. These are my brother's consorts, these! these are his comrades, his walking mates! he's a gallant, a cavaliero too, right hangman cut! Let me not live, and I could not find in my heart to swinge the whole gang of 'em, one after another, and begin with him first. I am griev'd it should be said he is my brother, and take these courses. Well, as he brews, so he shall drink, for George, again. Yet, he shall hear on't, and that rightly too, an' I live, i' faith.

Kite. But brother, let your reprehension then Run in an easy current, not o'er-high Carried with rashness, or devouring choler; But rather use the soft persuading way, More winning, than enforcing the consent.

Dow. Ay, ay, let me alone for that, I warrant you.

[*Bell rings.*
Kite. How now! Oh, the bell rings to breakfast. Brother, I pray you, go in, and bear my wife Company till I come; I'll but give order For some dispatch of business to my servant——

Dow. I will—Scavenger!--scavenger!--[*Exit Dow.*

Kite. Well, tho' my troubled spirit's somewhat eas'd,

It's not repos'd in that security
As I could wish: but, I must be content.
Howe'er I set a face on't to the world,
Would I had lost this finger, at a venture,

So Well-bred had ne'er lodg'd within my house.
 Why't cannot be, where there is such resort
 Of wanton gallants, and young revellers,
 That any woman should be honest long.
 Is't like, that factious beauty will preserve
 The public-weal of chastity unshaken,
 When such strong motives muster and make head
 Against her single peace? No, no. Beware.
 When mutual appetite doth meet to treat,
 And spirits of one kind and quality
 Come once to parly, in the pride of blood,
 It is now flow conspiracy that follows.
 Well, to be plain, if I but thought the time
 Had answer'd their affections, all the world
 Should not persuade me, but I were a cuckold!
 Marry, I hope they ha' not got that start;
 For opportunity hath balkt 'em yet,
 And shall do still, while I have eyes and ears
 To attend the impositions of my heart.
 My presence shall be as an iron-bar,
 'Twixt the conspiring motions of desire:
 Yea, every look or glance mine eye ejects,
 Shall check occasion, as one doth his slave,
 When he forgets the limits of prescription.

Enter Dame Kately.

Dame. Sister Bridget, pray you fetch down the rose-water above in the closet. Sweetheart, will you come in to breakfast?

Kite. An' she have over heard me now!

Dame. I pray thee, good muffs, we stay for you.

Kite. By heav'n, I would not for a thousand angels.

Dame. What ail you, sweetheart? are you not well?
 Speak, good muffs.

Kite. Troth, my head akes extremely, on a sudden.

Dame. Oh, the lord!

Kite. How now! what!

Dame. Alas, how it burns! Muffs, keep you warm,
 good truth it is this new disease! there's a number

VOL. II.

C

are

are troubled withal! For love's sake, sweetheart, come in, out of the air.

Kite. How simple, and how subtle are her answers! A new disease, and many troubled with it!

Why, true! she heard me, all the world to nothing.

Dame. I pray thee, good sweetheart, come in; the air will do you harm in troth.

Kite. I'll come to you presently; 'twill away, I hope.

Dame. Pray Heav'n it do. [Exit Dame.

Kite. A new disease! I know not, new or old,
But it may well be call'd poor mortals plague:
For, like a pestilence, it doth infect
The houses of the brain. First, it begins
Solely to work upon the phantasy,
Filling her seat with such pestiferous air
As soon corrupts the judgment, and from thence
Sends like contagion to the memory;
Still each to other giving the infection,
Which, as a subtle vapour, spreads itself
Confusedly through every sense part,
Till not a thought, or motion in the mind,
Be free from the black poison of suspect.
Ah, but what misery it is to know this!
Or, knowing it, to want the mind's direction,
In such extremes! Well, I will once more strive,
In spite of this black cloud, myself to be,
And shake the fever off, that thus shakes me. [Exit.

SCENE, Moor-Fields.

Enter Brain-worm, disguis'd like a Soldier.

Brain. 'Slid, I cannot choose but laugh to see myself translated thus. Now must I create an intolerable sort of lies, or my present profession loses the grace; and yet the lie to a man of my coat, is as ominous a fruit as the Fico. O, Sir, it holds for good polity ever, to have that outwardly in vilest estimation that inwardly is most dear to us. So much for my borrow'd

Borrow'd shape. Well, the truth is, my old master intends to follow my young, dry foot, over Moor-fields to London this morning: now I, knowing of this hunting match, or rather conspiracy, and to insinuate with my young master, for so must we that are blue-waiters and men of hope and service do, have got me afore in this disguise, determining here to lie in ambuscade, and intercept him in the mid-way. If I can but get his cloak, his purse, his hat, nay any thing to cut him off, that is to stay his journey—*Veni, vidi, vici*, I may say with captain Cæsar; I am made for ever, I faith. Well, now must I practise to get the true garb of one of those lance-knights, my arm here, and my—Young master! and his cousin, Mr. Stephen, as I am a true counterfeit man of war, and no soldier!

[Retires.]

Enter Ed. Kno'well and Master Stephen.

E. Kno. So, Sir, and how then, Coz?

Step. S'foot, I have lost my purse, I think.

E. Kno. How! lost your purse! Where? When had you it?

Step. I cannot tell: stay.

Bra. 'Slid, I am afraid they will know me, would I could get by them!

E. Kno. What! ha' you it?

Step. No, I think I was bewitch'd, I—

E. Kno. Nay, do not weep the loss, hang it, let it go.

Step. Oh, it's here—No, an' it had been lost, I had not car'd, but for a jet ring Mistress Mary sent me.

E. Kno. A jet ring! oh, the poesie, the posie!

Step. Fine, i'faith! *Though fancy sleep, my love is deep*; meaning that though I did not fancy her, yet she loved me dearly.

E. Kno. Most excellent!

Step. And then I sent her another, and my poesie was: *The deeper the sweeter, I'll be judg'd by St. Peter.*

E. Kno. How by St. Peter? I do not conceive that.

Step. Marry, St. Peter, to make up the metre.

C. 2

E. Kno.

E. Kno. Well, there the saint was your good patron; he help'd you at your need: thank him, thank him.

Brain. I cannot take leave on 'em so; I will venture, come what will. Gentlemen, please you change a few crowns, for a very excellent good blade, here? I am a poor gentleman, a soldier, that, in the better state of my fortunes, scorn'd so mean a refuge, but now it is the humour of necessity to have it so. You seem to be gentlemen, well affected to martial men, else I should rather die with silence than live with shame: however, vouchsafe to remember, it is my want speaks, not myself. This condition agrees not with my spirit.—

E. Kno. Where hast thou served?

Brain. May it please you, Sir, in all the late wars of Bohemia, Hungaria, Dalamatia, Poland; where not, Sir? I have been a poor servitor by sea and land, any time this fourteen years, and followed the fortunes of the best commanders in Christendom. I was twice shot at the taking of Aleppo, once at the relief of Vienna; I have been at Marseilles, Naples, and the Adriatick gulf; a gentleman-slave in the galleys thrice, where I was most dangerously shot in the head, through both the thighs, and yet, being thus maim'd, I am void of maintenance; nothing left me but my scars, the noted marks of my resolution.

Step. How will you sell this rapier, friend?

Brain. Cenerous Sir, I refer it to your own judgment; you are a gentleman, give me what you please.

Step. True, I am a gentleman, I know that, friend: but what though? I pray you say, what would you ask?

Brain. I assure you the blade may become the side or thigh of the best prince in Europe.

E. Kno. Ay, with a velvet scabbard.

Step. Nay, and 't be mine, it shall have a velvet scabbard, Coz, that's flat: I'd not wear it as 'tis, an you would give me an angel.

Brain.

Brain. At your worship's pleasure, Sir; nay, 'tis a most pure Toledo.

Step. I had rather it were a Spaniard; but tell me, what shall I give you for it? An' it had a silver hilt—

E. Kno. Come, come, you shall not buy it; hold, there's a shilling, fellow, take thy rapier.

Step. Why, but I will buy it now, because you say so; and there's another shilling, fellow; I scorn to be outbidden. What shall I walk with a cudgel, like a higgins-bottom, and may have a rapier for money?

E. Kno. You may buy one in the city.

Step. Tut, I'll buy this i' the field, so I will; I have a mind to't because 'tis a field rapier. Tell me your lowest price.

E. Kno. You shall not buy it, I say.

Step. By this money but I will, though I give more than 'tis worth.

E. Kno. Come away, you are a fool.

Step. Friend, I am a fool, that's granted: but I'll have it for that word's sake. Follow me for your money.

Brain. At your service, Sir.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Kno'well.

Kno. I cannot lose the thought yet of this letter
Sent to my son; nor leave to admire the change
Of manners, and the breeding of our youth
Within the kingdom, since myself was one,
When I was young, he liv'd not in the stews.
Durst have conceiv'd a scorn, and utter'd it,
On a grey head: age was authority
Against a buffoon; and a man had then
A certain reverence paid unto his years
That had none due unto his life.

But now we are fall'n; youth from their fear,
And age from that which bred it, good example,
Nay, would ourselves were not the first, even parents,
That did destroy the hopes in our own children;

' Or they not learn'd our vices in their cradles,
 ' And suck'd in our ill customs with their milk :
 ' Ere all their teeth be born, or they can speak,
 ' We make their palates cunning !' The first words
 We form their tongues with, are licentious jests.
 Can it call whore? cry bastard? O, then, kiss it,
 A witty child! Can swear! The father's darling!
 Give it two plumbs. Nay, rather than't shall learn
 No bawdy song, the mother herself will teach it!
 But this is in the infancy;
 When it puts on the breeches,
 It will put off all this. Ay, it is like;
 When it is gone into the bone already!
 No, no: this die goes deeper than the coat,
 Or shirt, or skin; it stains unto the liver
 And heart, in some: and rather than it should not,
 Note what we fathers do; look how we live;
 What mistresses we keep; at what expence;
 And teach them all bad ways to buy affliction!
 Well, I thank Heav'n, I never yet was he
 That travell'd with my son before sixteen,
 To shew him the Venetian courtezans,
 Nor read the grammar of cheating, I had made
 To my sharp boy at twelve; repeating still
 The rule, get money, still get money, boy,
 No matter by what means.
 These are the trades of fathers, now. However,
 My son, I hope, hath met within my threshold,
 None of these household precedents; which are strong
 And swift, to rape youth to their precipice.
 But let the house at home be ne'er so clean
 Swept, or kept sweet from filth,
 If he will live abroad with his companions,
 In riot and misrule, it is worth a fear.
 ' Nor is the danger of conversing less
 ' Than all that I have mention'd of example.'

Enter Brain-worm.

Brain. My master! Nay, faith have at you; I am
 Besh'd now, I have sped so well; though I must at-
 tack

tack you in different way. Worshipful Sir, I beseech you, respect the state of a poor soldier ! I am ashamed of this base course of life (God's my comfort) but extremity provokes me to't : what remedy ?

Kno. I have not for you now.

Brain. By the faith I bear unto truth, gentleman, it is no ordinary custom in me, but only to preserve manhood. I protest to you, a man I have been, a man I may be, by your sweet bounty.

Kno. Pr'ythee, good friend, be satisfied.

Brain. Good, Sir, by that hand, you may do the part of a kind gentleman, in lending a poor soldier the price of two cans of beer, a matter of small value ; the King of Heav'n shall pay you, and I shall rest thankful : sweet worship——

Kno. Nay, an' you be so importunate——

Brain. Oh, tender Sir, need will have his course. I was not made to this vile use ! Well the edge of the enemy could not have abated me so much. [*He weeps.*] It's hard, when a man hath served in his prince's cause, and be thus—Honourable worship, let me derive a small piece of silver from you, it shall not be given in the course of time. By this good ground, I was fain to pawn my rapier last night for a poor supper ; I had suck'd the hilts long before, I am a pagan else : sweet honour.

Kno. Believe me, I am taken with some wonder, To think a fellow of that outward presence, Should, in the frame and fashion of his mind, Be so degenerate and sordid-base !

Art thou a man, and sham'st thou not to beg ?

To practise such a servile kind of life ?

Why, were thy education ne'er so mean, Having thy limbs, a thousand fairer courses Offer themselves to thy election.

Either the wars might still supply thy wants,

Or service of some virtuous gentleman,

Or honest labour : nay, what can I name,

But would become thee better than to beg ?

But men of thy condition feed on sloth,

As

As doth the beetle on the dung she breeds in,
 Not caring how the metal of your minds
 Is eaten with the rust of idleness.
 Now, afore me, whate'er he be that should
 Relieve a person of thy quality,
 While thou insists in this loose desperate course,
 I would esteem the sin not thine, but his.

Brain. Faith, Sir, I would gladly find some other course, if so——

Kno. Ay, you'd gladly find it, but you will not seek it.

Brain. Alas! Sir, where should a man seek? In the wars there's no ascent by desert in these days, but—and for service, would it were as soon purchased as wish'd for (the air's my comfort) I know what I would say——

Kno. What's thy name?

Brain. Please you, Fitz-Sword, Sir.

Kno. Fitz-Sword,
 Say that a man should entertain thee now,
 Would'st thou be honest, humble, just and true?

Brain. Sir, by the place and honour of a soldier——

Kno. Nay, nay, I like not those affected oaths!
 Speak plainly, man: what think'st thou of my words?

Brain. Nothing, Sir, but with my fortunes were as happy, as my service should be honest.

Kno. Well, follow me; I'll prove thee, if thy deeds will carry a proportion to thy words. [Exit.

Brain. Yes, Sir; straight; I'll but garter my hose.
 Oh, that my belly were hoop'd now, for I am ready to burst with laughing! Never was a bottle or bag-pipe fuller. S'lid! was there ever seen a fox in years to betray himself thus? Now I shall be possessed of all his counsels! and by that conduit, my young master. Well, he is resolved to prove my honesty; faith, and I am resolved to prove his patience. Oh, I shall abuse him intolerably! This small piece of service will bring him clean out of love with the soldier for ever. He will never come within the sight of a red coat, or a musket-rest again. It's no matter, let

IN HIS HUMOUR.

let the world think me a bad counterfeit, if I cannot give him the slip at an instant. Why, this is better than to have staid his journey! Well, I'll follow him. Oh, how I long to be employed!

With change of voice, these scars, and many an oath, I'll follow son and fire, and serve 'em both. [*Exit.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *Stocks-Market.*

Enter Matthew, Well-bred, and Bobadil.

MATTHEW.

YES, faith, Sir! we were at your lodging to seek you, too.

Well. Oh, I came not there to-night.

Bob. Your brother delivered us as much.

Well. Who? My brother, Downright?

Bob. He. Mr. Well-bred, I know not in what kind you hold me; but let me say to you this; as sure as honour, I esteem it so much out of the sunshine of reputation to throw the least beam of regard upon such a——

Well. Sir, I must hear no ill words of my brother.

Bob. I protest to you, as I have a thing to be saved about me, I never saw any gentleman-like part—

Well. Good captain [*faces about.*] to some other discourse.

Bob. With your leave, Sir, an' there were no more men living upon the face of the earth, I should not fancy him, by St. George.

Mat. Troth, nor I; he is of a rustical cut, I know
not

not how : he doth not carry himself like a gentleman of fashion ———

Well. Oh, Mr. Matthew, that's a grace peculiar but to a few, ' *quos æquus amavit Jupiter.*

' *Mat.* I understand you, Sir.

Enter young Kno'well and Stephen.

Well. ' No question you do, or you do not, Sir? Ned!

Kno'well. By my soul, welcome ! How dost thou, sweet spirit, my genius? 'Slid, I shall love Apollo, and the mad Thespian girls, the better while I live, for this, my dear fury. Now I see there's some love in thee ! Sirrah, these be the two I writ to thee of. Nay, what a drowsy humour is this now ? Why dost thou not speak ?

E. Kno. Oh, you are a fine gallant ; you sent me a rare letter.

Well. Why, was't not rare ?

E. Kno. Yes, I'll be sworn, I was never guilty of reading the like. Match it in all Pliny's epistles, and I'll have my judgment burn'd in the ear for a rogue & make much of thy vein, for it is inimitable. But I marvel what camel it was that had the carriage of it ; for doubtless he was no ordinary beast that brought it.

Well. Why ?

E. Kno. Why, sayest thou ? Why, dost thou think that any reasonable creature, especially in the morning, the sober time of the day too, could have mistaken my father for me ?

Well. 'Slid, you jest, I hope.

E. Kno. Indeed, the best use we can turn it to, is to make a jest on't now ; but I'll assure you, my father had the full view o' your flourishing style, before I saw it.

Well. What a dull slave was this ! But, sirrah, what said he to it, i'faith ?

E. Kno. Nay, I know not what he said ; but I have a shrewd guess what he thought.

Well. What, what ?

E. Kno. Marry, that thou art some strange, dissolute

lute young fellow, and I not a grain or two better, for keeping thee company.

Well. Tut, that thought is like the moon in her last quarter, 'twill change shortly. But, sirrah, I pray thee be acquainted with my two hang-bys here; thou wilt take exceeding pleasure in 'em, if thou hearest 'em once go: my wind-instruments, I'll wind 'em up——But what strange piece of silence is this? The sign of the dumb man.

E. Kno. Oh, Sir, a kinsman of mine, one that may make your musick the fuller, an' he please; he has his humour, Sir.

Well. Oh, what is't, what is't?

E. Kno. Nay, I'll neither do your judgment, nor his folly, that wrong, as to prepare your apprehension. I'll leave him to the mercy o' your search, if you can take him so.

Well. Well, captain Bobadil, Mr. Matthew, I pray you know this gentleman here; he is a friend of mine, and one that will deserve your affection. I know not your name, Sir, but shall be glad of any occasion to render me more familiar to you.

Step. My name is Mr. Stephen, Sir; I am this gentleman's own cousin, Sir: his father is mine uncle, Sir; I am somewhat melancholy, but you shall command me, Sir, in whatsoever is incident to a gentleman.

Bob. Sir, I must tell you this, I am no general man; but for Mr. Well-bred's sake (you may embrace it at what height of favour you please) I do communicate with you; and conceive you to be a gentleman of some parts. I love few words.

E. Kno. And I fewer, Sir. I have scarce enow to thank you.

Mat. But are you indeed, Sir, so given to it?

[To Mr. Stephen.

Step. Ay, truly, Sir, I am mightily given to melancholy,

Mat. Oh, it's your only fine humour, Sir; your true melancholy breeds you perfect fine wit, Sir: I

am

am melancholy myself divers times, Sir ; and then do I no more but take a pen and paper presently, and overflow you half a score or a dozen of sonnets, at a sitting.

Step. Cousin, it is well ; am I melancholy enough ?

E. Kno. Oh, ay, excellent !

Well. Captain Bobadil, why muse you so ?

E. Kno. He is melancholy too.

Bob. Faith, Sir, I was thinking of a most honorable piece of service was perform'd, to-morrow, being St. Mark's day, shall be some ten years now.

E. Kno. In what place, captain ?

Bob. Why, at the beleag'ring of Strigonium, where, in less than two hours, seven hundred resolute gentlemen, as any were in Europe, lost their lives upon the breach. I'll tell you, gentlemen, it was the first, but the best leagure, that ever I beheld with these eyes, except the taking of——what do you call it, last year, by the *Genoese* ; but that (of all others) was the most fatal and dangerous exploit that ever I was ranged in, since I first bore arms before the face of the enemy, as I am a gentleman and a soldier.

Step. 'So, I had as lief as an angel, I could swear as well as that gentleman.

E. Kno. Then you were a servitor at both it seems ; at Strigonium, and what do you call't ?

Bob. Oh, lord, Sir ! by St. George, I was the first man that enter'd the breach ; and had I not effected it with resolution, I had been slain, if I had had a million of lives.

E. Kno. 'Twas pity you had not ten ; a cat's, and your own, i'faith. But, was it possible ?

Mat. Pray you, mark this discourse, Sir.

Step. So I do.

Bob. I assure you, upon my reputation, 'tis true, and yourself shall confess.

E. Kno. You must bring me to the rack first.

Bob. Observe me judicially, sweet Sir ; they had planted me three demi-culverins, just in the mouth of the breach : now, Sir, as we were to give on, their master

master gunner (a man of no mean skill and mark, you must think) confronts me with his linstock, ready to give fire: I, spying his intendment, discharg'd my petronel in his bosom, and with these single arms, my poor rapier, ran violently upon the Moors, that guarded the ordnance, and put them all pell-mell to the sword.

Well. To the sword! to the rapier, captain!

E. Kno. Oh, it was a good figure observed, Sir! but did you all this, captain, without hurting your blade?

Bob. Without any impeach o' the earth: you shall perceive, Sir. It is the most fortunate weapon, that ever rid on poor gentleman's thigh. Shall I tell you, Sir? You talk of Morglay, Excalibur, Durindina, or so? Tut, I lend no credit to that is fabled of 'em; I know the virtue of mine own, and therefore I dare the boldlier maintain it.

Step. I marvel whether it be a Toledo, or no.

Bob. A most perfect Toledo, I assure you, Sir.

Step. I have a countryman of his here.

Mat. Pray you, let's see, Sir. Yes, faith, it is!

Bob. This a Toledo! pish.

Step. Why do you pish, captain?

Bob. A Fleming, by heaven! I'll buy them for a guilder a piece, an' I would have a thousand of them.

E. Kno. How say you, cousin? I told you thus much.

Well. Where bought you it, Mr. Stephen?

Step. Of a scurvy rogue soldier (a hundred of lice go with him) he swore it was a Toledo.

Bob. A poor provant rapier, no better.

Mat. Mafs, I think it be, indeed! now I look on't better.

E. Kno. Nay, the longer you look on't the worse. Put it up, put it up!

Step. Well, I will put it up, but by——(I ha' forgot the captain's oath, I thought to to have sworn by it) an' e'er I meet him——

VOL. II.

D

Well.

Well. O, 'tis past help now, Sir; you must ha' patience.

Step. Whorson coney-catching rascal! I could eat the very hilts for anger.

E. Kno. A sign of good digestion; you have an ostrich stomach, cousin.

Step. A stomach! I would I had him here, you should see an' I had a stomach.

Well. It's better as 'tis. Come, gentlemen, shall we go?

Enter Brain-worm.

E. Kno. A miracle, cousin! look here! look here!

Step. O, god'slid, by your leave, do you know me, Sir?

Brain. Ay, Sir, I know you by sight.

Step. You sold me a rapier, did you not!

Brain. Yes, marry, did I, Sir.

Step. You said, it was a Toledo, ha?

Brain. True, I did so.

Step. But it is none!

Brain. No, Sir, I confess, it is none.

Step. Do you confess it? Gentlemen, bear witness, he has confest it. By God's will, an' you had not confest it——

E. Kno. Oh, cousin, forbear, forbear.

Step. Nay, I have done, cousin.

Well. Why, you have done like a gentleman, he has confest it, what would you more?

Step. Yet, by his leave, he is a rascal, under his favour, do you see.

E. Kno. Ay, by his leave, he is, and under favour. Pretty piece of civility! Sirrah, how dost like him?

Well. Oh; it's a most precious fool, make much on him. I can compare him to nothing more happily, than a drum; for every one may play upon him.

E. Kno. No, no, a child's whistle were far the fitter.

Brain. Sir, shall I intreat a word with you?

E. Kno.

E. Kno. With me, Sir! You have not another Toledo to sell, ha' you?

Brain. You are conceited, Sir, your name is Mr. Kno'well, as I take it?

E. Kno. You are i'the right. You mean not to proceed in the catechism, do you?

Brain. No, Sir, I am none of that coat.

E. Kno. Of as bare coat, though! Well say, Sir?

Brain. Faith, Sir, I am but a servant to the drum extraordinary, and indeed, this smoky varnish being washed off, and three or four patches removed, I appear your worship's in reversion, after the decease of your good father—Brain-worm.

E. Kno. Brain-worm! 'Slight, what breath of a conjurer hath blown thee hither in this shape?

Brain. The breath o' your letter, Sir, this morning: the same that blew you to the wind-mill, and your father after you.

E. Kno. My father!

Brain. Nay, never start; 'tis true; he has followed you over the fields by the foot, as you would do a hare i' the snow.

E. Kno. Sirrah, Well-bred, what shall we do, sirrah? My father is come over after me.

Well. Thy father! Where is he?

Brain. At justice Clement's house, here, in Coleman-Street, where he but stays my return; and then——

Well. Who's this? Brain-worm?

Brain. The same, Sir.

Well. Why, how, i'the name of wit, comest thou transmuted thus?

Brain. Faith, a device! a device! Nay, for the love of reason, gentlemen, and avoiding the danger, stand not here; withdraw, and I'll tell you all.

E. Kno. Come, cousin.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *the Warehouse.**Enter Kitley and Cash.*

Kite. What says he, Thomas? Did you speak with him?

Cash. He will expect you, Sir, within this half hour.

Kite. Has he the money ready, can you tell?

Cash. Yes, Sir, the money was brought in last night.

Kite. O, that's well: fetch me my cloak, my cloak.

Stay, let me see, an hour to go and come;
 Ay, that will be the least; and then 'twill be
 An hour before I can dispatch him,
 Or very near: well, I will say two hours.
 Two hours! ha! things, never dream't of yet,
 May be contriv'd, ay, and effected too,
 In two hours absence. Well, I will not go.
 Two hours! No, fleeing opportunity,
 I will not give your subtlety that scope.
 Who will not judge him worthy to be robb'd,
 That sets his doors wide open to a thief,
 And shews the felon where his treasure lies?
 Again, what earthly spirit but will attempt
 To taste the fruit of beauty's golden tree,
 When leaden sleep seals up the dragon's eyes?
 I will not go. Business, go by for once.
 No, beauty, no; you are too, too precious
 To be left so, without a guard, or open!
 You must be then kept up close, and well watch'd!
 For, give you opportunity, no quick-sand
 Devours or swallows swifter! He that lends
 His wife, if she be fair, or time, or place,
 Compels her to be false. I will not go.
 The dangers are too many. I am resolv'd for that.
 Carry in my cloak again. Yet, stay. Yet do, too.
 I will defer going on all occasions.

Cash. Sir, Snare, your scrivener, will be there with the bonds.

Kite.

Kite. That's true! fool on me! I had clean forgot it! I must go. What's o'clock?

Cash. Exchange time, Sir.

Kite. 'Heart, then will Well-bred presently be here too,

With one or other of his loose consorts.

I am a knave, if I know what to say,

What course to take, or which way to resolve.

My brain, methinks, is like an hour-glass,

Wherein my imagination runs, like sands,

Filling up time; but then are turn'd and turn'd;

So that I know not what to stay upon,

And less to put in act. It shall be so.

Nay, I dare build upon his secrecy,

He knows not to deceive me. Thomas!

Cash. Sir.

Kite. Yet now, I have bethought too, I will not—
Thomas, is Cob within?

Cash. I think he be, Sir.

Kite. But he'll prate too, there's no speech of him.

No, there were no man o' the earth to Thomas,

If I durst trust him; there is all the doubt.

But should he have a chink in him, I were gone;

Lost i' my fame for ever: talk for th' exchange.

The manner he hath stood with, 'till this present,

Doth promise no such change! What should I fear
then?

Well, come what will, I'll tempt my fortune once.

Thomas—you may deceive me, but I hope—

Your love to me is more—

Cash. Sir, if a servant's

Duty, with faith, may be call'd love, you are

More than in hope, you are possess'd of it.

Kite. I thank you heartily, Thomas; gi' me your
hand.

With all my heart, good Thomas. I have, Thomas,

A secret to impart to you—but

When once you have it, I must seal your lips up.

So far I tell you, Thomas.

Cash. Sir, for that—

Kite. Nay, hear me out. Think, I esteem you,
 Thomas,
 When I will let you in, thus to my private.
 It is a thing fits nearer to my crest,
 Than thou art aware of, Thomas. If thou should'st,
 Reveal it, but——

Cash. How! I reveal it!

Kite. Nay,
 I do not think thou would'st; but if thou should'st,
 'Twere a great weakness.

Cash. A great treachery.
 Give it no other name.

Kite. Thou will not do't then?

Cash. Sir, if I do, mankind disclaim me ever.

Kite. He will not swear; he has some reservation,
 Some conceal'd purpose, and close meaning, sure.
 Else, being urg'd so much, how should he choose,
 But lend an oath to all this protestation?
 He's no fanatic, I have heard him swear.
 What should I think of it? Urge him again,
 And by some other way? I will do so.
 Well, Thomas, thou hast sworn not to disclose;
 Yes, you did swear?

Cash. Not yet, Sir, but I will,
 Please you——

Kite. No, Thomas, I dare take thy word,
 But if thou wilt swear, do, as thou think'st good;
 I am resolv'd without it; at thy pleasure.

Cash. By my soul's safety then, Sir, I protest
 My tongue shall ne'er take knowledge of a word,
 Deliver'd me in nature of your trust.

Kite. It's too much, these ceremonies need not;
 I know thy faith to be as firm as rock.
 Thomas, come hither, near; we cannot be
 Too private in this business. So it is.
 (Now he has sworn, I dare the safer venture)
 I have of late, by divers observations—
 But whether his oath can bind him, there it is.
 I will bethink me e'er I do proceed.
 Thomas, it will be now too long to stay,

I'll spy some fitter time soon, or to-morrow.

Casb. Sir, at your pleasure?

Kite. I will think. Give me my cloak. And, Thomas,

I pray you search the books 'gainst my return,
For the receipts 'twixt me and Traps.

Casb. I will, Sir.

Kite. And, hear you, if your mistress's brother,
Well-bred,

Chance to bring hither any gentlemen,
Ere I come back, let one straight bring me word.

Casb. Very well, Sir.

Kite. To the exchange; do you hear?
Or here in Coleman-Street, to justice Clement's.
Forget it not, nor be out of the way.

Casb. I will not, Sir.

Kite. I pray you have a care on't.
Or whether he come or no, if any other
Stranger, or else, fail not send me word.

Casb. I shall not, Sir.

Kite. Be't your special business
Now to remember it.

Casb. Sir, I warrant you.

Kite. But, Thomas, this is not the secret, Thomas,
I told you of.

Casb. No, Sir. I do suppose it.

Kite. Believe me, it is not.

Casb. Sir, I do believe you.

Kite. By heaven! it is not; that's enough. But,
Thomas,

I would not you should utter it, do you see,
To any creature living; yet I care not.
Well, I must hence. Thomas, conceive thus much;
It was a trial of you, when I meant
So deep a secret to you: I mean not this,
But that I have to tell you. This is nothing, this.
But, Thomas, keep this from my wife, I charge you.
Lock'd up in silence, midnight, buried here,
No greater hell than to be slave to fear. [*Exit.*

Casb. Lock'd up in silence, midnight, buried here.
Whence

Whence should this flood of passion, trow, take head? ha!

Best dream no longer of this running humour,
For fear I sink! the violence of the stream
Already hath transported me so far,
That I can feel no ground at all! But soft,
Here is company; now must I——

Enter Well-bred, Edw. Kno'well, Brainworm, Bobadil, Stephen.

Well. Beshrew me, but it was an absolute good jest, and exceedingly well carried.

E. Kno. Ay, and our ignorance maintained it as well, did it not?

Well. Yes, faith! but was't possible thou should'st not know him? I forgive, Mr. Stephen, for he is stupidity itself.

E. Kno. 'Fore heav'n, not I. ' He had so written
• himself into the habit of one of your poor infantry,
• your decayed, ruinous, worm-eaten gentlemen of
• the round.'

Well. Why, Brain-worm, who would have thought thou hadst been such an artificer?

E. Kno. An artificer! an architect! Except a man had studied begging all his life-time, and been a weaver of language from his infancy, for the clothing of it! I never saw his rival.

Well. Where got'st thou this coat, I marvel?

Brain. Ofa Houndsditch man, Sir, one of the devil's near kinsmen, a broker.

Enter Cash.

Cash. Francis! Martin! Ne'er a one to be found now? What a spite's this?

Well. How now, Thomas, is my brotherly Kately within?

Cash. No, Sir; my master went forth e'en now; but master Down-right is within. Cob! what Cob! Is he gone too?

Well.

Well. Whither went your master, Thomas, can'st thou tell?

Cash. I known not; to justice Clement's, I think, Sir. Cob! [Exit Cash.]

E. Kuo. Justice Clement! What's he?

Well. Why, dost thou not know him? He is a city magistrate, a justice here; an excellent good lawyer, and a great scholar: but the only mad and merry old fellow in Europe! I shewed you him the other day.

E. Kuo. Oh, is that he! I remember him now. Good faith! and he has a very strange presence, methinks; it shews as if he stood out of the rank from other men. I have heard many of his jests i' the university. They say, he will commit a man for taking the wall of his horse.

Well. Ay, or wearing his cloak on one shoulder, or serving of God. Any thing indeed, if it come in the way of his humour.

Enter Cash.

Cash. Gasper, Martin, Cob! 'Heart! where should they be, trow?

Bob. Master Kately's man, pr'ythee vouchsafe us the lighting of this match.

Cash. Fire on your match, no time but now to vouchsafe! Francis! Cob!

Bob. Body of me! Here's the remainder of seven pound since yesterday was seven-night, 'Tis your right Trinidado! Did you never take any, master Stephen?

Step. No, truly, Sir! but I'll learn to take it now, since you commend it so.

Bob. Sir, believe me, upon my relation, for what I tell you the world shall not reprove. I have been in the Indies, where this herb grows, where neither myself, nor a dozen gentlemen more, of my knowledge, have received the taste of any other nutriment in the world for the space of one and twenty weeks, but the fume of this simple only. Therefore it cannot be but 'tis most divine, especially your Trinidado.

Your

Your Nicotian is good too. I do hold it, and will affirm it before any prince in Europe, to be the most sovereign and precious weed that ever the earth tendered to the use of man.

E. Kno. This speech would have done decently in a tobacco-trader's mouth.

Enter Cash and Cob.

Cash. At justice Clement's he is, in the middle of Coleman-street.

Cob. O, ho!

Bob. Where's the match I gave thee? master Kitley's man?

Cash. Here it is, Sir.

Cob. By God's-me! I marvel what pleasure or felicity they have in taking this roguish tobacco! it's good for nothing but to choke a man, and to fill him full of smoke and embers.

[*Bob. beats him with a cudgel, Mat. runs away.*]

All. Oh, good captain! hold, hold!

Bob. You base scullion, you.

Cash. Come, thou must need be talking too; thou'rt well enough serv'd.

Cob. Well, it shall be a dear beating, an I live! I will have justice for this.

Bob. Do you prate? Do you murmur?

[*Bob. beats him off.*]

E. Kno. Nay, good captain, will you regard the humour of a fool?

Bob. A whoreson filthy slave, a dung-worm, an excrement! Body o' Cæsar, but that I scorn to let forth so mean a spirit, I'd have stabb'd him to the earth.

Well. Marry, the law forbid, Sir.

Bob. By Pharaoh's foot, I would have done it.

[*Exit.*]

Step. Oh, he swears admirably! By Pharaoh's foot, body of Cæsar; I shall never do it, sure; upon mine honour, and by St. George; no I han't the right grace.

Well.

Well. But soft, where's Mr. Matthew? gone!

Brain. No, Sir; they went in here.

Well. O, let's follow them: Master Matthew is gone to salute his mistress in verse. We shall have the happiness to hear some of his poetry now. He never comes unfurnish'd. Brain-worm!

Step. Brain-worm! Where? Is this Brain-worm?

E. Kno. Ay, cousin, no words of it, upon your gentility.

Step. Not I, body of me! by this air, St. George, and the foot of Pharaoh!

Well. Rare! your cousin's discourse is simply drawn out with oaths.

E. Kno. 'Tis larded with 'em. A kind of French dressing, if you love it. Come, let's in. Come, cousin. [Exeunt.]

SCENE. *A Hall in Justice Clement's House.*

Enter Kiteley and Cob.

Kite. Ha! How many are there, say'st thou?

Cob. Marry, Sir, your brother, Master Well-bred--

Kite. Tut, beside him: what strangers are there, man?

Cob. Strangers! let me see; one, two; mass, I know not well, there are so many.

Kite. How, so many?

Cob. Ay, there's some five or six of them, at the most.

Kite. A swarm, a swarm!

Spite of the devil, how they sting my head
With forked stings, thus wide and large! But Cob,
How long hast thou been coming hither, Cob?

Cob. A little while, Sir.

Kite. Didst thou come running?

Cob. No, Sir.

Kite. Nay, then I am familiar with thy haste!
Bane to my fortunes. What meant I to marry?
I, that before was rank'd in such content,
My mind at rest too in so soft a peace,

Being

Being free master of my own free thoughts,
 And now become a slave? What, never sigh!
 Be of good cheer, man, for thou art a cuckold.
 'Tis done, 'tis done! Nay, when such flowing store,
 Plenty itself falls into my wife's lap,
 The Cornucopia will be mine, I know. But, Cob,
 What entertainment had they? I am sure
 My sister and my wife would bid them welcome! Ha!

Cob. Like enough, Sir; yet I heard not a word of it.

Kite. No; their lips were seal'd with kisses, and
 the voice,

Drown'd in a flood of joy at their arrival,
 Had lost her motion, state and faculty.

Cob. which of them was't that first kiss'd my wife?
 My sister, I should say, my wife, alas!

I fear not her. Ha! Who was it, say'st thou?

Cob. By my troth, Sir, will you have the truth of it?

Kite. Ay, good Cob, I pray thee heartily.

Cob. Then I am a vagabond, and fitter for Bride-
 well, than your worship's company, if I saw any body
 to be kiss'd unless they wou'd have kiss'd the post in
 the middle of the warehouse; for there I left 'em all,
 at their tobacco, with a pox!

Kite. How! were they not gone in then, ere thou
 cam'st?

Cob. O, no, Sir!

Kite. Spite o' the devil? What do I stay here then?
Cob. follow me. [Exit.

Cob. Nay, soft and fair, I have eggs on the spit.
 ' Now am I for some five and fifty reasons ham-
 ' mering, hammering revenge! Nay, 'an he had
 ' not lain in my house, 'twould never have grieved
 ' me; but, being my guest, one that I'll be sworn I
 ' loved and trusted; and he to turn monster of in-
 ' gratitude, and strike his lawful host! Well, I hope
 ' to raise up an host of fury for't. I'll to justice Cle-
 ' ment for a warrant. Strike his lawful host! [Exit.

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE, *a room in Kitley's House.**Enter Downright and Dame Kitley.*

DOWNRIGHT.

WELL, sister, I tell you true; and you'll find it so, in the end.

Dame. Alas, brother, what would you have me to do? I cannot help it. You see my brother brings 'em in here, they are his friends.

Down. His friends! his friends! 'Slud they do nothing but haunt him up and down, like a sort of unlucky spirits, and tempt him to all manner of villainy, that can be thought of. Well, by this light, a little thing would make me play the devil with some of 'em. And 'twere not more for your husband's sake, than any thing else, I'd make the house too hot for the best on 'em. They should say, and swear, hell were broken loose ere they went hence. But, by God's will, 'tis nobody's fault but yours; for an' you had done as you might have done, they should have been parboil'd and bak'd too, every mother's son, ere they should ha' come in e'er a one of 'em.

Dame. God's my life! did you ever hear the like? What a strange man is this! Could I keep out all them, think you? I should put myself against half a dozen men, should I? Good faith, you'd mad the patient'st body in the world to hear you talk so without any sence or reason!

Enter Mrs. Bridget, Mr. Matthew, Well-bred, Stephen, Edward Kno'well, Bobadil, and Cash.

Bridget. Servant, in troth, you are too prodigal Of your wit's treasure, thus to pour it forth Upon so mean a subject as my worth.

VOL. II.

E

Mat.

Mat. You say well, mistress; and I mean as well.

Down. Hey-day, here is stuff!

Well. O, now stand close. Pray Heav'n she can get him to read; he should do it of his own natural impudence.

Fridg. Servant, what is this same, I pray you?

Mat. Marry, an elegy! an elegy! an odd toy—I'll read it, if you please.

Bridg. Pray you do, servant.

Down. O, here's no foppery! Death! I can endure the stocks better.

E. Kno. What ails thy brother? Can he not bear the reading of a ballad?

Well. O, no; a rhyme to him is worse than cheese, or a bagpipe. But, mark, you lose the protestation.

Bob. Master Matthew, you abuse the expectation of your dear mistress, and her fair sister. Fie, while you live, avoid this prolixity.

Mat. I shall, Sir.

Rare creature, let me speak without offence,

Would Heav'n my rude words had the influence

To rule thy thoughts; as thy fair looks do mine,

Then should'st thou be his prisoner, who is thine.

[Master Stephen answers with shaking his head.]

E. Kno. 'Slight, he shakes his head like a bottle, to feel an' there be any brain in it!

Well. Sister, what ha' you here? Verses? Pray you, let's see. Who made these verses? They are excellent good.

Mat. O, master Well-bred, 'tis your disposition to say so, Sir. They were good in the morning; I made 'em extempore this morning.

Well. How, extempore!

Mat. I should I might be hang'd else; ask captain Bobadil. He saw me write them at the——(pox on it) the star yonder.

Step. Cousin, how do you like this gentleman's verses?

E. Kno. O, admirable! the best that ever I heard, Coz!

Step.

Step. Body o' Cæsar! they are admirable!
The best that ever I heard, as I am a soldier.

Down. I am vext, I can hold nie'er a bone of me still!
Heary. I think they mean to build and breed here.

Well. Sister Kately, I marvel you get yu not a servant that can rhyme, and do tricks too.

Down. Oh, monster! Impudence itself, tricks!
Come, you might practise your ruffian tricks somewhere else, and not here, I wufs. This is no tavern, nor drinking-school, to vent your exploits in.

Well. How now! whose cow has calv'd?

Down. Marry, that has mine, Sir. Nay, boy, never look askance at me for the matter; I'll tell you of it; aye, Sir, you and your companions; mend yourselves, when I ha' done?

Well. My companions!

Down. Yes, Sir, your companions; so I say; I am not afraid of you nor them neither, your hang-bys here. You must have your poets, and your poollings, your soldados and foolados, to follow you up and down the city, and here they must come to domineer and swagger. Sirrah, you ballad-singer; and slops, your fellow there, get you out; get you home; or, by this steel, I'll cut off your ears, and that presently.

Well. 'Slight, stay; let's see what he dare do. Cut off his ears! cut a whetstone. You are an ass, do you see; touch any man here, and by this hand, I'll run my rapier to the hilts in you.

Down. Yea, that would I fain see, boy.

[*They all draw, and they of the house make out to part them.*]

Dame. O, Jesu! murder! Thomas, Gasper!

Bridge. Help, help, Thomas.

E. Kno. Gentlemen; forbear, I pray you.

Bob. Well, sirrah! you Holofernes! by my hand, I will pink your flesh full of holes with my rapier; for this; I will, by this good Heav'n. Nay, let him come, gentlemen, by the body of St George, I'll not kill him.

[*They offer to fight again, and are parted.*]

Cash. Hold, hold, good gentlemen.

Down. Your whorson, bragging coistril.

Enter Kately.

Kite. Why, how now, what's the matter? What's the stir here?

Put up your weapons, and put off this rage.
My wife and sister, they're the cause of this.
What, Thomas, where is the knave?

Cash. Here, Sir.

Well. Come, let's go; this is one of my brother's ancient humours, this. *[Exit.*

Step. I am glad nobody was hurt by his ancient humour. *[Exit.*

Kite. Why, how now, brother, who inforc'd this brawl?

Down. A sort of leud rake-hells, that care neither for God nor the devil. And they must come here to read ballads, and roguery, and trash! I'll mar the knot of 'em ere I sleep, perhaps; especially Bob there: he that's all manner of shapes; and songs and sonnets, his fellow. But I'll follow 'em. *[Exit.*

Bridge. Brother, indeed you are too violent. Too sudden in your humour.

There was one a civil gentleman,
And very worthily demean'd himself.

Kite. O, that was some love of yours, sister.

Bridge. A love of mine? I would it were no worse, brother! You'd pay my portion sooner than you think for. *[Exit.*

Dame. Indeed, he seem'd to be a gentleman of exceeding fair disposition, and of very excellent good parts. What a coil and stir is here? *[Exit.*

Kite. Her love, by Heav'n! my wife's minion!
Death, these phrases are intolerable!
Well, well, well, well, well, well!
It is too plain, too clear. Thomas, come hither.
What, are they gone?

Cash. Ay, Sir, they went in.
My mistress, and your sister——

Kite. Are any of the gallants within?

Cash.

Casb. No, Sir, they are all gone.

Kite. Art thou sure of it?

Casb. I can assure you, Sir:

Kite. What gentleman was it that they prais'd so, Thomas?

Casb. One, they call him master Kno'well, a handsome young gentleman, Sir.

Kite. Ay, I thought so. My mind gave me as much. I'll die, but they have hid him in the house somewhere; I'll go and search. Go with me, Thomas. Be true to me, and thou shalt find me a master.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *Moor-Fields.*

Enter E. Kno'well, Well-bred, and Brainworm.

E. Kno. Well, Brainworm, perform this business happily, and thou makest a purchase of my love for ever.

Well. I'faith, now let thy spirits use their best faculties; but at my hand, remember the message to my brother; for there's no other means to start him out of his house.

Brain. I warrant you, Sir, fear nothing. I have a nimble soul has waked all forces of my phant'sy by this time, and put 'em in true motion. What you have possessed me withal, I'll discharge it amply, Sir. Make it no question. [*Exit.*]

Well. Forth, and prosper, Brainworm. Faith, Ned, how dost thou approve of my abilities in this device?

E. Kno. Troth, well, howsoever: but it will come excellent, if it take.

Well. Take, man! Why, it cannot chuse but take, if the circumstances miscarry not. But tell me ingenuously, dost thou affect my sister Bridget, as thou pretend'st?

E. Kno. Friend, am I worth belief?

Well. Come, do not protest. In faith, she is a maid of good ornament, and much modesty; and,

except I conceiv'd very worthily of her, thou should'st not have her.

E. Kno. Nay, that I am afraid will be a question yet, whether I shall have her or no.

Well. 'Slid thou shalt have her; by this light thou shalt.

E. Kno. Nay, do not swear.

Well. By this hand, thou shalt have her. I'll go fetch her presently. Point but where to meet, and as I am an honest man, I'll bring her.

E. Kno. Hold, hold, be temperate.

Well. Why, by——what shall I swear by? thou shalt have her, as I am——

E. Kno. 'Pray thee be at peace, I am satisfied; and do believe thou wilt omit no offered occasion, to make my desires complete.

Well. Thou shalt see and know I will not. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Formal and Kno'well.

Form. Was your man a soldier, Sir?

Kno. Aye, a knave I took him begging o' the way, This morning, as I came over Moorfields.

Enter Brain-worm.

O, here he is! you have made fair speed, believe me. Where i' the name of sloth could you be thus——

Brain. Marry, peace be my comfort, where I thought I should have had little comfort of your worship's service.

Kno. How so?

Brain. O, Sir! your coming to the city, your entertainment of me, and your sending me to watch——indeed, all the circumstances either of your charge, or my employment, are as open to your son as to yourself.

Kno. How should that be! unless that villain, Brainworm, Have told him of the letter, and discovered All that I strictly charg'd him to conceal! 'Tis so!

Brain. I am partly o' that faith, 'tis so indeed.

Kno.

Kno. But how should he know you to be my man?

Brain. Nay, Sir, I cannot tell; unless it be by the black art! Is not your son a scholar, Sir?

Kno. Yes, but I hope his soul is not allied
Unto such hellish practice: if it were,
I had just cause to weep my part in him,
And curse the time of his creation.
But where didst thou find them, Fitz-Sword?

Brain. You should rather ask, where they found me, Sir; for I'll be sworn I was going along in the street, thinking nothing, when (of a sudden) a voice calls, Mr. Kno'well's man; another cries, soldier: and thus, half a dozen of 'em, 'till they had called me within a house, where I no sooner came, but out flew all their rapiers at my bosom, with some three or fourscore oaths to accompany 'em, and all to tell me, I was a dead man, if I did not confess where you were, and how I was employed, and about what, which, when they could not get out of me (as I protest they must have dissected me, and made an anatomy of me first, and so I told 'em) they locked me up into a room i' the top of a high house, whence, by great miracle, having a light heart, I slid down by a bottom of packthread into the street, and so 'scaped. But, Sir, thus much I can assure you; for I heard it while I was lock'd up; there were a great many rich merchants and brave citizen's wives with 'em at a feast, and your son, Mr. Edward, withdrew with one of 'em, and has 'pointed to meet her anon, at one Cob's house, a water-bearer, that dwells by the wall. Now, there your worship shall be sure to take him, for there he preys, and fail he will not.

Kno. Nor will I fail, to break his match I doubt not.

Go thou along with justice Clement's man,
And stay there for me. At one Cob's house, say'st thou?

Brain. Aye, Sir, there you shall have him, [*Exit Kno'well.*] Yes! Invisible! Much wench, or much son! 'Slight, when he has staid there three or four hours,

hours, travelling with the expectation of wonders, and at length be delivered of air. O, the sport that I should then take to look on him, if I durst! But now I mean to appear no more before him in this shape. I have another trick to act yet. Sir, I make you stay somewhat long.

For. Not a whit, Sir.

You have been lately in the wars, Sir, it seems.

Brain. Marry have I, Sir, to my loss, and experience of all, almost——

Form. Troth, Sir, I would be glad to bestow a bottle of wine o'you, if it please you to accept it——

Brain. O, Sir——

Form. But to hear the manner of your services and your devices in the wars; they say they be very strange, and not like those a man reads in the Roman histories, or sees at Mile-End.

Brain. No, I assure you, Sir; why, at any time when it please you, I shall be ready to discourse with you all I know; and more too, somewhat.

Form. No better time than now, Sir. We'll go to the Windmill, there we shall have a cup of neat grist, as we call it. I pray you, Sir, let me request you to the Windmill.

Brain. I'll follow you, Sir, and make grist o'you, if have good luck. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Matthew, Ed. Knowell, Bobadil, and Stephen.

Mat. Sir, did your eyes ever taste the like clown of him, where we were to-day, Mr. Well-bred's half brother? I think the whole earth cannot shew his parallel, by this day-light.

E. Kno. We are now speaking of him. Captain Bobadil tells me, he is fallen foul o'you too.

Mat. O, aye, Sir! he threatened me with the bastinado.

Bob. Aye, but I think I taught you prevention this morning for that——You shall kill him, beyond question, if you be so generously minded.

Mat. Indeed, it is a most excellent trick!

Bob.

Bob. O, you do not give spirit enough to your motion, you are too tardy, too heavy! O, it must be done like lightning! hey! [*He practises at a post.*]

Mat. Rare captain!

Bob. Tut, 'tis nothing, an't be not done in a—punto!

E. Kno. Captain, did you ever prove yourself upon any of our masters of defence here?

Mat. O, good Sir! yes, I hope he has.

Bob. I will tell you, Sir. They have assaulted me some three, four, five, six of them together, as I have walked alone in divers skirts o'the town, where I have driven them before me the whole length of a street, in the open view of all our gallants, pitying to hurt them, believe me. Yet all this lenity will not overcome their spleen; they will be doing with the pismire, raising a hill, a man may spurn abroad with his foot at pleasure. By myself I could have slain them all, but I delight not in murder. I am loth to bear any other than this bastinado for 'em; yet I hold it good policy not to go disarmed, for though I be skilful, I may be oppressed with multitudes.

E. Kno. Aye, believe me, may you, Sir; and, in my conceit, our whole nation should sustain the loss by it, if it were so.

Bob. Alas, no! What's a peculiar man to a nation? Not seen.

E. Kno. O, but your skill, Sir!

Bob. Indeed, that might be some loss; but who respects it? I will tell you, Sir, by the way of private, and under seal, I am a gentleman, and live here obscure, and to myself: but were I known to his majesty, and the lords, observe me, I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of his subjects in general, but to save the one half, nay, three parts of his yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. And how would I do it, think you?

E. Kno. Nay, I know not, nor can I conceive.

Bob.

Bob. Why thus, Sir. I would select nineteen more to myself, throughout the land; gentlemen they should be, of good spirit, strong and able constitution; I would choose them by an instinct, a character that I have; and I would teach these nineteen the special rules, as your Punto, your Reverso, your Stoccata, your Imbroccata, your Passada, your Montanto; till they could all play very near, or altogether, as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong, we twenty would come into the field the tenth of March, or thereabouts; and we would challenge twenty of the enemy; they could not, in their honour, refuse us! Well, we would kill them; challenge twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them too; and thus would we kill every man his twenty a day, that's twenty score; twenty score, that's two hundred; two hundred a day, five days a thousand; forty thousand; forty times five; five times forty, two hundred days kill them all up by computation. And this I will venture my poor gentleman-like carcase to perform; provided there be no treason practised upon us; by fair and discreet manhood, that is, civilly by the sword.

E. Knb. Why are you so sure of your hand, captain, at all times?

Bob. Tut, never miss thrust; upon my reputation with you.

E. Kno. I would not stand in Downright's state then; ah' you meet him, for the wealth of any one street in London.

Bob. Why, Sir, you mistake! If he were here now, by this welkin I would not draw my weapon on him! Let this gentleman do his mind: but I will bastinado him, by the bright sun; wherever I meet him.

Mat. Faith, and I'll have a sling at him, at my distance.

Enter

Enter Downright, walking over the Stage.

E. Kno. God's so! look ye where he is; yonder he goes.

Down. What peevish luck have I, I cannot meet with these bragging rascals!

Bob. It's not he, is it?

E. Kno. Yes, faith, it is he!

Mat. I'll be hang'd then, if that were he.

E. Kno. I assure you that was he.

Step. Upon my reputation, it was he.

Bob. Had I thought it had been he, he must not have gone so: but I can hardly be induced to believe it was he yet.

E. Kno. That I think, Sir. But see, he is come again!

Down. O, Pharoah's foot! have I found you? Come, draw; to your topla. Draw, gipsy, or I'll thresh you.

Bob. Gentleman of valour, I do believe in thee, hear me—

Down. Draw your weapon, then.

Bob. Tall man, I never thought on't till now; body of me! I had a warrant of the peace served on me even now, as I came along, by a water-bearer; this gentleman saw it, Mr. Matthew.

[He beats him and disarms him. Matthew runs away.]

Down. 'Sdeath, you will not draw, then?

Bob. Hold, hold, under thy favour, forbear.

Down. Prate again, as you like this, you whorson foist, you. You'll controul the point, you! Your consort is gone; had he staid, he had shared with you, Sir.

[Exit Downright.]

E. Kno. Twenty, and kill 'em; twenty more, kill them too. Ha! ha!

Bob. Well, gentlemen, bear witness, I was bound to the peace by this good day.

E. Kno. No, faith, it's an ill day, captain, never reckon it other: but say you were bound to the peace, the

the law allows you to defend yourself; that will prove but a poor excuse.

Bob. I cannot tell, Sir. I desire good construction, in fair sort. I never sustained the like disgrace, by heaven. Sure I was struck with a planet thence, for I had no power to touch my weapon.

E. Kno. Aye, like enough, I have heard of many that have been beaten under a planet. Go, get you to a surgeon. 'Slid, an' these be your tricks, your passado's and your montanto's, I'll none of them.

Bob. I was planet-struck certainly. [Exit.]

E. Kno. O, manners! that this age should bring forth such creatures! that nature should be at leisure to make 'em! Come, Coz.

Step. Mafs, I'll have this cloak.

E. Kno. God's will, 'tis Downright's.

Step. Nay, it's mine now; another might have ta'en it up as well as I. I'll wear it, so I will.

E. Kno. How, an' he see it? He'll challenge it, assure yourself.

Step. Aye, but he shall not ha't; I'll say, I bought it.

E. Kno. Take heed you buy it not too dear, Coz. [Exit.]

SCENE, a Chamber in Kiteley's House.

Enter Kiteley and Cash.

Kite. Art thou sure, Thomas, we have pry'd into all and every part throughout the house? Is there no by-place, or dark corner, has escaped our searches?

Cash. Indeed, Sir, none; there's not a hole or nook unsearched by us, from the upper loft unto the cellar.

Kite. They have convey'd him then away, or hid him in some privacy of their own——Whilst we were searching of the dark closet by my sister's chamber, did'st thou not think thou heard'st a rustling on the other side, and a soft tread of feet?

Cash. Upon my truth, I did not, Sir; or if you did

did, it might be only the vermine in the wainseat; house is old, and over-run with 'em.

Kite. It is, indeed, Thomas—we should bane these rats—Dost thou understand me—we will—they shall not harbour here; I'll cleanse my house from 'em, if fire or poison can effect it—I will not be tormented thus—They gnaw my brain, and burrow in my heart—I cannot bear it.

Cash. I do not understand you, Sir! Good now, what is't disturbs you thus? Pray be composed; these starts of passion have some cause, I fear, that touches you more nearly.

Kite. Sorely, sorely, Thomas—it cleaves too close to me—Oh, me—[*Sighs.*] Lend me thy arm—so, good Cash.

Cash. You tremble and look pale! Let me call assistance.

Kite. Not for ten thousand worlds—Alas! alas! 'tis not in medicine to give me ease—here, here it lies.

Cash. What, Sir?

Kite. Why,—nothing, nothing—I am not sick, yet more than dead; I have a burning fever in my mind, and long for that, which having, would destroy me.

Cash. Believe me, 'tis your fancy's imposition, shut up your generous mind from such intruders—I'll hazard all my growing favour with you; I'll stake my present, my future welfare, that some base whispering knave, nay, pardon me, Sir, hath in the best and richest soil, sown seeds of rank and evil nature! O, my master, should they take root—

[*Laughing within.*]

Kite. Hark! hark! dost thou not hear! what think'st thou now? Are they not laughing at me? They are, they are. They have deceived the wittol, and thus they triumph in their infamy—This aggravation is not to be borne. [*Laughing again.*] Hark, again!—Cash, do thou unseen steal in upon 'em, and listen to their wanton conference.

VOL. II.

F

Cash.

Cash. I shall obey you, though against my will.

[*Exit.*

Kite. Against his will! Ha! it may be so—He's young, and may be bribed for them—they've various means to draw the unwary in; if it be so, I'm lost, deceived, betrayed, and my bosom, my full-fraught bosom, is unlocked and opened to mockery and laughter! Heaven forbid! He cannot be that viper; sting the hand that raised and cherish'd him! was this stroke added, I should be cursed—But it cannot be—no, it cannot be.

Enter Cash.

Cash. You are musing, Sir.

Kite. I ask your pardon, Cash,—ask me not why—I have wronged you, and am sorry—'tis gone.

Cash. If you suspect my faith—

Kite. I do not—say no more—and for my sake let it die and be forgotten —Have you seen your mistress, and heard—whence was that noise?

Cash. Your brother, Master Well-bred, is with 'em, and I found 'em throwing out their mirth on a very truly ridiculous subject; it is one Formal, as he stiles himself, and he appertains, so he phrases it, to justice Clement, and wou'd speak with you.

Kite. With me! Art thou sure it is the justice's clerk? Where is he?

Enter Brain-worm, as Formal.

Who are you, friend?

Brain. An appendix to justice Clement, vulgarly called his clerk.

Kite. What are your wants with me?

Brain. None.

Kite. Do you not want to speak with me?

Brain. No, but my master does.

Kite. What are the justice's commands?

Brain. He doth not command, but intreats Master Kite to be with him directly, having matters of some inoment to communicate unto him.

Kite.

IN HIS HUMOUR.

63.

Kite. What can it be? Say, I'll be with him instantly, and if your legs, friend, go no faster than your tongue, I shall be there before you.

Brain. I will. Vale. [Exit.]

Kite. 'Tis a precious fool, indeed!—I must go forth—But first, come hither, Thomas—I have admitted thee into the close recesses of my heart, and shewed thee all my frailties, passions, every thing.—Be careful of thy promise, keep good watch. Wilt thou be true, my Thomas?

Cash. As truth's self, Sir—
But be assured you're heaping care and trouble
Upon a sandy base; ill plac'd suspicion
Recoils upon yourself—She's chaste as comely!
Believe't she is—Let her not note your humour;
Disperse the gloom upon your brow, and be
As clear as her un sullied honour.

Kite. I will then, Cash—thou comfort'st me—I'll drive these

Fiend-like fancies from me, and be myself again.
Think'st thou she has perceived my folly? 'Twere
Happy, if she had not—She has not—
They who know no evil will suspect none.

Cash. True, Sir! nor has your mind a blemish now.
This change has gladdened me—Here's my mistress,
And the rest, settle your reason to accost 'em.

Kite. I will, Cash, I will—

Enter Well-bred, Dame Kitely, and Bridget.

Well. What are you plotting, brother Kitely,
That thus of late you muse alone, and bear
Such weighty care upon your pensive brow?

[Laughs.]

Kite. My care is all for you, good sneering brother,
And well I wish you'd take some wholesome counsel,
And curb your headstrong humours; trust me, brother,
You were to blame to raise commotions here,
And hurt the peace and order of my house.

Well. No harm done, brother, I warrant you.
Since there is no harm done, anger costs

A man nothing, and a brave man is never
His own man 'till he be angry—To keep
His valour in obscurity, is to keep himself,
As it were, in a cloak-bag. What's a brave
Musician unless he play?

What's a brave man unless he fight?

Dame. Aye, but what harm might have come of
it, brother?

Well. What, school'd on both sides! Prythee,
Bridget, save me from the rod and lecture.

[*Bridg. and Well. retire.*]

Kite. With what a decent modesty she rates him!
My heart's at ease, and she shall see it is—
How art thou, wife! 'Thou look'st both gay and
comely,

In troth, thou dost—I'm sent for out, my dear,
But I shall soon return—Indeed, my life,
Business that forces me abroad grows irksom,
I cou'd content me with less gain and 'vantage,
'To have the more at home, indeed I cou'd.

Dame. Your doubts, as well as love, may breed
these thoughts.

Kite. That jar untunes me.

[*Aside.*]

What dost thou say? Doubt thee?
I should as soon suspect myself—No, no,
My confidence is rooted in thy merit,
So fixt and settled, that, wert thou inclin'd
To masks, to sports, and balls, where lusty youth
Leads up the wanton dance, and the rais'd pulse
Beats quicker measures, yet I could with joy,
With heart's ease and security—not but
I had rather thou should'st prefer thy home,
And me, to toys and such like vanities.

Dame. But sure, my dear,
A wife may moderately more use these pleasures,
Which numbers, and the time give sanction to,
Without the smallest blemish on her name.

Kite. And so she may—And I'll go with thee, child,
I will indeed—I'll lead thee there myself,
And be the foremost reveller.—I'll silence

The

The sneers of envy, stop the tongue of slander;
Nor will I more be pointed at, as one
Disturb'd with jealousy——

Dame. Why, were you ever so?

Kite. What!—Ha! never—ha, ha, ha!
She stabs me home. [*Afide.*] Jealous of thee!
No, do not believe it—Speak low, my love,
Thy brother will overhear us—No, no, my dear,
It cou'd not be, it cou'd not be—for—for—
What is the time now?—I shall be too late—
No, no, thou may'st be satisfy'd
There's not the smallest spark remaining—
Remaining! What do I say? There never was
Nor can, nor ever shall be—so be satisfy'd—
Is Cob within there? Give me a kiss,
My dear; there, there, now we are reconcil'd—
I'll be back immediately—Good-bye, good-bye—
Ha! ha! jealous, I shall burst my sides with laughing.
Ha, ha! Cob, where are you, Cob? Ha, ha.—

[*Exit.*

[*Well-bred and Bridget come forward.*

Well. What have you done to make your husband
part so merry from you? He has of late been little
given to laughter.

Dame. He laughed indeed, but seemingly without
mirth. His behaviour is new and strange. He is much
agitated, and has some whimsy in his head, that puz-
zles mine to read it.

Well. 'Tis jealousy, good sister, and writ so largely,
that the blind may read it; have you not perceived
it yet?

Dame. If I have, 'tis not always prudent that my
tongue should betray my eyes, so far my wisdom tends,
good brother, and little more I boast—But what
makes him ever calling for Cob so? I wonder how
he can employ him.

Well. Indeed, sister, to ask how he employs Cob,
is a necessary question for you, that are his wife, and
a thing not very easy for you to be satisfy'd in—But
this I'll assure you, Cob's wife is an excellent bawd,

sister, and oftentimes your husband haunts her house ; marry to what end, I cannot altogether accuse him. Imagine you what you think convenient. But I have known fair hides have foul hearts ere now, sister.

Dame. Never said you truer than that, brother ; so much I can tell you for your learning. O, ho ! is this the fruit of 's jealousy ? I thought some game was in the wind, he acted so much tenderness but now, but I'll be quit with him.—Thomas !

Enter Cash.

Fetch your hat, and go with me ; I'll get my hood, and out the backward-way. I would to fortune I could take him there, I'd return him his own, I warrant him ! I'd fit him for his jealousy ! [*Exit.*

Well. Ha, ha ! so e'en let 'em go ; this may make sport anon—What, Brain-worm ?

Enter Brain-worm.

Brain. I saw the merchant turn the corner, and came back to tell you, all goes well ; wind and tide, my master.

Well. But how got'st thou this apparel of the justice's man ?

Brain. Marry, Sir, my proper fine penman would needs bestow the grist o' me at the Wind-mill, to hear some martial discourse, where I so marshalled him, that I made him drunk with admiration ; and because too much heat was the cause of his distemper, I stript him stark naked, as he lay along asleep, and borrowed his suit to deliver this counterfeit message in, leaving a rusty armour, and an old brown bill, to watch him 'till my return ; which shall be, when I have pawned his apparel, and spent the better part of the money, perhaps.

Will. Well, thou art a successful merry knave, Brainworm ; his absence will be subject for more mirth. I pray thee return to thy young master, and will him to meet me and my sister Bridget at the Tower instantly ; for here, tell him, the house is so
stored

stored with jealousy, there is no room for love to stand upright in. We must get our fortunes committed to some large prison, say : and then the Tower, I know no better air, nor where the liberty of the house may do us more present service. Away.

[Exit Brain.

Bridg. What, is this the engine that you told me of? What farther meaning have you in the plot?

Well. That you may know, fair sister-in-law, how happy a thing it is to be fair and beautiful.

Bridg. That touches not me, brother.

Well. That's true ; that's even the fault of it ; for indeed, beauty stands a woman in no stead, unless it procure her touching—Well, there's a dear and well respected friend of mine, sister, stands very strongly and worthily affected towards you, and hath vowed to inflame whole bonfires of zeal at his heart, in honour of your perfections. I have already engaged my promise to bring you where you shall hear him confirm much more. Ned Kno'well is the man, sister. There's no exception against the party ; you are ripe for a husband, and a minute's loss to such an occasion, is a great trespass in a wife beauty. What say you, sister? On my soul, he loves you ; will you give him the meeting?

Bridg. Faith, I had very little confidence in my own constancy, brother, if I durst not meet a man : but this motion of yours savours of an old knight-adventurer's servant, a little too much, methinks.

Well. What's that, sister?

Bridg. Marry, of the go-between.

Well. No matter if it did ; I would be such a one for my friend. But see, who is returned to hinder us.

Enter Kite.

Kite. What villainy is this? Called out on a false message! This was some plot; I was not sent for. Bridget, where's your sister?

Bridg. I think she be gone forth, Sir.

Kite.

Kite. How! is my wife gone forth? Whither, for Heaven's sake.

Bridg. She's gone abroad with Thomas.

Kite. Abroad with Thomas! Oh, that villain cheats me!

He hath discover'd all unto my wife;
Beast that I was to trust him. Whither, I pray
You, went she?

Bridg. I know not, Sir.

Well. I'll tell you, brother, whither I suspect she's gone.

Kite. Whither, good brother?

Well. To Cob's house, I believe; but keep my counsel.

Kite. I will, I will. To Cob's house! Does she haunt there?

She's gone on purpose now to cuckold me,
With that lewd rascal, who, to win her favour,
Hath told her all—Why wou'd you let her go?

Well. Because she's not my wife: if she were, I'd keep her to her tether.

Kite. So, so; now 'tis plain. I shall go mad
With my misfortunes; now they pour in torrents.
I'm bruted by my wife, betray'd by my servant,
Mock'd at by my relations, pointed at by my neighbours,

Despis'd by myself.—There is nothing left now
But to revenge myself first, next hang myself;
And then—all my cares will be over. [*Exit.*]

Bridg. He storms most loudly; sure you have gone too far in this.

Well. 'Twill all end right, depend upon't.—But let us lose no time; the coast is clear; away, away; the affair is worth it, and cries haste.

Bridg. I trust me to your guidance, brother, and so fortune for us. [*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V.

SCENE, *Stocks-Market.**Enter Matthew and Bobadil.*

MATTHEW.

I WONDER, captain, what they will say of my going away? ha!

Bob. Why, what should they say? but as of a discreet gentleman; quick, wary, respectful of nature's fair lineaments, and that's all.

Mat. Why so! but what can they say of your beating?

Bob. A rude part, a touch with soft wood, a kind of gross battery used, lain on strongly, borne most patiently, and that's all. But wherefore do I wake their remembrance? I was fascinated, by Jupiter! fascinated; but I will be unwitched, and revenged by law.

Mat. Do you hear? Is't not best to get a warrant, and have him arrested, and brought before justice Clement?

Bob. It were not amiss; would we had it!

Mat. Why, here comes his man, let's speak to him.

Bob. Agreed. Do you speak.

Enter Brain-worm as Formal.

Mat. Save you, Sir.

Brain. With all my heart, Sir!

Mat. Sir, there is one Downright hath abused this gentleman and myself, and we determine to make ourselves amends by law; now, if you would do us the favour to procure a warrant to bring him before your master, you shall be well considered of, I assure you, Sir.

Brain. Sir, you know my service is my living, such

such favours as these, gotten of my master, is his only preferment, and therefore you must consider me, as I may make benefit of my place.

Mat. How is that, Sir?

Brain. Faith, Sir, the thing is extraordinary, and the gentleman may be of great account. Yet, be what he will, if you will lay me down a brace of angels in my hand, you shall have it, otherwise not.

Mat. How shall we do, captain? He asks a brace of angels, you have no money.

Bob. Not a cross, by fortune.

Mat. Nor I, as I am a gentleman, but two pence left of my two shillings in the morning for wine and raddish. Let's find him some pawn.

Bob. Pawn! We have none to the value of his demand.

Mat. O, yes, I can pawn my ring here.

Bob. And harkee, he shall have my trusty Toledo too. I believe I shall have no service for it to-day.

Mat. Do you hear, Sir? We have no store of money at this time, but you shall have good pawns; look you, Sir, I will pledge this ring, and that gentleman his Toledo, because we would have it dispatched.

Brain. I am content, Sir; I will get you the warrant presently. What's his name, say you? Down-right?

Mat. Aye, aye, George Downright.

Brain. Well, gentlemen, I'll procure you the warrant presently; but who will you have to serve it?

Mat. That's true, captain, that must be considered.

Bob. Body o' me, I know not! 'Tis service of danger!

Brain. Why, you were best get one of the varlets o' the city, a serjeant; I'll appoint you one, if you please.

Mat. Will you, Sir? Why we can wish no better.

Bob. We'll leave it to you, Sir.

[*Exeunt Bob. and Mat.*]

Brain. This is rare! Now will I go pawn this cloak of the justice's man's, at the broker's, for a var-

varlet's suit, and be the varlet myself, and so get money on all sides. *[Exit.]*

SCENE, *the street before Cob's House.*

Enter Kno'well.

Kno. O, here it is; I have found it now—Hoa, who is within here? *[Tib appears at the window.]*

Tib. I am within, Sir, what is your pleasure?

Kno. To know who is within besides yourself.

Tib. Why, Sir, you are no constable, I hope?

Kno. O, fear you the constable? Then I doubt not you have some guests within deserve that fear—I'll fetch him straight.

Tib. For Heaven's sake, Sir—

Kno. Go to, come tell me, is not young Kno'well here?

Tib. Young Kno'well! I know none such, Sir, o' my honesty.

Kno. Your honesty, dame! It flies too lightly from you. There is no way but fetch the constable.

Tib. The constable; the man is mad, I think.

Enter Cash and Dame Kately.

Cash. Hoa! who keeps house here?

Kno. O, this is the female copesmate of my son. Now shall I meet him straight. *[Aside.]*

Dame. Knock, Thomas, hard.

Cash. Hoa! good wife.

Tib. Why, what's the matter with you?

Dame. Why, woman, grieves it you to ope the door? Belike, you get something to keep it shut.

Tib. What mean these questions, pray you?

Dame. So strange you make it! Is not my husband here!

Kno. Her husband! *[Aside.]*

Dame. My tried and faithful husband, master Kately.

Tib. I hope he needs not to be tried here,

Dame.

Dame. Come hither, Cash—I see my turtle coming to his haunts; let us retire. [*They retire.*]

Kno. This must be some device to mock me withal, Soft—who is this?—Oh! 'tis my son disgus'd. I'll watch him, and surprize him.

Enter Kately muffled in a Cloak.

Kite. 'Tis truth, I see, there she skulks. But I will fetch her from her hold—I will—I tremble so, I scarce have power to do the justice Her infamy demands.

[*As Kately goes forward, Dame Kately and Kno'well lay bold of him.*]

Kno. Have I trapped you, youth? You cannot 'scape me now.

Dame. O, Sir! have I forestall'd your honest market?

Found your close walks! You stand amaz'd Now, do you? Ah, hide, hide your face for shame! I'faith, I am glad I have found you out at last. What is your jewel, trow? In, come let's see her; fetch

Forth the wanton dame—If she be fairer, In any honest judgment, than myself, I'll be content with it: but she is change; She feeds you fat, she sooths your appetite, And you are well. Your wife, an honest woman, Is meat twice sod to you, Sir. O, you traitor!

Kno. What mean you, woman? Let go your hold. I see the counterfeit—I am his father, and claim him as my own.

Kite. [*discovering himself.*] I am your cuckold, and claim my vengeance.

Dame. What, do you wrong me, and insult me too? Thou faithless man!

Kite. Out on thy more than strumpet's impudence! Steal'st thou thus to thy haunts? And have I taken Thy bawd and thee, and thy companion, This hoary-headed lecher, this old goat, Close at your villainy, and would'st thou 'scuse it.

With

With this stale harlot's jest, accusing me?
 O, old incontinent, dost thou not shame,
 To have a mind so hot; and to entice,
 And feed the enticement of a lustful woman?

Dame. Out, I defy thee, thou dissembling wretch!

Kite. Defy me, strumpet! Ask thy pander here,
 Can he deny it, or that wicked elder?

Kno. Why, hear you, Sir—

Cash. Master, 'tis in vain to reason while these
 passions blind you—I'm griev'd to see you thus.

Kite. Tut, tut, never speak, I see thro' ev'ry
 Veil you cast upon your treachery: but I have
 Done with you, and root you from my heart for ever.
 For you, Sir, thus I demand my honour's due;
 Resolv'd to cool your lust, or end my shame. [*Draws.*

Kno. What lunacy is this? Put up your sword, and
 undeceive yourself—No arm that e'er pois'd weapon
 can affright me. But I pity folly, nor cope with
 madness.

Kite. I will have proofs—I will—so you good wife-
 bawd, Cob's wife; and you, that make your husband
 such a monster; and you, young pander, and old cuc-
 kold maker, I'll ha' you every one before the justice—
 Nay, you shall answer it; I charge you go. Come
 forth, thou bawd.

[*Goes into the house and brings out Tib.*

Kno. Marry, with all my heart, Sir; I go wil-
 lingly.

Tho' I do taste this as a trick put on me,
 To punish my impertinent search; and justly;
 And half forgive my son for the device.

Kite. Come, will you go?

Dame. Go, to thy shame believe it.

Kite. Tho' shame and sorrow both my heart be-
 tide,

Come on---I must, and will be satisfy'd. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *Stocks-Market.**Enter Brainworm.*

Brain. Well, of all my disguises yet, now am I most like myself; being in this serjeant's gown. A man of my present profession never counterfeits, till he lays hold upon a debtor, and says, he 'rests him; for then he brings him to all manner of unrest. A kind of little kings we are, bearing the diminutive of a mace, made like a young artichoke, that always carries pepper and salt in itself. Well, I know not what danger I undergo by this exploit; pray Heaven I come well off!

Enter Bobadil and Mr. Matthew.

Mat. See, I think, yonder is the varlet, by his gown. 'Save you, friend; are not you here by appointment of justice Clement's man?

Brain. Yes, an'r please you, Sir, he told me two gentleman had willed him to procure a warrant from his master, which I have about me, to be served on one Downright.

Mat. It is honestly done of you both; and see where the party comes, you must arrest. Serve it upon him quickly, before he be aware——

Enter Mr. Stephen in Downright's Cloak.

Bob. Bear back, Master Matthew.

Brain. Master Downright, I arrest you i' the queen's name, and must carry you before a justice, by virtue of this warrant.

Step. Me, friend, I am no Downright, I. I am Master Stephen; you do not well to arrest me; I tell you truly. I am in nobody's bonds or books, I would you should know it. A plague on you heartily, for making me thus afraid before my time.

Brain. Why, now you are deceived, gentlemen?

Bob. He wears such a cloak, and that deceived us. ~~Mat.~~ See, here he comes indeed! this is he, officer.

Enter

Enter Downright.

Down. Why, how now, signor Gull! are you turned filcher of late? Come, deliver my cloak.

Step. Your cloak, Sir! I bought it even now in open market.

Brain. Master Downright, I have a warrant I must serve upon you, procured by these two gentlemen.

Down. These gentlemen! these rascals!

Brain. Keep the peace, I charge you in her majesty's name.

Down. I obey thee. What must I do, officer.

Brain. Go before master justice Clement, to answer what they can object against you, Sir. I will use you kindly, Sir.

Mat. Come, let's before, and make the justice, captain——

[*Exit.*

Bob. The varlet's a tall man, before heaven!

[*Exit.*

Down. Gull, you'll gi' me my cloke?

Step. Sir, I bought it, and I'll keep it.

Down. You will?

Step. Aye, that I will.

Down. Officer, there's thy fee, arrest him.

Brain. Master Stephen, I must arrest you.

Step. Arrest me, I scorn it; there, take your cloak, I'll none on't.

Down. Nay, that shall not serve your turn, now, Sir. Officer, I'll go with thee to the justice's. Bring him along.

Step. Why, is not here your cloak, what would you have?

Down. I'll ha' you answer it, Sir.

Brain. Sir, I'll take your word, and this gentleman's too, for his appearance.

Down. I'll ha' no words taken. Bring him along.

Brain. So, so, I have made a fair mash on't.

Step. Must I go?

Brain. I know no remedy, master Stephen.

G 2

Down.

Down. Come along before me here. I do not love your hanging look behind.

Step. Why, Sir, I hope you cannot hang me for it. Can he, fellow.

Brain. I think not, Sir. It is but a whipping matter, sure!

Step. Why, then let him do his worst, I am resolute. [Exit.

SCENE, *a hall in justice Clement's House.*

Enter Clement, Kno'well, Kitely, *Dame* Kitely, Tib, Cash, Cob, *and Servants.*

Clem. Nay, but stay, stay, give me leave. My chair, firrah. You, master Kno'well, say you went thither to meet your son.

Kno. Aye, Sir.

Clem. But who directed you thither?

Kno. That did mine own man, Sir.

Clem. Where is he?

Kno. Nay, I know not, now; I left him with your clerk; and appointed him to stay for me.

Clem. My clerk! About what time was this?

Kno. Marry, between one and two, as I take it.

Clem. And what time came my man with the false message to you, master Kitely?

Kite. After two, Sir.

Clem. Very good: but, Mrs. Kitely, how chance it that you were at Cob's? Ha!

Dame. An' please you, Sir, I'll tell you. My brother Well-bred told me, that Cob's house was a suspected place—

Clem. So it appears, methinks: but on.

Dame. And that my husband used thither daily.

Clem. No matter, so he us'd himself well, mistress.

Dame. True, Sir; but you know what grows by such haunts, oftentimes.

Clem. I see rank fruits of a jealous brain, mistress Kitely. But did you find your husband there, in that case, as you suspected?

Kite.

Kite. I found her there, Sir.

Clem. Did you so? That alters the case. Who gave you knowledge of your wife's being there?

Kite. Marry, that did my brother Well-bred.

Clem. How, Well-bred first tell her, then tell you after? Where is Well-bred?

Kite. Gone with my sister, Sir, I know not whither.

Clem. Why, this is a mere trick, a device; you are gulled in this most grossly, all! Alas, poor wench, wert thou suspected for this?

Tib. Yes, and't please you.

Clem. I smell mischief here, plot and contrivance, master Kitley. However, if you will step into the next room with your wife, and think coolly of matters, you'll find some trick has been played you—I fear there have been jealousies on both parts, and the wags have been merry with you.

Kite. I begin to feel it—I'll take your counsel—Will you go in, dame?

Dame. I will have justice, Mr. Kitley.

[*Exit Kite. and Dame.*]

Clem. You will be a woman, Mrs. Kitley, that I see—How now, what's the matter?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's a gentleman i' the court without, desires to speak with your worship.

Clem. A gentleman! What's he?

Serv. A foldier, Sir, he says.

Clem. A foldier! My sword, quickly. A foldier speak with me! Stand by, I will end your matters anon—Let the foldier enter. Now, Sir, what ha' you to say to me?

Enter Bobadil and Matthew.

Bob. By your worship's favour——

Clem. Nay, keep out, Sir, I know not your pretence; you send me word, Sir, you are a foldier? Why, Sir, you shall be answered here; here be them have been among foldiers. Sir, your pleasure?

Bob. Faith, Sir, so it is, this gentleman and myself,

self, have been most uncivilly wronged and beaten by one Downright, a coarse fellow about the town here ; and, for my own part, I protest, being a man in no sort given to this filthy humour of quarrelling, he hath assaulted me in the way of my peace ; despoiled me of mine honour ; disarmed me of my weapons ; and rudely laid me along in the open streets ; when I not so much as once offered to resist him.

Clem. O, God's precious ! Is this the foldier ? Lie there, my sword, 'twill make him swoon, I fear ; he is not fit to look on't, that will put up a blow.

Mat. An't, please your worship, he was bound to the peace.

Clem. Why, an' he were, Sirs, his hands were not bound, were they ?

Serv. There's one of the varlets of the city, Sir, has brought two gentlemen here, one upon your worship's warrant.

Clem. My warrant !

Serv. Yes, Sir, the officer says, procured by these two.

Clem. Bid him come in. Set by this picture. What, Mr. Downright ! are you brought at Mr. Freshwater's suit here ?

Enter Downright, Stephen, and Brain-worm.

Down. I'faith, Sir. And here's another, brought at my suit.

Clem. What are you, Sir ?

Step. A gentleman, Sir ? O, uncle !

Clem. Uncle ! Who, Master Kno'well ?

Kno. Aye, Sir, this is a wise kinsman of mine.

Step. God's my witness, uncle, I am wronged here monstrously, he charges me with stealing of his cloak, and would I might never stir, if I did not find it in the street by chance.

Down. O, did you find it, now ? You said you bought it ere-while.

Step. And you said I stole it. Nay, now my uncle is here, I'll do well enough with you.

Clem.

Clem. Well, let this breathe a-while. You that have cause to complain there, stand forth. Had you my warrant for this gentleman's apprehension.

Bob. Aye, an't please your worship.

Clem. Nay, do not speak in passion so. Where had you it.

Bob. Of your clerk, Sir.

Clem. That's well, an' my clerk can make warrants, and my hand not at 'em! Where is the warrant? Officer, have you it?

Brain. No, Sir, your worship's man, Master Formal, bid me do it for these gentlemen, and he would be my discharge.

Clem. Why, Master Downright, are you such a novice to be served, and never see the warrant!

Down. Sir, he did not serve it on me.

Clem. No, how then?

Down. Marry, Sir, he came to me, and said he must serve it, and he would use me kindly, and so—

Clem. O, God's pity, was it so, Sir? He must serve it? Give me a warrant, I must serve one too—you knave, you slave, you rogue, do you say you must, firrah? Away with him to the gaol. I'll teach you a trick for your *must*, Sir.

Brain. Good Sir, I beseech you be good to me.

Clem. Tell him, he shall to the gaol, away with him, I say.

Brain. Aye, Sir, if you will commit me, it shall be for committing more than this. I will not lose by my travel any grain of my fame certain.

[*Throws off his disguise.*]

Clem. How is this!

Kno. My man, Brain-worm!

Step. O, yes, uncle, Brainworm has been with my cousin Edward and I, all this day.

Clem. I told you all there was some device.

Brain. Nay, excellent justice, since I have laid myself thus open to you, now stand strong for me, both with your sword and your balance.

Clem. Body o' me, a merry knave! Give me a bowl

bowl of sack. If he belongs to you, Master Kno'-well, I bespeak your patience.

Brain. That is it I have most need of. Sir, if you'll pardon me only, I'll glory in all the rest of my exploits.

Kno. Sir, you know I love not to have my favours come hard from me. You have your pardon; though I suspect you shrewdly for being of counsel with my son against me.

Brain. Yes, faith, I have Sir; though you retained me doubly this morning for yourself; first, as Brain-worm, after, as Fitz-Sword. I was your reformed soldier. 'Twas I sent you to Cob's upon the errand without end.

Kno. Is it possible! Or that thou shouldst disguise thyself so as I should not know thee?

Brain. O, Sir! this has been the day of my metamorphosis; it is not that shape alone that I have run through to-day. I brought Master Kitley a message too, in the form of Master justice's man here, to draw him out o' the way, as well as your worship; while Master Well-bred might make a conveyance of mistress Bridget to my young master.

Kno. My son is not married, I hope.

Brain. Faith, Sir, they are both, as sure as love, a priest, and three thousand pounds, which is her portion, can make 'em; and by this time are ready to bespeak their wedding supper at the Wind-mill, except some friend here prevent 'em, and invite 'em home.

Clem. Marry, that will I, I thank thee for putting me in mind on't. Sirrah, go you and fetch them hither upon my warrant. Neither's friends have cause to be sorry, if I know the young couple aright. But I pray thee, what hast thou done with my man, Formal?

Brain. Faith, Sir, after some ceremony past, as making him drunk, first with story, and then with wine, but all in kindness, and stripping him to his shirt; I left him in that cool vein, departed, sold your
worship's

worship's warrant to these two, pawned his livery for that varlet's gown to serve it in ; and thus have brought myself, by my activity, to your worship's consideration.

Clem. And I will consider thee in a cup of sack. Here's to thee, which having drank off, this is my sentence, pledge me. Thou hast done, or assisted to nothing, in my judgment, but deserves to be pardoned for the wit o' the offence. Go into the next room ; let Master Kitely into this whimsical business, and if he does not forgive thee, he has less mirth in him, than an honest man ought to have. How now, who are these ?

Enter Ed. Kno'well, Well-bred, and Bridget.

O, the young company. Welcome, welcome. Give you joy. Nay, Mrs. Bridget, blush not, you are not so fresh a bride, but the news of it is come hither before you. Master Bridegroom, I have made your peace, give me your hand. So will I for the rest, ere you forsake my roof.

All. We are the more bound to your humanity, Sir.

Clem. Only these two have so little of man in 'em, they are no part of my care.

Step. And what shall I do ?

Clem. O ! I had lost a sheep, an' he had not bleated. Why, Sir, you shall give Mr. Downright his cloak ; and I will intreat him to take it. A trencher and a napkin you shall have in the buttery, and keep Cob and his wife company here ; whom I will intreat first to be reconciled ; and you to endeavour with your wit to keep 'em so.

Step. I'll do my best.

Clem. Call Master Kitely and his wife, there.

Enter Mr. Kitely and Dame Kitely.

Did not I tell you there was a plot against you ? Did I not smell it out, as a wise magistrate ought ? Have not you traced, have you not found it, Eh, Master Kitely ?

Kite.

Kite. I have—I confess my folly, and own I have deserv'd what I have suffered for it. The trial has been severe, but it is past. All I have to ask now, is, that as my folly is cured, and my persecutors forgiven, my shame may be forgotten.

Clem. That will depend upon yourself, Master Kite-ly; do not you yourself create the food for mischief, and the mischievous will not prey upon you. But come, let a general reconciliation go round, and let all discontents be laid aside. You, Mr. Downright, put off your anger. You, Master Kno'well, your cares. And do you, Master Kite-ly, and your wife, put off your jealousies.

Kite. Sir, thus they go from me: kiss me, my wife. See, what a drove of horns fly in the air, Wing'd with my cleansed, and my credulous breath; Watch 'em, suspicious eyes, watch where they fall, See, see, on heads, that think they've none at all. O, what a plenteous world of this will come, When air rains horns, all may be sure of some.

Clem. 'Tis well, 'tis well. This night we'll dedicate to friendship, love and laughter. Master bridegroom, take your bride, and lead, every one a fellow. Here is my mistress, Brainworm! to whom all my addresses of courtship shall have their reference: whose adventures this day, when our grand children shall hear to be made a fable, I doubt not but it shall find both spectators and applause.

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.



Robert del.

J. Smith sculps. & del. Theat. Mag. 1776.

MR. SMITH in the Character of ARCHER.

*Lady How d'ye, the last. Mistress I serv'd call'd me up one. Morn-
ing, Martin, go to my Lady all night, with my humble Service*

BELL'S EDITION.



THE
BEAUX STRATAGEM.

A COMEDY, by Mr. FARQUAHR.

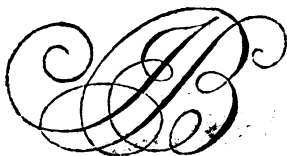
AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exeter-Exchange*, in the *Strand*,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at *York*.

MDCCCLXXVI.

P R O L O G U E.

WHEN strife disturbs, or sloth corrupts an age,
 Keen satire is the business of the stage.
 When the Plain Dealer writ, he lash'd those crimes
 Which then infested most—the modish times.
 But now when faction sleeps, and sloth is fled,
 And all our youth in active fields are bred;
 When thro' Great Britain's fair extensive round,
 The trumps of Fame the notes of Union sound;
 When Anna's sceptre points the laws their curse,
 And her example gives her precepts force;
 There scarce is room for satire; all our lays
 Must be, or songs of triumph, or of praise.
 But as in grounds best cultivated, tares
 And poppies rise among the golden ears;
 Our product so, fit for the field or school,
 Must mix with nature's favourite plant—a fool,
 A weed that has to twenty summers ran,
 Shoots up in stalk, and vegetates to man.
 Simpling our author goes from field to field,
 And culls such fools as may diversion yield.
 And, thanks to nature, there's no want of those,
 For rain or shine the thriving coxcomb grows.
 Follies to-night we shew ne'er lash'd before,
 Yet such as nature shews you ev'ry hour:
 Nor can the picture give a just offence,
 For fools are made for jests to men of sense.

A 2

Dramatis

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

Aimwell, { Two gen- } *Drury-Lane. Covent-Garden.*
Archer, { tlemen of } Mr. Packer. Mr. Wroughton.
 - { broken } Mr. Garrick. Mr. Lewis.
 - { fortunes, }

Sullen, a country
 blockhead, - - - Mr. Hurst. Mr. Clarke.

Sir Charles Freeman, a
 gentleman from
 London, - - - Mr. Brereton. Mr. Young.

Foigard, a French
 priest, - - - Mr. Moody. Mr. Fox.

Gibbet, a highway-
 man, - - - Mr. Bransby. Mr. Mahon.

Hounslow & Bagshot,
 his companions, -

Boniface, landlord of
 the inn, - - - Mr. Usher. Mr. Dunstall.

Scrub, servant to Mr.
Sullen, - - - Mr. Yates. Mr. Woodward.

W O M E N.

Lady Bountiful, an old
 civil country gen-
 tlewoman, that cures
 all distempers, - - Mrs. Cross. Mrs. Pitt.

Dorinda, lady Boun-
 tiful's daughter, - Miss Sherry. Mrs. Lessingham.

Mrs. Sullen, her daugh-
 ter-in-law, - - Mrs. Abington. Mrs. Bulkley.

Gipsy, maid to the
 ladies, - - - Mrs. Davis. Mrs. Willems.

Cherry, Boniface's
 daughter. Miss Jarratt. Miss Brown.

Scene, - Litchfield.

T H E

THE BEAUX STRATAGEM.

A C T I.

S C E N E, *An Inn.*

Enter Boniface running.

[*Bar-bell rings.*

BONIFACE.

Chamberlain, maid, Cherry, daughter Cherry !
all asleep, all dead ?

Enter Cherry, running.

Cher. Here, here. Why d'ye bawl so, father ?
D'ye think we have no ears ?

Bon. You deserve to have none, you young minx
—the company of the Warrington coach has stood in
the hall this hour, and nobody to shew them to their
chambers.

Cher. And let 'em wait, father ; there's neither red-
coat in the coach, nor footman behind it.

Bon. But they threaten to go to another inn to-
night.

Cher. That they dare not, for fear the coachman
shou'd overturn them to-morrow [*Ringing.*] Coming,
coming : here's the London coach arriv'd.

A 3

Enter

6 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Enter several people with trunks, band-boxes, with other luggage, and cross the stage.

Bon. Welcome, ladies.

Cher. Very welcome, gentlemen.—Chamberlain, shew the Lion and the Rose.

[Exit with the Company.]

Enter Aimwell in a riding habit, Archer as footman, carrying a portmanteau.

Bon. This way, this way, gentlemen.

Aim. Set down the things ; go to the stable, and see my horses well rubb'd.

Arch. I shall, Sir.

Aim. You're my landlord, I suppose ?

Bon. Yes, Sir, I'm old Will Boniface, pretty well known upon this road, as the saying is.

Aim. O, Mr. Boniface, your servant.

Bon. O, Sir—What will your honour please to drink, as the saying is ?

Aim. I have heard your town of Litchfield much fam'd for ale : I think I'll taste that.

Bon. Sir, I have now in my cellar ten tun of the best ale in Staffordshire : 'tis smooth as oil, sweet as milk, clear as amber, and strong as brandy, and will be just fourteen years old the fifth day of next March, old style.

Aim. You're very exact, I find, in the age of your ale.

Bon. As punctual, Sir, as I am in the age of my children : I'll shew you such ale.—Here, tapster, broach number 1706, as the saying is.—Sir, you shall taste my anno domini—I have liv'd in Litchfield, man and boy, above eight-and-fifty years, and, I believe, have not consumed eight-and-fifty ounces of meat.

Aim. At a meal, you mean, if one may guess your sense by your bulk.

Bon. Not in my life, Sir : I have fed purely upon ale : I have eat my ale, drank my ale, and I always sleep upon ale.

Enter

BEAUX STRATAGEM. 7

Enter Tapster with a tankard.

Now, Sir, you shall see [*filling it out.*] Your worship's health : Ha ! delicious, delicious——fancy it Burgundy, only fancy it, and 'tis worth ten shillings a quart.

Aim. [*drinks.*] 'Tis confounded strong.

Bon. Strong ! It must be so, or how wou'd we be strong that drink it ?

Aim. And have you lived so long upon this ale, landlord ?

Bon. Eight-and-fifty years, upon my credit, Sir ; but it kill'd my wife, poor woman ! as the saying is.

Aim. How came that to pass ?

Bon. I don't know how, Sir ; she would not let the ale take its natural course, Sir ; she was for qualifying it every now and then with a dram, as the saying is ; and an honest gentleman that came this way from Ireland, made her a present of a dozen bottles of usquebaugh——but the poor woman was never well after ; but, however, I was obliged to the gentleman, you know.

Aim. Why, was it the usquebaugh that kill'd her ?

Bon. My lady Bountiful said so——she, good lady, did what could be done ; she cur'd her of three tympanies, but the fourth carried her off ; but she's happy, and I'm contented, as the saying is.

Aim. Who's that lady Bountiful, you mentioned ?

Bon. Ods my life, Sir, we'll drink her health [*drinks.*] My lady Bountiful is one of the best of women : her last husband, Sir Charles Bountiful, left her worth a thousand pounds a year ; and I believe, she lays out one half on't in charitable uses for the good of her neighbours ; she cures rheumatisms, ruptures, and broken shins in men : ' green sickness, obstructions, ' and fits of the mother in women ; ' the king's evil, chin-cough, and chilblains in children : in short, she has cured more people in and about Litchfield within ten years, than the doctors have kill'd in twenty, and that's a bold word.

Aim.

8 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Aim. Has the lady been any other way useful in her generation?

Bon. Yes, Sir, she has a daughter, by Sir Charles, the finest woman in all our county, and the greatest fortune; she has a son too, by her first husband, 'squire Sullen, who married a fine lady from London t'other day; if you please, Sir, we'll drink his health.

Aim. What sort of a man is he?

Bon. Why, Sir, the man's well enough; says little, thinks less, and does—nothing at all, faith; but he's a man of great estate, and values nobody.

Aim. A sportsman, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, Sir, he's a man of pleasure: he plays at whist, and smoaks his pipe eight-and-forty hours together sometimes.

Aim. A fine sportsman, truly! and marry'd you say?

Bon. Ay, and to a curious woman, Sir.—But he's a—He wants it here, Sir. [*Pointing to his forehead.*]

Aim. He has it there, you mean.

Bon. That's none of my business, he's my landlord, and so a man, you know, wou'd not—But I cod, he's no better than—Sir, my humble service to you. (*Drinks.*) Tho' I value not a farthing what he can do to me; I pay him his rent at quarter-day; I have a good running trade; I have but one daughter, and I can give her—But no matter for that.

Aim. You're very happy, Mr. Boniface; pray, what other company have you in town?

Bon. A power of fine ladies; and then we have the French officers.

Aim. O that's right, you have a good many of those gentlemen: pray, how do you like their company?

Bon. So well, as the saying is, that I could wish we had as many more of 'em; they're full of money, and pay double for every thing they have; they know, Sir, that we paid good round taxes for the taking of 'em, and so we are willing to reimburse us a little: one of 'em lodges in my house.

Enter

Enter Archer.

Arch. Landlord, there are some French gentlemen below that ask for you.

Bon. I'll wait on 'em——Does your master stay long in town, as the saying is? [*To Archer.*]

Arch. I can't tell, as the saying is.

Bon. Come from London?

Arch. No.

Bon. Going to London, may hap?

Arch. No.

Bon. An odd fellow this! (*Bar-bell rings.*) I beg your worship's pardon, I'll wait on you in half a minute. [*Exit.*]

Aim. The coast's clear, I see——Now, my dear Archer, welcome to Litchfield.

Arch. I thank thee, my dear brother in iniquity.

Aim. Iniquity! prithee, leave canting; you need not change your stile with your dress.

Arch. Don't mistake me, Aimwell, for 'tis still my maxim, that there's no scandal like rags, nor any crime so shameful as poverty. Men must not be poor; idleness is the root of all evil; the world's wide enough, let 'em bustle: Fortune has taken the weak under her protection, but men of sense are left to their industry.

Aim. Upon which topic we proceed, and, I think, luckily hitherto. Would not any man swear now that I am a man of quality, and you my servant, when if our intrinsic value were known——

Arch. Come, come, we are the men of intrinsic value, who can strike our fortunes out of ourselves, whose worth is independent of accidents in life, or revolutions in government: we have heads to get money, and hearts to spend it.

Aim. As to our hearts, I grant ye they are as willing tits as any within twenty degrees; but I can have no great opinion of our heads from the service they have done us hitherto, unless it be that they brought us from London hither to Litchfield, made me a lord, and you my servant.

Arch.

Arch. That's more than you could expect already.
—But what money have we left?

Aim. But two hundred pounds.

Arch. And our horses, cloaths, rings, &c. Why, we have very good fortunes now for moderate people; and let me tell you, that this two hundred pounds, with the experience that we are now masters of, is a better estate than the ten thousand we have spent—our friends, indeed, began to suspect that our pockets were low,; but we came off with flying colours, shewed no signs of want either in word or deed.

Aim. Ay, and our going to Bruffels was a good pretence enough for our sudden disappearing; and, I warrant you, our friends imagine that we are gone a volunteering.

Arch. Why 'faith if this project fails, it must e'en come to that. I am for venturing one of the hundreds, if you will, upon this knight errantry; but in case it should fail, we'll reserve the other to carry us to some counterescarp, where we may die as we liv'd, in a blaze.

Aim. With all my heart; and we have liv'd justly, Archer; we can't say that we have spent our fortunes, but that we have enjoy'd 'em.

Arch. Right; so much pleasure for so much money; we have had our penny-worths; and had I millions I would go to the same market again. O London, London! Well, we have had our share, and let us be thankful: past pleasures, for ought I know, are best, such as we are sure of: those to come may disappoint us. But you command for the day, and so I submit.—At Nottingham, you know, I am to be master.

Aim. And at Lincoln I again.

Arch. Then, at Norwich I mount, which, I think, shall be our last stage; for if we fail there, we'll embark for Holland; bid adieu to Venus, and welcome Mars.

Aim. A match! [*Enter Boniface.*] Mum.

Ben.

BEAUX STRATAGEM. 11

Bon. What will your worship please to have for supper?

Aim. What have you got?

Bon. Sir, we have a delicate piece of beef in the pot, and a pig at the fire.

Aim. Good supper-meat, I must confess—I can't eat beef, landlord.

Arch. And I hate pig.

Aim. Hold your prating, Sirrah! Do you know who you are? *[Aside.*

Bon. Please to bespeak something else; I have every thing in the house.

Aim. Have you any veal?

Bon. Veal! Sir, we had a delicate loin of veal on Wednesday last.

Aim. Have you got any fish, or wild-fowl?

Bon. As for fish, truly, Sir, we are an inland town, and indifferently provided with fish, that's the truth on't; but then for wild-fowl!—we have a delicate couple of rabbits.

Aim. Get me the rabbits fricasseed.

Bon. Fricasseed! Lard, Sir, they'll eat much better smother'd with onions.

Arch. Pshaw! Rot your onions.

Aim. Again, Sirrah!—Well, landlord, what you please; but hold, I have a small charge of money, and your house is so full of strangers, that I believe it may be safer in your custody than mine; for when this fellow of mine gets drunk, he minds nothing—Here, sirrah, reach me the strong box.

Arch. Yes, Sir——this will give us reputation.

[Aside. Brings the box.]

Aim. Here, landlord, the locks are sealed down, both for your security and mine; it holds somewhat above two hundred pounds: if you doubt it, I'll count them to you after supper; but be sure you lay it where I may have it at a minute's warning; for my affairs are a little dubious at present; perhaps I may be gone in half an hour; perhaps I may be your guest till the best part of that be spent; and pray

order your hostler to keep my horses ready saddled : but one thing above the rest, I must beg that you will let this fellow have none of your Anno Domini, as you call it;—for he's the most insufferable set—Here, firrah, light me to my chamber.

Arch. Yes, Sir. [*Exit, lighted by Archer,*

Bon. Cherry, daughter Cherry !

Enter Cherry.

Cher. D'ye call, father.

Bon. Ay, child, you must lay by this box for the gentleman, 'tis full of money.

Cher. Money ! is all that money ! why sure, father, the gentleman comes to be chosen parliament-man. Who is he ?

Bon. I don't know what to make of him ; he talks of keeping his horses ready saddled, and of going perhaps at a minute's warning, or of staying perhaps till the best part of this be spent.

Cher. Ay ! ten to one, father, he's a highwayman.

Bon. A highwayman ! Upon my life, girl, you have hit it, and this box is some new purchased booty.—Now, could we find him out, the money were ours.

Cher. He don't belong to our gang.

Bon. What horses have they ?

Cher. The master rides upon a black.

Bon. A black ! ten to one the man upon the black mare ; and since he don't belong to our fraternity, we may betray him with a safe conscience. I don't think it lawful to harbour any rogues but my own. Look'ye, child, as the saying is, we must go cunningly to work ; proofs we must have ; the gentleman's servant loves drink, I'll ply him that way ; and ten to one he loves a wench ; you must work him t'other way.

Cher. Father, would you have me give my secret for his ?

Bon. Consider, child, there's two hundred pounds to boot. [*Ringings without.*] Coming, coming—Child, mind your business.

[*Exit Bon.*

Cher.

Cher. What a rogue is my father!—My father! I deny it——My mother was a good, generous, free-hearted woman, and I can't tell how far her good-nature might have extended for the good of her children. This landlord of mine, for I think I can call him no more, would betray his guest and debauch his daughter into the bargain.——by a footman too!

Enter Archer.

Arch. What footman, pray, mistress, is so happy as to be the subject of your contemplation?

Cher. Whoever he is, friend, he'll be but little the better for't.

Arch. I hope so, for I'm sure you did not think of me.

Cher. Suppose I had!

Arch. Why then you're but even with me; for the minute I came in, I was considering in what manner I should make love to you.

Cher. Love to me, friend!

Arch. Yes, child.

Cher. Child! Manners; if you kept a little more distance, friend, it would become you much better.

Arch. Distance! good night, sauce-box. [*Going.*]

Cher. A pretty fellow! I like his pride—Sir; pray, Sir; you see Sir [*Archer returns.*] I have the credit to be trusted with your master's fortune here, which sets me a degree above his footman. I hope, Sir, you an't affronted.

Arch. Let me look you full in the face, and I'll tell you whether you can affront me or no.——'Sdeath, child, you have a pair of delicate eyes, and you don't know what to do with 'em.

Cher. Why, Sir, don't I see every body?

Arch. Ay, but if some women had 'em, they would kill every body,——Prithee instruct me; I would fain make love to you, but I don't know what to say.

Cher. Why, did you never make love to any body before?

Arch. Never to a person of your figure, I can assure you, Madam; my addresses have always been

14 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

confined to persons within my own sphere; I never aspir'd so high before.

[Archer sings.

*But you look so bright,
And are dress'd so tight,
That a man would swear you're right,
As arm was e'er laid over.*

*Such an air
You freely wear
To ensnare,
As makes each guest a lover :
Since then, my dear, I'm your guest,
Prithee give me of the best
Of what is ready dress'd.
Since then my dear, &c.*

Cher. 'What can I think of this man?' [*Aside.*]
Will you give me that song, Sir?

Arch. Ay, my dear; take it while it is warm. [*Kisses her.*] Death and Fire! her lips are honey-combs.

Cher. And I wish there had been a swarm of bees too, to have stung you for your impudence.

Arch. There's a swarm of Cupids, my little Venus, that has done the business much better.

Cher. This fellow is misbegotten as well as I.
[*Aside.*] What's your name, Sir?

Arch. Name! I gad, I have forgot it. [*Aside.*] Oh, Martin.

Cher. Where was you born?

Arch. In St. Martin's parish.

Cher. What was your father?

Arch. Of——of—— St. Martin's parish.

Cher. Then, friend, good night.

Arch. I hope not.

Cher. You may depend upon't.

Arch. Upon what?

Cher. That you're very impudent.

Arch. That you are very handsome.

Cher. That you're a footman.

Arch. That you're an angel.

Cher.

Cher. I shall be rude.

Arch. So shall I.

Cher. Let go my hand.

Arch. Give me a kiss. [*Kisses her.*]

Boniface calls without, Cherry, Cherry.

Cher. I'm —— My father calls, you plaguy devil, how durst you stop my breath so? — Offer to follow me one step, if you dare. [*Exit.*]

Arch. A fair challenge, by this light; this is a pretty fair opening of an adventure; but we are knight-errants, and so Fortune be our guide. [*Exit.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE, a gallery in Lady Bountiful's House.

Mrs. Sullen and Dorinda meeting.

DORINDA.

MORROW, my dear sister; are you for church this morning?

Mrs. Sul. Any where to pray; for heaven alone can help me: but I think, Dorinda, there's no form of prayer in the liturgy against bad husbands.

Dor. But there's a form of law at Doctors Commons; and I swear, sister Sullen, rather than see you thus continually discontented, I would advise you to apply to that: for besides the part that I bear in your vexatious broils, as being sister to the husband, and friend to the wife, your examples give me such an impression of matrimony, that I shall be apt to condemn my person to a long vacation all its life. But supposing, Madam, that you brought it to a case of
B 2
separa-

separation, what can you urge against your husband ? My brother is, first, the most constant man alive.

Mrs. Sul. The most constant husband, I grant ye.

Dor. He never sleeps from you.

Mrs. Sul. No, he always sleeps with me.

Dor. He allows you a maintenance suitable to your quality.

Mrs. Sul. A maintenance ! Do you take me, Madam, for an hospital child, that I must sit down and bless my benefactors for meat, drink, and clothes ? As I take it, Madam, I brought your brother ten thousand pounds, out of which I might expect some pretty things called pleasures.

Dor. Your share in all the pleasures the country affords.

Mrs. Sul. Country pleasures ! Racks and torments ! Dost think, child, that my limbs were made for leaping of ditches, and clambering over files. Or, that my parents, wisely foreseeing my future happiness in country pleasures, had early instructed me in rural accomplishments, of drinking fat ale, playing at whist, and smoaking tobacco with my husband ; or of spreading of plaisters, brewing of diet drinks, and stilling rosemary-water, with the good old gentlewoman, my mother-in law ?

Dor. I'm sorry, Madam, that it is not more in our power to divert you ; I could wish, indeed, that our entertainments were a little more polite, or your taste a little less refined ; but pray, Madam, how came the poets and philosophers, that laboured so much in hunting after pleasure, to place it at last in country life ?

Mrs. Sul. Because they wanted money, child, to find out the pleasures of the town. Did you ever hear of a poet or philosopher worth ten thousand pounds ? If you can shew me such a man, I'll lay you fifty pounds, you'll find him somewhere within the weekly bills. Not that I disapprove rural pleasures, as the poets have painted them in their landscapes ; every Phillis has her Corydon ; every murmuring stream, and every flowery mead, gives fresh alarm to love. Besides,

Sides, you'll find, that their couples were never married. But yonder I see my Corydon, and a sweet swain it is, heaven knows! Come, Dorinda, don't be angry, he's my husband, and your brother, and between both is he not a sad brute?

Dor. I have nothing to say to your part of him, you're the best judge.

Mrs. Sul. O, sister, sister! if ever you marry, beware of a sullen, silent sot, one that's always musing, but never thinks.—There's some diversion in a talking blockhead; and since a woman must wear chains, I would have the pleasure of hearing 'em rattle a little. Now you shall see; but take this by the way; he came home this morning at his usual hour of four, wakened me out of a sweet dream of something else, by tumbling over the tea-table, which he broke all to pieces. After his man and he had rolled about the room, like sick passengers in a storm, he comes flounce into bed, dead as a salmon into a fishmonger's basket; his feet cold as ice; his breath hot as a furnace; and his hands and his face as greasy as his flannel night cap—Oh, matrimony! matrimony!—He tosses up the clothes with a barbarous swing over his shoulders, disorders the whole œconomy of my bed, leaves me half-naked, and my whole night's comfort is the tuneable serenade of that wakeful nightingale, his nose.—O, the pleasure of counting the melancholy clock by a snoring husband!—But now, sister, you shall see how handsomely, being a well-bred man, he will beg my pardon.

Enter Sullen.

Sul. My head aches consumedly.

Mrs. Sul. Will you be pleased, my dear, to drink tea with us this morning; it may do your head good?

Sul. No.

Dor. Coffee, brother?

Sul. Pshaw!

Mrs. Sul. Will you please to dress, and go to church with me? the air may help you.

B 3

Sul.

Sul. Scrub!

Enter Scrub.

Scrub. Sir!

Sul. What day o'th' week is this?

Scrub. Sunday, an't please your worship.

Sul. Sunday! bring me a dram; and d'ye hear, set out the venison-pasty and a tankard of strong beer upon the hall table, I'll go to breakfast. [*Going.*]

Dor. Stay, stay, brother, you shan't get off so; you were very naughty last night, and must make your wife reparation. Come, come, brother, won't you ask pardon?

Sul. For what?

Dor. For being drunk last night.

Sul. I can afford it, can't I?

Mrs. Sul. But I can't, Sir.

Sul. Then you may let it alone.

Mrs. Sul. But I must tell you, Sir, that this is not to be borne.

Sul. I'm glad on't.

Mrs. Sul. What is the reason, Sir, that you use me thus inhumanly?

Sul. Scrub!

Scrub. Sir!

Sul. Get things ready to shave my head. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Sul. Have a care of coming near his temples, Scrub, for fear you meet something there that may turn the edge of your razor. [*Exit Scrub.*] Inveterate stupidity! Did you ever know so hard, so obstinate a spleen as his? O, sister, sister! I shall never have any good of the beast till I get him to town; London, dear London! is the place for managing and breaking a husband.

Dor. And has not a husband the same opportunities there for humbling a wife?

Mrs. Sul. No, no, child; 'tis a standing maxim in conjugal discipline, that when a man would enslave his wife, he hurries her into the country; and when a lady would be arbitrary with her husband, she weedles her

her booby up to town.—A man dare not play the tyrant in London, because there are so many examples to encourage the subject to rebel. O, Dorinda, Dorinda! a fine woman may do any thing in London. O' my conscience, she may raise an army of forty thousand men.

Dor. I fancy, sister, you have a mind to be trying your power that way here in Litchfield; you have drawn the French count to your colours already.

Mrs. Sul. The French are a people that can't live without their gallantries.

Dor. And some English that I know, sister, are not averse to such amusements.

Mrs. Sul. Well, sister, since the truth must out, it may do as well now as hereafter; I think one way to rouse my lethargic, sottish husband, is to give him a rival; security begets negligence in all people, and men must be alarmed to make 'em alert in their duty. Women are like pictures, of no value in the hands of a fool, till he hears men of sense bid high for the purchase.

Dor. This might do, sister, if my brother's understanding were to be convinced into a passion for you; but, I believe, there's a natural aversion on his side; and I fancy, sister, that you don't come much behind him, if you dealt fairly.

Mrs. Sul. I own it; we are united contradictions, fire and water. But I could be contented, with a great many other wives, to humour the censorious vulgar, and give the world an appearance of living well with my husband, could I bring him but to dissemble a little kindness to keep me in countenance.

Dor. But how do you know, sister, but that instead of rousing your husband by this artifice to a counterfeit kindness, he should awake in a real fury?

Mrs. Sul. Let him.—If I can't entice him to the one, I would provoke him to the other.

Dor. But how must I behave myself between ye?

Mrs. Sul. You must assist me.

Dor. What, against my own brother?

Mrs.

20 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Mrs. *Sul.* He's but half a brother, and I'm your entire friend. If I go a step beyond the bounds of honour, leave me; till then, I expect you should go along with me in every thing. The count is to dine here to day.

Dor. 'Tis a strange thing, sister, that I can't like that man.

Mrs. *Sul.* You like nothing; your time is not come. Love and death have their fatalities, and strike home one time or other.—You'll pay for all one day, I warrant ye.—But come, my lady's tea is ready, and 'tis almost church-time. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *the Inn.*

Enter Aimwell dress'd, and Archer.

Aim. And was she the daughter of the house?

Arch. The landlord is so blind as to think so; but I dare swear she has better blood in her veins.

Aim. Why dost think so?

Arch. Because the baggage has a pert *je-ne-sçay-quoi*; she reads plays, keeps a monkey, and is troubled with vapours.

Aim. By which discoveries I guess that you know more of her.

Arch. Not yet, faith. The lady gives herself airs, forsooth; nothing under a gentleman.

Aim. Let me take her in hand.

Arch. Say one word more o'that, and I'll declare myself, spoil your sport there, and every where else. Look ye, Aimwell, every man in his own sphere.

Aim. Right, and therefore you must pimp for your master.

Arch. In the usual forms, good Sir, after I have served myself—But to our business. You are so well dress'd, Tom, and make so handsome a figure, that I fancy you may do execution in a country church; the exterior part strikes first, and you're in the right to make that impression favourable.

Aim.

BEAUX STRATAGEM. 21

Aim. There's something in that which may turn to advantage. The appearance of a stranger in a country church, draws as many gazers as a blazing star; no sooner he comes into the cathedral, but a train of whispers runs buzzing round the congregation in a moment.—Who is he? Whence comes he? Do you know him!—Then I, Sir, tips me the verger half a crown; he pockets the simony, and inducts me into the best pew in the church; I pull out my snuff-box, turn myself round, bow to the bishop, or the dean, if he be the commanding officer, single out a beauty, rivet both my eyes to hers, set my nose a bleeding by the strength of imagination, and shew the whole church my concern, by my endeavouring to hide it; after the sermon, the whole town gives me to her for a lover, and by persuading the lady that I am dying for her, the tables are turned, and she in good earnest falls in love with me.

Arch. There's nothing in this, Tom, without a precedent; but instead of riveting your eyes to a beauty, try to fix them upon a fortune; that's our business at present.

Aim. Pshaw! no woman can be a beauty without a fortune. Let me alone for a mark's-man.

Arch. Tom!

Aim. Aye!

Arch. When were you at church before, pray?

Aim. Um—I was there at the coronation.

Arch. And how can you expect a blessing by going to church now?

Aim. Blessing! Nay, Frank, I ask but for a wife.

[Exit.

Arch. Truly, the man is not very unreasonable in his demands.

[Exit at the opposite door.

Enter Boniface and Cherry.

Bon. Well, daughter, as the saying is, have you brought Martin to confess?

Cher. Pray, father, don't put me upon getting any thing

thing out of a man ; I'm but young, you know, father, and don't understand wheedling.

Bon. Young ! why you jade, as the saying is, can any woman wheedle that is not young ? Your mother was useless at five and twenty. Would you make your mother a whore, and me a tuckold, as the saying is ? I tell you, his silence confesses it, and his master spends his money so freely, and is so much a gentleman every manner of way, that he must be a highwayman.

Enter Gibbet in a cloak.

Gib. Landlord, landlord, is the coast clear ?

Bon. O, Mr. Gibbet, what's the news ?

Gib. No matter, ask no questions, all's fair and honourable ; here, my dear Cherry, [*Gives her a bag.*] two hundred sterling pounds, as good as ever hanged or saved a rogue ; lay 'em by with the rest ; and here—three wedding—or mourning rings, 'tis much the same, you know.—Here, two silver hilted swords ; I took those from fellows that never shew any part of their swords but the hilts. Here is a diamond necklace, which the lady hid in the privatest place in the coach, but I found it out. This gold watch I took from a pawnbroker's wife, it was left in her hands by a person of quality, there's the arms upon the case.

Cher. But who had you the money from ?

Gib. Ah ! poor woman ! I pitied her ;—from a poor lady just eloped from her husband ; she had made up her cargo, and was bound for Ireland, as hard as she could drive ; she told me of her husband's barbarous usage, and so, faith, I left her half a crown. But I had almost forgot my dear Cherry, I have a present for you.

Cher. What is't ?

Gib. A pot of ceruse, my child, that I took out of a lady's under petticoat pocket.

Cher. What, Mr. Gibbet, do you think that I paint ?

Gib. Why, you jade, your betters do ; I'm sure the

the lady that I took it from had a coronet upon her handkerchief—Here, take my cloak, and go secure the premisses.

Cher. I will secure 'em. [Exit.]

Bon. But heark ye, where's Hounslow and Bagshot?

Gib. They'll be here to-night.

Bon. D'ye know of any other gentleman o' the pad on this road?

Gib. No.

Bon. I fancy that I have two that lodge in the house just now.

Gib. The devil! how d'ye smook 'em?

Bon. Why, the one is gone to church.

Gib. To church! That's suspicious, I must confess.

Bon. And the other is now in his master's chamber; he pretends to be a servant to the other; we'll call him out, and pump him a little.

Gib. With all my heart.

Bon. Mr. Martin! Mr. Martin!

Enter Archer combing a periwig, and singing.

Gib. The roads are consumed deep, I'm as dirty as Old Brentford at Christmas.—A good pretty fellow that; whose servant are you, friend?

Arch. My master's.

Gib. Really?

Arch. Really.

Gib. That's much.—That fellow has been at the bar by his evasions:—But pray, Sir, what is your master's name?

Arch. Tall, all, dall.—[Sings and combs the periwig.] This is the most obstinate curl—

Gib. I ask you his name?

Arch. Name, Sir—Tall, all, dall—I never asked him his name in my life—Tall, all, dall.

Bon. What think you now?

Gib. Plain, plain; he talks now as if he were before

fore a judge. But pray, friend, which way does your master travel?

Arch. A horseback.

Gib. Very well again; an old offender—Right--- But I mean does he go upwards or downwards?

Arch. Downwards, I fear, Sir—Tall, lall.

Gib. I'm afraid thy fate will be a contrary way.

Bon. Ha, ha, ha! Mr. Martin, you're very arch. —This gentleman is only travelling towards Chester, and would be glad of your company, that's all.—Come, captain, you'll stay to-night, I suppose; I'll shew you a chamber—Come, captain.

Gib. Farewel, friend— [Exeunt.

Arch. Captain, your servant.—Captain! a pretty fellow! 'Sdeath! I wonder that the officers of the army don't conspire to beat all scoundrels in red but their own.

Enter Cherry.

Cher. Gone, and Martin here! I hope he did not listen: I would have the merit of the discovery all my own, because I would oblige him to love me. [Aside.] Mr. Martin, who was that man with my father?

Arch. Some recruiting serjeant, or whipp'd-out trooper, I suppose.

Cher. All's safe, I find. [Aside.

Arch. Come, my dear, have you conn'd over the catechise I taught you last night?

Cher. Come, question me.

Arch. What is love?

Cher. Love is I know not what, it comes I know not how, goes I know not when.

Arch. Very well, an apt scholar. [Chucks her under the chin.] Where does love enter?

Cher. Into the eyes.

Arch. And where go out?

Cher. I won't tell you.

Arch. What are the objects of that passion!

Cher. Youth, beauty, and clean linen.

Arch.

Arch. The reason.

Cher. The two first are fashionable in nature, and the third at court.

Arch. That's my dear. What are the signs and tokens of that passion?

Cher. A stealing look, a stammering tongue, words improbable, designs impossible, and actions impracticable.

Arch. That's my good child; kiss me——What must a lover do to obtain his mistress?

Cher. He must adore the person that disdains him, he must bribe the chambermaid that betrays him, and court the footman that laughs at him!——He must, he must——

Arch. Nay, child, I must whip you if you don't mind your lesson; he must treat his——

Cher. O! aye. He must treat his enemies with respect, his friends with indifference, and all the world with contempt; he must suffer much, and fear more; he must desire much, and hope little; in short, he must embrace his ruin, and throw himself away.

Arch. Had ever man so hopeful a pupil as mine! Come, my dear; why is love called a riddle?

Cher. Because being blind, he leads those that see; and though a child, he governs a man.

Arch. Mighty well---And why is love pictured blind?

Cher. Because the painters, out of their weakness or the privilege of their art, chose to hide those eyes they could not draw.

Arch. That's my dear little scholar, kiss me again---And why should love, that's a child, govern a man?

Cher. Because that a child is the end of love.

Arch. And so ends love's catechism——And now, my dear, we'll go in and make my master's bed.

Cher. Hold, hold, Mr. Martin——you have taken a great deal of pains to instruct me, and what d'ye think I have learned by it?

VOL. II.

C

Arch.

Arch. What?

Cher. That your discourse and your habit are contradictions, and it would be nonsense in me to believe you a footman any longer.

Arch. 'Oons, what a witch it is!

Cher. Depend upon this, Sir, nothing in that garb shall ever tempt me: for though I was born to servitude, I hate it.—Own your condition, swear you love me, and then ———

Arch. And then we shall go make my master's bed?

Cher. Yes.

Arch. You must know then, that I am born a gentleman, my education was liberal; but I went to London a younger brother, fell into the hands of sharpers, who stript me of my money, my friends disowned me, and now my necessity brings me to what you see.

Cher. Then take my hand——promise to marry me before you sleep, and I'll make you master of two thousand pounds.

Arch. How!

Cher. Two thousand pounds that I have this minute in my own custody; so throw off your livery this instant, and I'll go find a parson.

Arch. What said you? a parson.

Cher. What! Do you scruple?

Arch. Scruple! No, no, but---two thousand pounds you say?

Cher. And better.

Arch. 'Sdeath, what shall I do?——But heark'e, child, what need you make me master of yourself and money, when you may have the same pleasure out of me, and still keep your fortune in your own hands?

Cher. Then you won't marry me?

Arch. I would marry you, but ———

Cher. O, sweet Sir, I'm your humble servant, you're fairly caught. Would you persuade me that any gentleman who could bear the scandal of wearing a livery, wou'd refuse two thousand pounds, let the
cop-

BEAUX STRATAGEM. 27

condition be what it wou'd---No, no, Sir---But I hope you'll pardon the freedom I have taken, since it was only to inform myself of the respect that I ought to pay to you. [Going.

Arch. Fairly bit, by Jupiter!--Hold, hold! and have you actually two thousand pounds?

Cher. Sir, I have my secrets as well as you---when you please to be more open, I shall be more free; and be assured that I have discoveries that will match yours, be they what they will.---In the mean while be satisfied, that no discovery I make shall ever hurt you; but beware of my father.--- [Exit.

Arch. So---we're like to have as many adventures in our inn, as Don Quixote had in his.---Let me see---two thousand pounds! If the wench wou'd promise to die when the money were spent, I gad, one wou'd marry her; but the fortune may go off in a year or two, and the wife may live-----Lord knows how long! Then an inn-keeper's daughter! Aye, that's the devil---there my pride brings me off.

*For whatso'er the sages charge on pride,
The angels fall, and twenty faults beside;
On earth, I'm sure, 'mong us of mortal calling,
Pride saves man oft, and woman too, from falling.* [Exit.

END of the SECOND ACT.

C 2

ACT

A C T III.

SCENE, *Lady Bountiful's House.**Enter Mrs. Sullen and Dorinda.*

Mrs. SULLEN.

HA, ha, ha, my dear sister! let me embrace thee, now we are friends indeed; for I shall have a secret of yours, as a pledge for mine—Now you'll be good for something, I shall have you conversable in the subjects of the sex.

Dor. But do you think that I am so weak as to fall in love with a fellow at first sight?

Mrs. Sul. Pshaw! now you spoil all; why shou'd not we be as free in our friendships as the men? I warrant you, the gentleman has got to his confident already, has avowed his passion, toasted your health, called you ten thousand angels, has run over your lips, eyes, neck, shape, air, and every thing, in a description that warms their mirth to a second enjoyment.

Dor. Your hand, sister: I a'n't well.

Mrs. Sul. So—she's breeding already—Come, child, up with it—hem a little—so—Now tell me, don't you like the gentleman that we saw at church just now?

Dor. The man's well enough.

Mrs. Sul. Well enough! Is he not a demi-god, a Narcissus, a star, the man i'the moon?

Dor. O, sister, I'm extremely ill.

Mrs. Sul. Shall I send to your mother, child, for a little cephalic plaister to put to the soles of your feet? Or shall I send to the gentleman for something for you?—Come, unbosom yourself—the man is perfectly a pretty fellow; I saw him when he first came into church.

Dor.

Dor. I saw him too; sister, and with an air that shone, methought, like rays about his person.

Mrs. Sull. Well said, up with it.

Dor. No forward coquet behaviour, no air to set him off, no study'd looks, nor artful posture,—but nature did it all——

Mrs. Sul. Better and better — One touch more—Come——

Dor. But then his looks—did you observe his eyes?

Mrs. Sul. Yes, yes, I did — his eyes; well, what of his eyes?

Dor. Sprightly, but not wand'ring; they seemed to view, but never gaz'd on any thing but me—and then his looks so humble were, and yet so noble, that they aimed to tell me, that he cou'd with pride die at my feet, though he scorn'd slavery any where else.

Mrs. Sul. The phyfic works purely.—How d'ye find yourself now, my dear?

Dor. Hem! Much better, my dear—Oh, here comes our Mercury!

Enter Scrub.

Dor. Well, Scrub, what news of the gentleman?

Scrub. Madam, I have brought you a whole packet of news.

Dor. Open it quickly; come.

Scrub. In the first place, I enquired who the gentleman was? They told me he was a stranger. Secondly, I asked what the gentleman was? They answered and said, that they never saw him before. Thirdly, I enquired what countryman he was? They reply'd, 'twas more than they knew. Fourthly, I demanded whence he came? Their answer was, they cou'd not tell. And fifthly, I asked whither he went? And they reply'd, they knew nothing of the matter. —And this is all I cou'd learn.

Mrs. Sul. But what do the people say? Can't they guess?

Scrub. Why some think he's a spy, some guess he's
C. 3 a mounte-

a mountebank, some say one thing, some another; but for my own part, I believe he's a Jesuit.

Dor. A Jesuit! why a Jesuit?

Scrub. Because he keeps his horses always ready saddled, and his footman talks French.

Mrs. Sul. His footman!

Scrub. Ay, he and the count's footman were gabbering French like two intriguing ducks in a mill pond; and I believe they talk'd of me, for they laugh'd consumedly.

Dor. What sort of livery has the footman?

Scrub. Livery! Lord, Madam, I took him for a captain, he's so bedizen'd with lace; and then he has tops to his shoes, up to his mid-leg, a silver headed cane dangling at his knuckles:—He carries his hands in his pockets, and walks just so—[*Walks in a French air.*] and has a fine long periwig ty'd up in a bag——Lord, Madam, he's clear another sort of a man than I.

Mrs. Sul. That may easily be.—But what shall we do now, sister?

Dor. I have it——This fellow has a world of simplicity, and some cunning; the first hides the latter by abundance.——*Scrub.*

Scrub. Madam.

Dor. We have a great mind to know who this gentleman is, only for our satisfaction.

Scrub. Yes, Madam, it would be a satisfaction, no doubt.

Dor. You must go and get acquainted with his footman, and invite him hither to drink a bottle of your ale, because you're butler to-day.

Scrub. Yes, Madam, I am butler every Sunday.

Mrs. Sul. O brave sister! o' my conscience you understand the mathematics already.—'Tis the best plot in the world! Your mother, you know, will be gone to church, my spouse will be got to the ale-house with his scoundrels, and the house will be our own——so we drop in by accident, and ask the fellow some questions ourselves. In the country, you know,

know, any stranger is company, and we're glad to take up with the butler in a country dance, and happy if he'll do us the favour.

Scrub. Oh, Madam, you wrong me; I never refus'd your ladyship the favour in my life.

Enter Gipsy.

Gip. Ladies, dinner's upon table.

Dor. Scrub, we'll excuse your waiting——Go where we order'd you.

Scrub. I shall.

SCENE *changes to the inn.*

Enter Aimwell and Archer.

Arch. Well, Tom, I find you're a marksman.

Aim. A marksman! who so blind cou'd be as not discern a swan among the ravens?

Arch. Well, but heark'e Aimwell.

Aim. Aimwell! call me Oroondates, Cefario, Amadis, all that romance can in a lover paint, and then I'll answer. Oh, Archer! I read her thousands in her looks; she look'd like Ceres in her harvest; corn, wine, and oil, milk, honey, gardens, groves, and purling streams, play'd on her plenteous face.

Arch. Her face! her pocket, you mean! the corn, wine and oil lie there. In short, she has twenty thousand pounds, that's the English on't.

Aim. Her eyes——

Arch. Are demi-cannons, to be sure; so I won't stand their battery. *[Going.]*

Aim. Pray, excuse me, my passion must have vent.

Arch. Passion! what a plague, d'ye think these romantic airs will do our business? Were my temper as extravagant as yours, my adventures have something more romantic by half.

Aim. Your adventures!

Arch. Yes.

The

32 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

*The nymph that with her twice ten hundred pounds,
With brazen engine hot, and coif clear starch'd,
Can fire the guest in warming of the bed*——

There's a touch of sublime Milton for you, and the subject but an inn-keeper's daughter. I can play with a girl as an angler does with his fish; he keeps it at the end of his line, runs it up the stream, and down the stream, till at last he brings it to hand, tickles the trout, and so whips it into his basket.

Enter Boniface.

Bon. Mr. Martin, as the saying is——yonder's an honest fellow below, my lady Bountiful's butler, who begs the honour that you would go home with him and see his cellar.

Arch. Do my baise-mains to the gentleman, and tell him I will do myself the honour to wait on him immediately, as the saying is.

Bon. I shall do your worship's commands, as the saying is. *[Exit, bowing obsequiously.]*

Aim. What do I hear? soft Orpheus play, and fair Toftida sing!

Arch. Pshaw! Damn your raptures; I tell you here's a pump going to be put into the vessel, and the ship will get into harbour, my life on't. You say there's another lady very handsome there.

Aim. Yes, faith.

Arch. I'm in love with her already.

Aim. Can't you give me a bill upon Cherry in the mean time?

Arch. No, no, friend, all her corn, wine, and oil is ingross'd to my market.——And once more I warn you, to keep your anchorage clear of mine; for if you fall foul of me, by this light, you shall go to the bottom——What! make a prize of my little frigate, while I am upon the cruize for you. You're a pretty fellow indeed! *[Exit.]*

Enter

Enter Boniface.

Aim. Well, well, I won't.——Landlord; have you any tolerable company in the house? I don't care for dining alone.

Bon. Yes, Sir, there's a captain below, as the saying is, that arriv'd about an hour ago.

Aim. Gentlemen of his coat are welcome everywhere; will you make a compliment for me, and tell him I should be glad of his company, that's all.

Bon. Who shall I tell him, Sir, wou'd ——

Aim. Ha! that stroke was well thrown in—— I'm only a traveller, like himself, and would be glad of his company, that's all.

Bon. I obey your commands, as the saying is. [*Exit.*

Enter Archer.

Arch. 'Sdeath! I had forgot; what title will you give yourself?

Aim. My brother's, to be sure; he would never give me any thing else, so I'll make bold with his honour this bout.——You know the rest of your cue?

Arch. Ay, ay. [*Exit.*

Enter Gibbet.

Gib. Sir, I'm yours.

Aim. 'Tis more than I deserve, Sir, for I don't know you.

Gib. I don't wonder at that, Sir, for you never saw me before——I hope. [*Afide.*

Aim. And pray, Sir, how came I by the honour of seeing you now.

Gib. Sir, I scorn to intrude upon any gentleman——but my landlord——

Aim. O, Sir, I ask your pardon, you're the captain he told me of.

Gib. At your service, Sir.

Aim. What regiment, may I be so bold?

Gib. A marching regiment, Sir; an old corps.

Aim.

34 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Aim. Very old, if your coat be regimental. [*Afide.* You have serv'd abroad, Sir ?

Gib. Yes, Sir, in the Plantations, 'twas my lot to be sent into the worst service ; I wou'd have quitted it indeed, but a man of honour, you know—— Besides, 'twas for the good of my country that I shou'd be abroad——Any thing for the good of one's country——I'm a Roman for that.

Aim. One of the first, I'll lay my life. [*afide.*] You found the West Indies very hot, Sir.

Gib. Ay, Sir, too hot for me.

Aim. Pray, Sir, han't I seen your face at Will's Coffee house ?

Gib. Yes, Sir, and at White's too.

Aim. And where's your company now, captain ?

Gib. They an't come yet.

Aim. Why, d'ye expect them here ?

Gib. They'll be here to-night, Sir.

Aim. Which way do they march ?

Gib. Across the country.——The devil's in't if I han't said enough to encourage him to declare—but I'm afraid he's not right, I must tack about. [*Afide.*

Aim. Is your company to quarter at Litchfield ?

Gib. In this house, Sir.

Aim. What, all ?

Gib. My company is but thin, ha, ha, ha ! we are but three, ha, ha, ha !

Aim. You're merry, Sir ?

Gib. Ay, Sir, you must excuse me. Sir, I understand the world, especially the art of travelling. I don't care, Sir, for answering questions directly upon the road—for I generally ride with a charge about me.

Aim. Three or four, I believe. [*Afide.*

Gib. I am credibly inform'd that there are highwaymen upon this quarter ; not, Sir, that I cou'd suspect a gentleman of your figure——But truly, Sir, I have got such a way of evasion upon the road, that I don't care for speaking truth to any man.

Aim.

Aim. Your caution may be necessary——Then I presume you're no captain.

Gib. Not I, Sir: Captain is a good travelling name, and so I take it; it stops a great many foolish enquiries that are generally made about gentlemen that travel: it gives a man an air of something, and makes the drawers obedient——And thus far I am a captain, and no farther.

Aim. And pray, Sir, what is your true profession?

Gib. O, Sir, you must excuse me——upon my word, Sir, I don't think it safe to tell you.

Aim. Ha, ha! upon my word, I commend you.

Enter Boniface.

Well, Mr. Boniface, what's the news?

Bon. There's another gentleman below, as the saying is, that hearing you were but two, would be glad to make the third man, if you'd give him leave.

Aim. What is he?

Bon. A clergyman, as the saying is.

Aim. A clergyman! Is he really a clergyman? or is it only his travelling name, as my friend the captain has it?

Bon. O, Sir, he's a priest, and chaplain to the French officers in town.

Aim. Is he a Frenchman?

Bon. Yes, Sir, born at Brussels.

Gib. A Frenchman, and a priest! I won't be seen in his company, Sir; I have a value for my reputation, Sir.

Aim. Nay, but captain, since we are by ourselves——Can he speak English, landlord?

Bon. Very well, Sir; you may know him, as the saying is, to be a foreigner by his accent, and that's all.

Aim. Then he has been in England before?

Bon. Never, Sir; but he's master of languages, as the saying is; he talks Latin; it does me good to hear him talk Latin.

Aim. Then you understand Latin, Mr. Boniface.

Bon.

36 B E A U X S T R A T A G E M .

Bon. Not I, Sir, as the saying is ; but he talks it so very fast, that I'm sure it must be good.

Aim. Pray desire him to walk up.

Bon. Here he is, as the saying is.

Enter Foigard.

Foig. Save you, gentlemens bote.

Aim. A Frenchman ! Sir, your most humble servant.

Foig. Och, dear joy, I am your most faithful servant, and yours also.

Gib. Doctor, you talk very good English, but you have a mighty twang of the foreigner.

Foig. My English is very well for the words, but we foreigners, you know, cannot bring our tongues about the pronunciation so soon.

Aim. A foreigner ! a downright Teague, by this light. [*Aside.*] Were you born in France, doctor ?

Foig. I was educated in France, but I was borned at Brussels : I am a subject of the king of Spain, joy.

Gib. What king of Spain, Sir ? Speak.

Foig. Upon my shoul, joy, I cannot tell you as yet.

Aim. Nay, captain, that was too hard upon the doctor, he's a stranger.

Foig. O let him alone, dear joy, I'm of a nation that is not easily put out of countenance.

Aim. Come, gentlemen, I'll end the dispute—— Here, landlord, is dinner ready ?

Bon. Upon the table, as the saying is.

Aim. Gentlemen——pray——that door.——

Eon. No, no, fait, the captain must lead.

Aim. No, doctor, the church is our guide.

Gib. Ay, ay, so it is—[*Exit foremost, they follow.*]

SCENE

SCENE *changes to a gallery in Lady Bountiful's house.*

Enter Archer and Scrub singing, and bumping one another; Scrub with a tankard in his hand, Gipsy listening at a distance.

Scrub. Tall, all, dall——Come, my dear boy——let us have that song once more.

Arch. No, no, we shall disturb the family——but will you be sure to keep the secret?

Scrub. Pho! upon my honour, as I'm a gentleman.

Arch. 'Tis enough——You must know then, that my master is the lord viscount Aimwell; he fought a duel t'other day in London, wounded his man so dangerously that he thinks fit to withdraw till he hears whether the gentleman's wounds be mortal or not: he never was in this part of England before, so he chose to retire to this place, that's all.

Gip. And that's enough for me. [Exit.]

Scrub. And where were you when your master fought?

Arch. We never know of our masters' quarrels.

Scrub. No! if our masters in the country here receive a challenge, the first thing they do is to tell their wives; the wife tells the servants, the servants alarm the tenants, and in half an hour you shall have the whole country up in arms——

Arch. To hinder two men from doing what they have no mind for——But if you should chance to talk, now, of this business?

Scrub. Talk! ah, Sir, had I not learn'd the knack of holding my tongue, I had never liv'd so long in a great family.

Arch. Ay, ay, to be sure, there are secrets in all families.

Scrub. Secrets, O Lud!——but I'll say no more——Come, sit down, we'll make an end of our tankard: Here——

Arch. With all my heart: who knows but you and I may come to be better acquainted, eh——

VOL. II.

D

Here's

Here's your lady's health : you have three, I think ; and to be sure there must be secrets among 'em.

Scrub. Secrets ! Ah ! friend, friend !——I wish I had a friend.——

Arch. Am I not your friend ? Come, you and I will be sworn brothers.

Scrub. Shall we ?

Arch. From this minute——Give me a kiss——
And now, brother Scrub.——

Scrub. And now, brother Martin, I will tell you a secret that will make your hair stand an end——
You must know, that I am consumedly in love.

Arch. That's a terrible secret, that's the truth on't.

Scrub. That jade, Gipsy, that was with us just now in the cellar, is the errantest whore that ever wore a petticoat, and I'm dying for love of her.

Arch. Ha, ha, ha !——Are you in love with her person, or her virtue, brother Scrub ?

Scrub. I should like virtue best, because it's more durable than beauty ; for virtue holds good with some women, long and many a day after they have lost it.

Arch. In the country, I grant ye, where no woman's virtue is lost, till a bastard be found.

Scrub. Ay, could I bring her to a bastard, I shou'd have her all to myself ; but I dare not put it upon that lay, for fear of being sent for a soldier—Pray, brother, how do you gentlemen in London like that same pressing act ?

Arch. Very ill, brother Scrub——'Tis the worst that ever was made for us ; formerly, I remember the good days when we could dun our masters for our wages, and if they refused to pay us, we cou'd have a warrant to carry 'em before a justice ; but now, if we talk of eating, they have a warrant for us, and carry us before three justices.

Scrub. And to be sure we go, if we talk of eating ; for the justices won't give their own servants a bad example. Now this is my misfortune——I dare not speak in the house, while that jade, Gipsy, dings
about

about like a fury—Once I had the better end of the staff.

Arch. And how comès the change now ?

Scrub. Why, the mother of all this mischief is a priest.

Arch. A priest !

Scrub. Ay, a damn'd son of a whore of Babylon, that came over hither to say grace to the French officers, and eat up our provisions—There's not a day goes over his head without a dinner or supper in this house.

Arch. How came he so familiar in the family ?

Scrub. Because he speaks English as if he had liv'd here all his life, and tells lies as if he had been a traveller from his cradle.

Arch. And this priest, I'm afraid, has converted the affections of your Gipsy.

Scrub. Converted ! ay, and perverted, my dear friend—for I'm afraid he has made her a whore and a papist—But this is not all; there's the French count and Mrs. Sullen, they're in confederacy, and for some private end of their own too, to be sure.

Arch. A very hopeful family, yours, brother Scrub ; I suppose the maiden lady has her lover too.

Scrub. Not that I know—She's the best on 'em, that's the truth on't : but they take care to prevent my curiosity, by giving me so much business, that I am a perfect slave :—What d'ye think is my place in this family ?

Arch. Butler, I suppose.

Scrub. Ah, Lord help your silly head !—I'll tell you—Of a Monday I drive the coach ; of a Tuesday I drive the plough ; on Wednesday I follow the hounds ; a Thursday I dun the tenants ; on Friday I go to market ; on Saturday I draw warrants ; and on Sunday I draw beer.

Arch. Ha, ha, ha ! if variety be a pleasure in life, you have enough on't, my dear brother—But what ladies are those ?

D 2

Scrub.

Scrub. Ours, ours; that upon the right hand is Mrs. Sullen, and the other Mrs. Dorinda—Don't mind 'em, fit still, man——

Enter Mrs. Sullen and Dorinda.

Mrs. Sul. I have heard my brother talk of my lord Aimwell, but they say that his brother is the finer gentleman.

Dor. That's impossible, sister.

Mrs. Sul. He's vastly rich, and very close, they say.

Dor. No matter for that; if I can creep into his heart, I'll open his breast, I warrant him: I have heard say, that people may be guess'd at by the behaviour of their servants; I cou'd wish we might talk to that fellow.

Mrs. Sul. So do I; for I think he's a very pretty fellow: come this way; I'll throw out a lure for him presently.

[They walk a turn towards the opposite side of the stage. Mrs. Sullen drops her fan, Archer runs, takes it up, and gives it to her.]

Arch. Corn, wine, and oil, indeed—But I think the wife has the greatest plenty of flesh and blood; she should be my choice—Ay, ay, say you so—Madam——your ladyship's fan.

Mrs. Sul. O Sir, I thank you——What a handsome bow the fellow made!

Dor. Bow! Why, I have known several footmen come down from London, set up here for dancing-masters, and carry off the best fortunes in the country.

Arch. *[aside.]* That project, for aught I know, had been better than ours—Brother Scrub, why don't you introduce me?

Scrub. Ladies, this is the strange gentleman's servant that you saw at church to-day; I understood he came from London, and so I invited him to the cellar, that he might shew me the newest flourish in whetting my knives.

Dor.

Dor. And I hope you have made much of him ?

Arch. O yes, Madam ; but the strength of your ladyship's liquor is a little too potent for the constitution of your humble servant.

Mrs. Sul. What, then you don't usually drink ale.

Arch. No, Madam, my constant drink is tea, or a little wine and water ; 'tis prescrib'd me by the physician, for a remedy against the spleen.

Scrub. O la ! O la !—a footman have the spleen—

Mrs. Sul. I thought that distemper had been only proper to people of quality.

Arch. Madam, like all other fashions, it wears out, and so descends to their servants ; tho' in a great many of us, I believe, it proceeds from some melancholy particles in the blood, occasioned by the stagnation of wages.

Dor. How affectedly the fellow talks !—How long, pray, have you serv'd your present master ?

Arch. Not long ; my life has been mostly spent in the service of the ladies.

Mrs. Sul. And pray, which service do you like best ?

Arch. Madam, the ladies pay best ; the honour of serving them is sufficient wages ; there is a charm in their looks that delivers a pleasure with their commands, and gives our duty the wings of inclination.

Mrs. Sul. That flight was above the pitch of a livery : and, Sir, wou'd not you be satisfied to serve a lady again ?

Arch. As groom of the chambers, Madam, but not as a footman.

Mrs. Sul. I suppose you serv'd as footman before ;

Arch. For that reason I wou'd not serve in that post again ; for my memory is too weak for the load of messages that the ladies lay upon their servants in London : My Lady Howd'ye, the last mistress I serv'd, call'd me up one morning, and told me, Martin, go to my Lady Allnight with my humble service ; tell her I was to wait on her ladyship yesterday,

and left word with Mrs. Rebecca, that the preliminaries of the affair she knows of, are stopt till we know the concurrence of the person that I know of, for which there are circumstances wanting which we shall accommodate at the old place; but that in the mean time there is a person about her ladyship, that from several hints and surmises, was necessary at a certain time to the disappointments that naturally attend things, that to her knowledge are of more importance—

Mrs. Sul. } Ha, ha! where are you going, Sir?
Dor. }

Arch. Why, I ha'n't half done.

Scrub. I should not remember a quarter of it.

Arch. The whole, how d'ye, was about half an hour long; so happened to misplace two syllables, and was turned off, and rendered incapable—

Dor. The pleasantest fellow, sister, I ever saw.—But, friend, if your master be married.—I presume you still serve a lady?

Arch. No, Madam, I take care never to come into a married family, the commands of the master and mistress are always so contrary, that 'tis impossible to please both.

Dor. There's a main point gain'd.—My lord is not married, I find. [Aside.]

Mrs. Sul. But I wonder, friend, that in so many good services, you had not a better provision made for you?

Arch. I don't know how, Madam.—I am very well as I am.

Mrs. Sul. Something for a pair of gloves.

[Offering him money.]

Arch. I humbly beg leave to be excused. My master, Madam, pays me; nor dare I take money from any other hand, without injuring his honour, and disobeying his commands. [Exit.]

Scrub. Brother Martin, brother Martin.

Arch. What do you say, brother Scrub?

Scrub. Take the money, and give it to me.

[Exeunt Archer and Scrub.]

Dor.

Dor. This is surprizing. Did you ever see so pretty a well-bred fellow.

Mrs. Sul. The devil take him for wearing the livery.

Dor. I fancy, sister, he may be some gentleman, a friend of my lord's, that his lordship has pitch'd upon for his courage, fidelity, and discretion, to bear him company in his dress, and who, ten to one, was his second.

Mrs. Sul. It is so, it must be so, and it shall be so ---For I-like him.

Dor. What! better than the count?

Mrs. Sul. The count happened to be the most agreeable man upon the place; and so I chose him to serve me in my design upon my husband---But I should like this fellow better in a design upon myself.

Dor. But now, sister, for an interview with this lord, and this gentleman; how shall we bring that about?

Mrs. Sul. Patience! you country ladies give no quarter, 'if once you be entered.'----Wou'd you prevent their desires, and give the fellows no wishing time?---Look'e, Dorinda, if my lord Aimwell loves you or deserves you, he'll find a way to see you, and there we must leave it---My business comes now upon the tapis---Have you prepared you brother?

Dor. Yes, yes.

Mrs. Sul. And how did he relish it?

Dor. He said little, mumbled something to himself, and promised to be guided by me---but here he comes---

Enter Sullen.

Sul. What finging was that I heard just now?

Mrs. Sul. The finging in your head, my dear; you complained of it all day.

Sul. You're impertinent.

Mrs. Sul. I was ever so, since I became one flesh with you.

Sul. One flesh! rather two carcases joined unnaturally together.

Mrs.

44 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Mrs. *Sul.* Or rather, a living soul coupled to a dead body.

Dor. So, this is fine encouragement for me!

Sul. Yes, my wife shews what you must do.

Mrs. *Sul.* And my husband shews you what you must suffer.

Sul. 'Sdeath! why can't you be silent?

Mrs. *Sul.* 'Sdeath! why can't you talk?

Sul. Do you talk to any purpose?

Mrs. *Sul.* Do you think to any purpose?

Sul. Sister, heark'e---[*Whispers.*] I shan't be home till it be late.]*Exit.*

Mrs. *Sul.* What did he whisper to ye?

Dor. That he wou'd go round the back way, come into the closet, and listen as I directed him---But let me beg once more, dear sister, to drop this project: for, as I told you before, instead of awaking him to kindness, you may provoke him to rage; and then who knows how far his brutality may carry him?

Mrs. *Sul.* I'm provided to receive him, I warrant you. Away.]*Exeunt.*

The END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT

A C T IV.

S C E N E *continues.*

Enter Dorinda, meeting Mrs. Sullen and Lady Bountiful.

DORINDA.

NEWS, dear sister, news, news!

Enter Archer running.

Arch. Where, where is my lady Bountiful?---Pray which is the old lady of you three?

L. Boun. I am.

Arch. O, Madam, the fame of your ladyship's charity, goodness, benevolence, skill, and ability, have drawn me hither to implore your ladyship's help in behalf of my unfortunate master, who is this moment breathing his last.

L. Boun. Your master! where is he?

Arch. At your gate, Madam: drawn by the appearance of your handsome house to view it nearer, and walking up the avenue, he was taken ill of a sudden, with a sort of I know not what: but down he fell, and there he lies.

L. Boun. Here, Scrub, Gipsy, all run, get my easy-chair down stairs, put the gentleman in it, and bring him in quickly, quickly.

Arch. Heaven will reward your ladyship for this charitable act.

L. Boun. Is your master used to these fits.

Arch. O, yes, Madam, frequently.—I have known him have five or six of a night.

L. Boun. What's his name?

Arch. Lord, Madam, he's a dying; a minute's care or neglect, may save or destroy his life.

L. Boun.

46 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

L. Boan. Ah, poor gentleman! Come, friend, shew me the way; I'll see him brought in myself.

[Exit with Archer.

Dor. O, sister, my heart flutters about strangely, I can hardly forbear running to his assistance.

Mrs. Sul. And I'll lay my life he deserves your assistance more than he wants. Did not I tell you that my lord would find a way to come at you? Love's his distemper, and you must be the physician; put on all your charms, summon all your fire into your eyes, plant the whole artillery of your looks against his breast, and down with him.

Dor. O, sister, I'm but a young gunner; I shall be afraid to shoot, for fear the piece should recoil, and hurt myself.

Mrs. Sul. Never fear; you shall see me shoot before you, if you will.

Dor. No, no, dear sister, you have missed your mark so unfortunately, that I sha'n't care for being instructed by you.

Enter Aimwell in a chair carried by Archer and Scrub, Lady Bountiful, Gipsy; Aimwell counterfeiting a swoon.

L. Boun. Here, here, let's see the hartshorn drops—Gipsy, a glass of fair water, his fit's very strong—Bless me, how his hands are clench'd!

Arch. For shame, ladies, what d'ye do? Why don't you help us?—Pray, Madam, [To Dorinda.] take his hand, and open it, if you can, whilst I hold his head. [Dorinda takes his hand.

Dor. Poor gentleman!—Oh—he has got my hand within his, and squeezes it unmercifully—

L. Boun. 'Tis the violence of his convulsion, child.

Arch. O, Madam, he's perfectly possess'd in these cases.—He'll bite you, if you don't have a care.

Dor. Oh, my hand! my hand!

L. Boun. What's the matter with the foolish girl? I have got this hand open, you see, with a great deal of ease.

Arch.

Arch. Aye, but, Madam, your daughter's hand is somewhat warmer than your ladyship's, and the heat of it draws the force of the spirits that way.

Mrs. Sul. I find, friend, you're very learned in these sort of fits.

Arch. 'Tis no wonder, Madam, for I'm oftentimes troubled with them myself; I find myself extremely ill at this minute.

[*Looking hard at Mrs. Sullen.*]

Mrs. Sul. [*Aside.*] I fancy I cou'd find a way to cure you.

L. Boun. His fit holds him very long.

Arch. Longer than usual, Madam.

L. Boun. Where did his illness take him first, pray?

Arch. To day at church, Madam.

L. Boun. In what manner was he taken?

Arch. Very strangely, my lady. He was of a sudden touched with something in his eyes, which at the first he only felt, but could not tell whether 'twas pain or pleasure.

L. Boun. Wind, nothing but wind. Your master should never go without a bottle to smell to—Oh!—he recovers—the lavender water—some feathers to burn under his nose—Hungary water to rub his temples—O, he comes to himself. Hem a little, Sir, hem,—Gipsy, bring the cordial water.

[*Aimwell seems to awake in amaze.*]

Dor. How do you, Sir?

Aim. Where am I?

[*Rising.*]

Sure I have pass'd the gulf of silent death,
And now am landed on th' Elysian shore---
Behold the goddesses of those happy plains,
Fair Proserpine---Let me adore thy bright divinity.

[*Kneels to Dorinda, and kisses her hand.*]

Mrs. Sul. So, so, so, I knew were the fit would end.

Aim. Eurydice perhaps—

How cou'd thy Orpheus keep his word,
And not look back on thee?

No

No treasure but thyself cou'd sure have brib'd him

To look one minute off thee.

L. Boun. Delirious, poor gentleman!

Arch. Very delirious, Madam, very delirious.

Aim. Martin's voice, I think.

Arch. Yes, my lord.—How does your lordship?

L. Boun. Lord! did you mind that, girls?

Aim. Where am I?

Arch. In very good hands, Sir.—You were taken just now with one of your old fits, under the trees, just by this good lady's house; her ladyship had you taken in, and has miraculously brought you to yourself, as you see—

Aim. I am so confounded with shame, Madam, that I can now only beg pardon—and refer my acknowledgments for your ladyship's care, till an opportunity offers of making some amends.—I dare to be no longer troublesome.—Martin, give two guineas to the servants. [Going.]

Dor. Sir, you may catch cold by going so soon into the air; you don't look, Sir, as if you were perfectly recover'd.

[Here Archer talks to Lady Bountiful in dumb show.]

Aim. That I shall never be, Madam; my present illness is so rooted, that I must expect to carry it to my grave.

L. Boun. Come, Sir, your servant has been telling me that you're apt to relapse, if you go into the air—Your good manners sha'n't get the better of ours—You shall sit down again, Sir—Come, Sir, we don't mind ceremonies in the country—Here, Gipsy, bring the cordial water—Here, Sir, my service t'ye—You shall taste my water; 'tis a cordial, I can assure you, and of my own making. [*Aimwell drinks.*] Drink it off, Sir.—And how d'ye find yourself now, Sir?

Aim. Somewhat better—tho' very faint still.

L. Boun. Ay, ay, people are always faint after those fits. Come, girls, you shall shew the gentleman the

the house: 'tis but an old family building, Sir; but you had better walk about and cool by degrees, than venture immediately into the air:—but you'll find some tolerable pictures.—Dorinda, shew the gentleman the way. [*Exit.*] I must go to the poor woman below.

Dor. This way, Sir.

Aim. Ladies, shall I beg leave for my servant to wait on you, for he understands pictures very well.

Mrs. Sul. Sir we understand originals as well as he does pictures, so he may come along.

[*Exeunt Dor. Mrs. Sul. Arch. Aim. leads Dor.*

Enter Foigard.

Foig. Save you, Master Scrub.

Scrub. Sir, I won't be sav'd your way.—I hate a priest, I abhor the French, and I defy the devil.—Sir, I am a bold Briton, and will spill the last drop of my blood to keep out popery and slavery.

Foig. Master Scrub, you would put me down in politics, and so I wou'd be speaking with Mrs. Gipsefey.

Scrub. Good Mr. Priest, you can't speak with her; she's sick, Sir; she's gone abroad, Sir; she's—dead two months ago, Sir.

Enter Gipsefey.

Gip. How now, impudence! How dare you talk so saucily to the doctor? Pray, Sir, don't take it ill; for the common people of England are not so civil to strangers, as—

Scrub. You lie, you lie—'tis the common people, such as you are, that are civilest to strangers.

Gip. Sirrah, I have a good mind to—Get you out, I say.

Scrub. I won't.

Gip. You won't, sauce-box—Pray, doctor, what is the captain's name that came to your inn last night?

Scrub. The captain! ah, the devil! there she hampers me again;—the captain has me on one side, and

the priest on t'other — So between the gown and sword I have fine time on't. [Going.]

Gip. What, firrah, won't you march ?

Scrub. No, my dear, I won't march—but I'll walk :
—And I'll make bold to listen a little too.

[Goes behind the side-scene, and listens.]

Gip. Indeed, doctor, the count has been barbarously treated, that's the truth on't.

Foig. Ah, Mrs. Gipsy, upon my shoul, now gra, his complainings would mollify the marrow in your bones, and move the bowels of your commiseration ; he weeps, and he dances, and he fistles, and he swears, and he laughes, and he stamps, and he sings ; in conclusion, joy, he's afflicted, *à la François*, and a stranger wou'd not know whider to cry or to laugh with him.

Gip. What wou'd you have me do, doctor ?

Foig. Noting, joy, but only hide the count in Mrs. Sullen's closet, when it is dark.

Gip. Nothing ! Is that nothing ? It would be both a sin and a shame, doctor.

Foig. Here are twenty loudiores, joy, for your shame ; and I will give you an absolution for the shin.

Gip. But won't that money look like a bribe ?

Foig. Dat is according as you shall tauk it.—If you receive the money before hand, 'twill be, logice, a bribe ; büt if you stay till afterwards, 'twill be, only a gratification.

Gip. Well, doctor, I'll take it logice.—But what must I do with my conscience, Sir ?

Foig. Leave dat wid me, joy ; I am your priest, gra ; and your conscience is under my hands.

Gip. But should I put the count into the closet—

Foig. Vell, is dere any shin for a man's being in a closet ? One may go to prayers into a closet.

Gip. But if the lady shou'd come into her chamber, and go to bed ?

Foig. Vel, and is dere any shin in going to-bed, joy ?

Gip. Ay, but if the parties shou'd meet, doctor ?

Foig.

Feig. Vel den—the parties must be responsible.
—Do you begone after putting the count into the closet ; and leave the shins wid themselves.—I will come with the count to instruct you in your chamber.

Gip. Well, doctor, your religion is so pure—‘ Me-
‘ thinks I’m so easy after an absolution, and can sin
‘ afresh with so much security,’ that I’m resolved to
die a martyr to’t—Here’s the key of the garden door ;
come in the back way, when ’tis late—I’ll be ready to
receive you ; but don’t so much as whisper, only take
hold of my hand ; I’ll lead you, and do you lead the
count, and follow me. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Scrub.

Scrub. What witchcraft now have these two imps of
the devil been a hatching here ? There’s twenty
Lewidores ; I heard that, and saw the purse : but I
must give room to my betters.

Enter Mrs. Sullen and Archer.

Mrs. Sul. Pray, Sir, [*To Archer.*] how d’ye like
that piece ?

Arch. O, ’tis Leda—You find, Madam, how Ju-
piter came disguis’d to make love——

Mrs. Sul. Pray, Sir, what head is that in the corner
there ?

Arch. O Madam, ’tis poor Ovid in his exile.

Mrs. Sul. What was he banish’d for ?

Arch. His ambitious love, Madam. [*Bowing.*] His
misfortune touches me.

Mrs. Sul. Was he successful in his amours ?

Arch. There he has left us in the dark——He was
too much a gentleman to tell.

Mrs. Sul. If he were secret, I pity him.

Arch. If he were successful, I envy him.

Mrs. Sul. How d’ye like that Venus over the chim-
ney ?

Arch. Venus ! I protest, Madam, I took it for your
picture ; but, now I look again, ’tis not handsome
enough.

52 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Mrs. Sul. Oh, what a charm is flattery ! If you would see my picture, there it is, over the cabinet—How d'ye like it ?

Arch. I must admire any thing, Madam, that has the least resemblance of you.—But, methinks, Madam—[*He looks at the picture and Mrs. Sullen, three or four times by turns.*] Pray, Madam, who drew it ?

Mrs. Sul. A famous hand, Sir.

[*Here Aimwell and Dorinda go off.*]

Arch. A famous hand, Madam !—Your eyes, indeed, are featured here ; but where's the sparkling moisture, shining fluid, in which they swim ? The picture, indeed, has your dimples ; but where's the swarm of killing Cupids that should ambush there ? The lips too are figured out ; but where's the carnation dew, the pouting ripeness, that tempts the taste in the original ?

Mrs. Sul. Had it been my lot to have match'd with such a man !

[*Aside.*]

Arch. Your breasts too, presumptuous man ! what ! paint heaven ! A-propos, Madam, in the very next picture is Salmonius, that was struck dead with lightning, for offering to imitate Jove's thunder ; I hope you serv'd the painter so, Madam.

Mrs. Sul. Had my eyes the power of thunder, they shou'd employ their lightning better.

Arch. There's the finest bed in that room, Madam ; I suppose 'tis your ladyship's bed-chamber.

Mrs. Sul. And what then, Sir ?

Arch. I think the quilt is the richest that I ever saw—I can't at this distance, Madam, distinguish the figures of the embroidery. Will you give me leave, Madam ?

Mrs. Sul. The devil take his impudence—Sure, if I gave him an opportunity, he durst not be rude. I have a great mind to try.—[*Going. Returns.*] 'Sdeath ! what am I doing !—And alone too !—Sister, sister !

Arch. I'll follow her close——

For where a Frenchman durst attempt to storm,

A Briton sure may well the work perform. [*Going. Enter*

Enter Scrub.

Scrub. Martin! Brother Martin!

Arch. O brother Scrub, I beg your pardon, I was not a going: here's a guinea my master order'd you.

Scrub. A guinea! hi, hi, hi, a guinea! eh—by this light it is a guinea; but I suppose you expect twenty shillings in change.

Arch. Not at all; I have another for Gipsy.

Scrub. A guinea for her! Fire and faggot for the witch—Sir, give me that guinea; and I'll discover a plot.

Arch. A plot!

Scrub. Ay, Sir, a plot, a horrid plot—First, it must be a plot, because there's a woman in't: secondly, it must be a plot, because there's a priest in't: thirdly, it must be a plot, because there's French gold in't; and fourthly, it must be a plot, because I don't know what to make on't.

Arch. Nor any body else, I'm afraid, brother Scrub.

Scrub. Truly I'm afraid so too; for where there's a priest and a woman, there's always a mystery, and a riddle.—This I know, that here has been the doctor with a temptation in one hand, and an absolution in the other, and Gipsy has sold herself to the devil; I saw the price paid down; my eyes shall take their oath on't.

Arch. And is all this bustle about Gipsy?

Scrub. That's not all; I could hear but a word here and there; but I remember they mentioned a count, a closet, a back-door, and a key.

Arch. The count! did you hear nothing of Mrs. Sullen?

Scrub. I did hear some word that sounded that way: but whether it was Sullen or Dorinda, I cou'd not distinguish.

Arch. You have told this matter to nobody, brother?

Scrub. Told! No, Sir, I thank you for that; I'm resolv'd never to speak one word, pro nor con, till we have a peace.

E 3

Arch:

Arch. You're i'th' right, brother Scrub. Here's a treaty a-foot between the count and the lady.—The priest and the chamber maid are plenipotentiaries.—It shall go hard but I'll find a way to be included in the treaty. Where's the doctor now?

Scrub. He and Gipsy are this moment devouring my lady's marinalade in the clofets.

Aim. [*From without.*] Martin, Martin!

Arch. I come, Sir, I come.

Scrub. But you forget the other guinea, brother Martin.

Arch. Here, I give it with all my heart.

Scrub. And I take it with all my soul. [*Exeunt severally.*] I cod, I'll spoil your plotting, Mrs. Gipsy: and if you shou'd set the captain upon me, these two guineas will buy me off. [*Exit.*]

Enter Mrs. Sullen and Dorinda, meeting.

Mrs. Sul. Well, sister.

Dor. And well, sister.

Mrs. Sul. What's become of my lord?

Dor. What's become of his servant?

Mrs. Sul. Servant! He's a prettier fellow, and a finer gentleman by fifty degrees, than his master.

Dor. O my conscience, I fancy you could beg that fellow at the gallows foot.

Mrs. Sul. O my conscience, I could, provided I could put a friend of yours in his room.

Dor. You desir'd me, sister, to leave you, when you transgress'd the bounds of honour.

Mrs. Sul. Thou dear censorious country girl—What dost mean? You can't think of the man without the bedfellow, I find.

Dor. I don't find any thing unnatural in that thought; while the mind is conversant with flesh and blood, it must conform to the humours of the company.

Mrs. Sul. How a little love and conversation improve a woman! Why, child, you begin to live.—You never spoke before.

Dor.

BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Dor. Because I was never spoke to before : my lord has told me, that I have more wit and beauty than any of my sex ; and truly I begin to think the man is sincere.

Mrs. Sul. You're in the right, Dorinda ; pride is the life of a woman, and flattery is our daily bread. But I'll lay you a guinea that I had finer things said to me than you had.

Dor. Done.—What did your fellow say to ye ?

Mrs. Sul. My fellow took the picture of Venus for mine.

Dor. But my lover took me for Venus herself.

Mrs. Sul. Common cant ! Had my spark call'd me a Venus directly, I should have believed him to be a footman in good earnest.

Dor. But my lover was upon his knees to me.

Mrs. Sul. And mine was upon his tiptoes to me.

Dor. Mine vowed to die for me.

Mrs. Sul. Mine swore to die with me.

Dor. Mine kiss'd my hand ten thousand times.

Mrs. Sul. Mine has all that pleasure to come.

Dor. Mine spoke the softest moving things.

Mrs. Sul. Mine had his moving things too.

Dor. Mine offered marriage.

Mrs. Sul. O Lard ! D'ye call that a moving thing ?

Dor. The sharpest arrow in his quiver, my dear sister :—Why, my twenty thousand pounds may lie brooding here this seven years, and hatch nothing at last but some ill-natur'd clown like yours :—whereas, if I marry my lord Aimwell, there will be title, place, and precedence, the park, the play, and the drawing room, splendor, equipage, noise and flambeaux—Hey, my lady Aimwell's servants there—Lights, lights to the stairs—My lady Aimwell's coach, put forward—Stand by ; make room for her ladyship—Are not these things moving ? What, melancholy of a sudden !

Mrs. Sul. Happy, happy sister ! Your angel has been watchful for your happiness, whilst mine has slept

slept regardless of his charge—Long smiling years of circling joys for you; but not one hour for me!

[Weeps.]

Dor. Come, my dear, we'll talk on something else.

Mrs. Sul. O Dorinda, I own myself a woman, full of my sex, a gentle, generous soul,—‘easy and yielding to soft desires; a spacious heart, where love and all his train might lodge:’ And must the fair apartment of my breast be made a stable for a brute to lie in?

Dor. Meaning your husband, I suppose.

Mrs. Sul. Husband! No—Even husband is too soft a name for him—But come, I expect my brother here to-night or to-morrow: he was abroad when my father marry'd me; perhaps he'll find a way to make me easy.

Dor. Will you promise not to make yourself easy in the mean time with my lord's friend?

Mrs. Sul. You mistake me, sister—It happens with us as among the men, the greatest talkers are the greatest cowards: and there's a reason for it; those spirits evaporate in prattle, which might do more mischief if they took another course---Though, to confess the truth, I do love that fellow;—and if I met him dress'd as he shou'd be, and I undress'd as I should be—Look'e, sister, I have no supernatural gifts;—I can't swear I cou'd resist the temptation—though I can safely promise to avoid it; and that's as much as the best of us can do.

[Exeunt.]

Enter Aimwell and Archer laughing.

Arch. And the aukward kindness of the good motherly old gentlewoman,—

Aim. And the coming easiness of the young one.—'Sdeath, 'tis a pity to deceive her.

Arch. Nay, if you adhere to those principles, stop where you are.

Aim. I can't stop, for I love her to distraction.

Arch.

Arch. 'Sdeath, if you love her a hair's breadth beyond discretion, you must go no farther.

Aim. Well, well, any thing to deliver us from fauntering away our idle evenings at White's, Tom's, or Wiff's, 'and be stinted to bare looking at our old acquaintance, the cards, because our impotent pockets can't afford us a guinea for the mercenary drabs; 'and ten thousand such rascally tricks——had we 'outliv'd our fortunes among our acquaintance'—— But now---

Arch. Aye, now is the time to prevent all this.--- Strike while the iron is hot.--- This priest is the luckiest part of our adventure; he shall marry you, and pimp for me.

' *Aim.* But I should not like a woman that can be ' so fond of a Frenchman.

' *Arch.* Alas, Sir, necessity has no law; the lady ' may be in distress.' But if the plot lies as I suspect---I must put on the gentleman.——But here comes the doctor. I shall be ready. [Exit.

Enter Foigard.

Foig. Save you, noble friend.

Aim. O Sir, your servant. Pray, doctor, may I crave your name?

Foig. Fat naam is upon me? My naam is Foigard, joy.

Aim. Foigard! a very good name for a clergyman. Pray, doctor Foigard, were you ever in Ireland?

Foig. Ireland! no, joy. Fat sort of plaace is dat saam Ireland? Dey say, de people are catch'd dere when dey are young.

Aim. And some of 'em here, when they are old—— as for example—[Takes Foigard by the shoulder.] Sir I arrest you as a traitor against the government; you're a subject of England, and this morning shewed me a commission, by which you served as chaplain in the French army. This is death by our law, and your reverence must hang for it.

Foig. Upon my shoul, noble friend, dis is strange news

50 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

news you tell me ; fader Foigard a subject of England ! the son of a burgomaster of Brussels a subject of England ! Ubooboo.——

Aim. The son of a bog-trotter in Ireland ! Sir, your tongue will condemn you before any bench in the kingdom.

Foig. And is my tongue all your evidensh, joy ?

Aim. That's enough.

Foig. No, no, joy, for I will never speak English no more.

Aim. Sir, I have other evidence.——Here, Martin, you know this fellow.

Enter Archer.

Arch. [*In a brogue.*] Saave you, my dear cussen, how does your health ?

Foig. Ah ! upon my shouldere is my countryman, and his brogue will hang mine. [*Aside.*] *Mynbere, Ick wit neat watt hey zackts, Ick Universton ewe neat, sacrament.*

Aim. Altering your language won't do, Sir ; this fellow knows your person, and will swear to your face.

Foig. Faash ! Fey, is dere brogue upon my faash too ?

Arch. Upon my foulvation dere is, joy——But, cussen Mackshane, vill you not put a remembrance upon me ?

Foig. Mackshane ! by St. Paatrick, dat is my name shure enough. [*Aside.*]

Aim. I fancy, Archer, you have it.

Foig. The devil hang you, joy——By fat acquaintance are yau my cussen ?

Arch. O, de devil hang yourself, joy ; you know we were little boys togeder upon de school, and your foster-moder's son was marry'd upon my nurse's chifster, joy, and so we are Irish cussens.

Foig. De devil take de relation ! Vel joy, and fat school was it ?

Arch. I think it vas——Aay——'twas Tipperary.

Foig.

Foig. Now, upon my shoul, joy, it was Kilkenny.

Aim. That's enough for us—Self confession——
Come, Sir, we must deliver you into the hands of the next magistrate.

Arch. He sends you to gaol, you're try'd next assizes, and away you go swing into purgatory.

Foig. And is it so wid you, cussen?

Arch. It vil be so vid you, cussen, if you don't immediately confes the secret between you and Mrs. Gipsy——Look'ee, Sir, the gallows or the secret, take your choice.

Foig. The gallows! Upon my shoul I hate that shame gallows, for it is a diseashe dat is fatal to our family—Vel, den, there is noting, shentlemens, but Mrs. Sullen wou'd speak wid de count in her chamber at midnight, and dere is no harm, joy, for I am to conduct the count to de plaash myself.

Arch. As I guesf'd——Have you communicated the matter to the count?

Foig. I have not sheen him since.

Arch. Right agen; why then, doctor,—you shall conduct me to the lady instead of the count.

Foig. Fat, my cussen to the lady! Upon my shoul, gra, dat's too much upon the brogue.

Arch. Come, come, doctor, consider we have got a rope about your neck, and if you offer to squeak, we'll stop your wind-pipe, most certainly; we shall have another job for you in a day or two, I hope.

Aim. Here's company coming this way; let's into my chamber, and there concert our affairs farther.

Arch. Come, my dear cussen, come along. [*Exeunt.*]

Foig. Arra, the devil taake our relashion.

Enter Boniface, Hounslow, and Bagshot at one dour, Gibbet at the opposite.

Gib. Well, gentlemen, 'tis a fine night for our enterprize.

Hounf. Dark as hell.

Bag. And blows like the devil; our landlord here has shew'd us the window where we must break in,
and

and tells us the plate stands in the wainscot cupboard in the parlour.

Bon. Ay, ay, Mr. Bagshot, as the saying is, knives and forks, cups and cans, tumblers and tankards—There's one tankard, as the saying is, that's near upon as big as me; it was a present to the 'squire from his god-mother, and smells of nutmeg and toast like an East-India ship.

Hounsf. Then you say we must divide at the stair head.

Bon. Yes, Mr. Hounslow, as the saying is—At one end of the gallery lies my Lady Bountiful and her daughter; and, at the other, Mrs. Sullen—As for the 'squire—

Gib. He's safe enough, I have fairly enter'd him, and he's more than half seas over already—But such a parcel of scoundrels are got about him there, that, I gad, I was asham'd to be seen in their company.

Bon. 'Tis now twelve, as the saying is—Gentlemen, you must set out at one.

Gib. Hounslow, do you and Bagshot see our arms fix'd, and I'll come to you presently.

Hounsf. and Bag. We will.

[*Exeunt.*]

Gib. Well, my dear Bonny, you assure me that Scrub is a coward.

Bon. A chicken, as the saying is—You'll have no creature to deal with but the ladies.

Gib. And I can assure you, friend, there's a great deal of address and good-manners in robbing a lady; I am the most a gentleman that way that ever travelled the road—But, my dear Bonny, this prize will be a galleon, a Vigo business—I warrant you we shall bring off three or four thousand pound.

Bon. In plate, jewels, and money, as the saying is, you may.

Gib. Why then, Tyburn, I defy thee; I'll get up to town, sell off my horse and arms, buy myself some pretty employment in the law, and be as snug and as honest as e'er a long gown of 'em all.

Bon.

Bon. And what think you then of my daughter Cherry for a wife?

Gib. Look'e, my dear Bonny—Cherry is the goddess I adore, as the song goes; but it is a maxim, that man and wife should never have it in their power to hang one another; for if they shou'd, the Lord have mercy upon them both. [*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE continues. Knocking without.

Enter Boniface.

BONIFACE.

Coming, coming—A coach and six foaming horses at this time o'night! Some great man, as the saying is, for he scorns to travel with other people.

Enter Sir Charles Freeman.

Sir Ch. What, fellow! a public house, and a-bed when other people sleep!

Bon. Sir, I an't a-bed, as the saying is.

Sir Ch. I see that, as the saying is! Is Mr. Sullen's family a-bed, think'e?

Bon. All but the 'squire himself, Sir, as the saying is; he's in the house,

Sir Ch. What company has he?

Bon. Why, Sir, there's the constable, Mr. Gage the exciseman, the hunch-back'd barber, and two or three other gentlemen.

VOL. II.

F

Sir Ch.

Sir. *Cb.* I find my sifter's letters gave me the true picture of her spouse.

Enter Sullen, drunk.

Bon. Sir, here's the 'squire.

Sul. The puppies left me asleep——Sir.

Sir *Cb.* Well, Sir.

Sul. Sir, I am an unfortunate man—I have three thousand pounds a year, and I can't get a man to drink a cup of ale with me.

Sir *Cb.* That's very hard.

Sul. Ay, Sir—And unless you have pity upon me, and smoke one pipe with me, I must e'en go home to my wife, and I had rather go to the devil by half.

Sir *Cb.* But I presume, Sir, you won't see your wife to-night, she'll be gone to bed—you don't use to lie with your wife in that pickle?

Sul. What! not lie with my wife! Why, Sir, do you take me for an atheist or a rake?

Sir *Cb.* If you hate her, Sir, I think you had better lie from her.

Sul. I think so too, friend——But I am a justice of peace, and must do nothing against the law.

Sir *Cb.* Law! As I take it, Mr. Justice, nobody observes law for law's sake, only for the good of those for whom it was made.

Sul. But if the law orders me to send you to gaol, you must lie there, my friend.

Sir *Cb.* Not unless I commit a crime to deserve it.

Sul. A crime! Oons, an't I marry'd?—

Sir *Cb.* Nay, Sir, if you call marriage a crime, you must disown it for a law.

Sul. Eh!—I must be acquainted with you, Sir—But, Sir, I should be very glad to know the truth of this matter.

Sir *Cb.* Truth, Sir, is a profound sea, and few there be that dare wade deep enough to find the bottom on't. Besides, Sir, I'm afraid the line of your understanding may'nt be long enough.

Sul. Look'e, Sir, I have nothing to say to your sea

fea of truth, but if a good parcel of land can intitle a man to a little truth, I have as much as any he in the county.

Bon. I never heard your worship, as the saying is, talk so much before.

Sul. Because I never met with a man that I lik'd before.

Bon. Pray, Sir, as the saying is, let me ask you one question : Are not man and wife one flesh ?

Sir Cb. You and your wife, Mr. Guts, may be one flesh, because you are nothing else—But rational creatures have minds that must be united.

Sul. Minds !

Sir Cb. Ay, minds, Sir. Don't you think that the mind takes place of the body ?

Sul. In some people.

Sir Cb. Then the interest of the master must be consulted before that of the servant.

Sul. Sir, you shall dine with me to-morrow ———
Oons, I always thought that we were naturally one.

Sir Cb. Sir, I know that my two hands are naturally one, because they love one another, 'kiss one 'another', help one another in all actions of life ; but I cou'd not say so much if they were always at cuffs.

Sul. Then 'tis plain that we are two.

Sir Cb. Why don't you part with her, Sir ?

Sul. Will you take her, Sir ?

Sir Cb. With all my heart.

Sul. You shall have her to-morrow morning, and a venison pasty into the bargain.

Sir Cb. You'll let me have her fortune too ?

Sul. Fortune ! why, Sir, I have no quarrel to her fortune——I hate only the woman, Sir, and none but the woman shall go.

Sir Cb. But her fortune, Sir ———

Sul. Can you play at whist, Sir ?

Sir Cb. No, truly, Sir.

Sul. Nor at all-fours ?

Sir Cb. Neither.

64 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Sul. Oons ! where was this man bred [*Afide.*] Burn me, Sir, I can't go home, 'tis but two o'clock.

Sir Ch. For half an hour, Sir, if you please—But you must consider 'tis late.

Sul. Late ! that's the reason I can't go to bed—
Come, Sir——— [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Cherry, runs across the stage, and knocks at Aimwell's chamber door. Enter Aimwell, in his night-cap and gown.

Aim. What's the matter ? You tremble, child ; you're frightened !

Cher. No wonder, Sir—But in short, Sir, this very minute a gang of rogues are gone to rob my Lady Bountiful's house.

Aim. How !

Cher. I dogg'd 'em to the very door, and left 'em breaking in.

Aim. Have you alarm'd any body else with the news ?

Cher. No, no, Sir ; I wanted to have discover'd the whole plot, and twenty other things, to your man Martin ; but I have search'd the whole house, and can't find him ; where is he ?

Aim. No matter, child ; will you guide me immediately to the house ?

Cher. With all my heart, Sir ; my Lady Bountiful is my godmother, and I love Mrs. Dorinda so well———

Aim. Dorinda ! the name inspires me ; the glory and the danger shall be all my own.—Come, my life, let me but get my sword. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to the bed-chamber in Lady Bountiful's house.

Enter Mrs. Sullen, and Dorinda, undress'd ; a table and lights.

Dor. 'Tis very late, sister ; no news of your spouse, yet ?

Mrs. Sul.

Mrs. Sul. No, I'm condemn'd to be alone till towards four, and then, perhaps, I may be executed with his company.

Dor. Well, my dear, I'll leave you to your rest; you'll go directly to bed, I suppose.

Mrs. Sul. I don't know what to do; hey-ho!

Dor. That's a desiring sigh, sister.

Mrs. Sul. This is a languishing hour, sister.

Dor. And might prove a critical minute, if the pretty fellow were here.

Mrs. Sul. Here! what, in my bed-chamber, at two o'clock i'th' morning, I undress'd, the family asleep, my hated husband abroad, and my lovely fellow at my feet—O gad, sister.

Dor. Thoughts are free, sister, and them I allow you. So, my dear, good night. [Exit.]

Mrs. Sul. A good rest to my dear Dorinda—— Thoughts are free! are they so? Why then, suppose him here, dress'd like a youthful, gay, and burning bridegroom, [*Here Archer steals out of the closet.*] with tongue enchanting, eyes bewitching, knees imploring. [*Turns a little on one side, and sees Archer in the posture she describes.*] Ah! [*Shrieks, and runs to the other side of the stage.*] Have my thoughts rais'd a spirit?—What are you, Sir, a man or a devil?

Arch. A man, a man, Madam. [Rising.]

Mrs. Sul. How shall I be sure of it?

Arch. Madam, I'll give you demonstration this minute. [Takes her hand.]

Mrs. Sul. What, Sir! do you intend to be rude?

Arch. Yes, Madam, if you please.

Mrs. Sul. In the name of wonder, whence came ye?

Arch. From the skies, Madam—I'm a Jupiter in love, and you shall be my Alcmena.

Mrs. Sul. How came you in?

Arch. I flew in at the window, Madam; your cousin Cupid lent me his wings, and your sister Venus open'd the casement.

Mrs. Sul. I'm struck dumb with admiration.

66 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Arch. And I with wonder. [*Looks passionately at her.* How beautiful she looks!——the teeming jolly spring smiles in her blooming face, and when she was conceiv'd her mother smelt to roses, look'd on lilies—

*Lilies unfold their white, their fragrant charms,
When the warm sun thus darts into their arms.*

[*Runs to her.*]

Mrs. Sul. Ah! [*Scrieks.*]

Arch. Oons, Madam, what do you mean? You'll raise the house.

Mrs. Sul. Sir, I'll wake the dead before I'll bear this.—What! approach me with the freedom of a keeper.——I'm glad on't——Your impudence has cur'd me.

Arch. If this be impudence, [*Kneels.*] I leave to your partial self; no panting pilgrim, after a tedious, painful voyage, e'er bow'd before his saint with more devotion.

Mrs. Sul. Now, now, I'm ruin'd if he kneels. [*Aside.*] Rise, thou prostrate engineer, not all thy undermining skill shall reach my heart. Rise, and know I am a woman without my sex; I can love to all the tenderness of wishes, sighs and tears——But go no farther——Still to convince you that I'm more than woman, I can speak my frailty, confess my weakness, even for you——But——

Arch. For me!

[*Going to lay hold on her.*]

Mrs. Sul. Hold, Sir, build not upon that——for my most mortal hatred follows, if you disobey what I command you now——leave me this minute——If he denies, I'm lost.

[*Aside.*]

Arch. Then you'll promise——

Mrs. Sul. Any thing another time.

Arch. When shall I come?

Mrs. Sul. To-morrow; when you will.

Arch. Your lips must seal the promise.

Mrs. Sul. Pshaw!

Arch. They must, they must, [*Kisses her.*] Raptures

tures and Paradise ! And why not now, my angel ?
The time, the place, silence and secrecy all conspire
— And now the conscious stars have pre-ordain'd this
moment for my happiness. [*Takes her in his arms.*]

Mrs. Sul. You will not, cannot, sure.

Arch. If the sun rides fast, and disappoints not
mortals of to-morrow's dawn, this night shall crown
my joys.

Mrs. Sul. You shall kill me first.

Arch. I'll die with you. [*Carrying her off.*]

Mrs. Sul. Thieves, thieves, murder——

Enter Scrub, in his breeches, and one shoe.

Scrub. Thieves, thieves, murder, popery !

Arch. Ha ! the very timorous stag will kill in rut-
ting time. [*Draws and offers to stab Scrub.*]

Scrub. [*Kneeling.*] O pray, Sir, spare all I have,
and take my life.

Mrs. Sul. [*Holding Archer's hand.*] What does the
fellow mean ?

Scrub. O Madam, down upon your knees, your
marrow-bones——he's one of them.

Mrs. Sul. Of whom ?

Scrub. One of the rogues——I beg your pardon,
one of the honest gentlemen that just now are broke
into the house.

Arch. How !

Mrs. Sul. I hope you did not come to rob me ?

Arch. Indeed I did, Madam ; but I would have
taken nothing but what you might very well ha'
spar'd ; but your crying thieves has wak'd this dream-
ing fool, and so he takes 'em for granted.

Scrub. Granted ! 'tis granted, Sir ; take all we have.

Mrs. Sul. The fellow looks as if he were broke out
of Bedlam.

Scrub. Oons, Madam, they're broke into the house
with fire and sword ; I saw them, heard them, they'll
be here this minute.

Arch. What, thieves !

Scrub. Under favour, Sir, I think so.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Sul.* What shall we do, Sir?

Arch. Madam, I wish your ladyship a good night.

Mrs. *Sul.* Will you leave me?

Arch. Leave you! Lord, Madam, did you not command me to be gone just now, upon pain of your immortal hatred?

Mrs. *Sul.* Nay, but pray, Sir— [*Takes hold of him.*]

Arch. Ha, ha, ha, now comes my turn to be ravish'd—You see, Madam, you must use men one way or other; but take this by the way, good Madam, that none but a fool will give you the benefit of his courage, unless you'll take his love along with it—
How are they arm'd, friend?

Scrub. With sword and pistol, Sir.

Arch. Hush!—I see a dark lanthorn coming thro' the gallery—Madam, be assur'd I will protect you, or lose my life.

Mrs. *Sul.* Your life! No, Sir, they can rob me of nothing that I value half so much; therefore, now, Sir, let me intreat you to be gone.

Arch. No, Madam, I'll consult my own safety for the sake of yours; I'll work by stratagem. Have you courage enough to stand the appearance of them?

Mrs. *Sul.* Yes, yes, since I have 'scap'd your hands I can face any thing.

Arch. Come hither, brother Scrub; don't you know me?

Scrub. Eh! my dear brother, let me kiss thee.

[*Kisses Archer.*]

Arch. This way—Here—

[*Archer and Scrub hide behind the bed.*]

Enter Gibbet with a dark lanthorn in one hand, and a pistol in the other.

Gib. Ay, ay, this is the chamber, and the lady alone,

Mrs. *Sul.* Who are you, Sir? What would you have? D'ye come to rob me?

Gib. Rob you! Alack-a-day, Madam, I'm only a younger brother, Madam; and so, Madam, if you make a noise, I'll shoot you through the head. But
don't

don't be afraid, Madam. [*Laying his lanthorn and pistol upon the table.*] These rings, Madam ; don't be concerned, Madam ; I have a profound respect for you, Madam ; your keys, Madam ; don't be frightened, Madam, I'm the most of a gentleman—[*Searching her pockets.*] This necklace, Madam ; I never was rude to any lady !—I have a veneration—for this necklace—[*Here Archer having come round, and seized the pistol, takes Gibbet by the collar, trips up his heels, and claps the pistol to his breast.*]

Arch. Hold, profane villain, and take the reward of thy sacrilege.

Gib. Oh ! pray, Sir, don't kill me ; I a'n't prepared.

Arch. How many are there of 'em, Scrub ?

Scrub. Five and forty, Sir.

Arch. Then I must kill the villain, to have him out of the way.

Gib. Hold ! hold, Sir ! we are but three, upon my honour.

Arch. Scrub, will you undertake to secure him ?

Scrub. Not I, Sir ; kill him, kill him.

Arch. Run to Gipsy's chamber, there you'll find the doctor ; bring him hither presently.

[*Exit Scrub, running.*]

Come, rogue, if you have a short prayer, say it.

Gib. Sir, I have no prayer at all ; the government has provided a chaplain to say prayers for us on these occasions.

Mrs. Sul. Pray, Sir, don't kill him—you fright me as much as him.

Arch. The dog shall die, Madam, for being the occasion of my disappointment—Sirrah, this moment is your last.

Gib. Sir, I'll give you two hundred pounds to spare my life.

Arch. Have you no more, rascal ?

Gib. Yes, Sir, I can command four hundred ; but I must reserve two of 'em, to save my life at the sessions.

Enter

Enter Scrub and Foigard.

Arch. Here, doctor ; I suppose Scrub and you, between you, may manage him—Lay hold of him.

[*Foigard lays hold of Gibbet.*

Gib. What ! turn'd over to the priest already—Look'e, doctor, you come before your time ; I a'n't condemn'd yet, I thank ye.

Foig. Come, my dear joy, I vil secure your body and your shoul too ; I vil make you a good catholic, and give you an absolution.

Gib. Absolution ! Can you procure me a pardon, doctor ?

Foig. No, joy—

Gib. Then you and your absolution may go to the devil.

Arch. Convey him into the cellar ; there bind him : —take the pistol, and if he offers to resist, shoot him thro' the head—and come back to us with all the speed you can.

Scrub. Ay, ay ; come, doctor, do you hold him fast, and I'll guard him. [Exeunt.

Mrs. Sul. But how came the doctor ?

Arch. In short, Madam——[*Scrieking without.*] 'Sdeath ! the rogues are at work with the other ladies ;—'I'm vex'd I parted with the pistol ;' but I must fly to their assistance—Will you stay here, Madam, or venture yourself with me ?

Mrs. Sul. Oh, dear Sir, with you.

[*Takes him by the arm and exeunt.*

SCENE changes to another apartment in the house.

Enter Hounslow dragging in Lady Bountiful, and Bagshot hauling in Dorinda ; the rogues with swords drawn.

Houn. Come, come, your jewels, mistress.

Bag. Your keys, your keys, old gentlewoman.

Enter Aimwell.

Aim. Turn this way, villains ! I durst engage an army in such a cause. [He engages them both.

Enter

Enter Archer and Mrs. Sullen.

Arch. Hold, hold, my lord ; every man his bird, pray. [*They engage man to man ; the rogues are thrown down and disarmed.*]

Arch. Shall we kill the rogues ?

Aim. No, no, we'll bind them.

Arch. Ay, ay ; here, Madam, lend me your garter ?
[*To Mrs. Sullen, who stands by him.*]

Mrs. Sul. The devil's in this fellow ; he fights, loves, and banters, all in a breath. Here's a cord, that the rogues brought with them, I suppose.

Arch. Right, right, the rogue's destiny, a rope to hang himself—Come, my lord,---this is but a scandalous sort of an office. [*Binding the rogues together.*] If our adventures should end in this sort of hangman work ; but I hope there is something in prospect that--

Enter Scrub.

Well, Scrub, have you secured your Tartar ?

Scrub. Yes, Sir, I left the priest and him disputing about religion.

Aim. And pray carry these gentlemen to reap the benefit of the controversy.

[*Delivers the prisoners to Scrub, who leads them out.*]

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sister, how came my lord here ?

Dor. And pray, how came the gentleman here ?

Mrs. Sul. I'll tell you the greatest piece of villany.
[*They talk apart.*]

Aim. I fancy, Archer, you have been more successful in your adventures than the house-breakers.

Arch. No matter for my adventure, yours is the principal---Press her this minute to marry you---now while she's hurried between the palpitation of her fear and the joy of her deliverance ; now while the tide of her spirits is at high flood---throw yourself at her feet, speak some romantic nonsense or other---confound her senses, bear down her reason, and away with her---The priest is now in the cellar, and dares not refuse to do the work.

Aim. But how shall I get off without being observed ?

Arch.

72 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Arch. You a lover ! and not find a way to get off.
---Let me see.

Aim. You bleed, Archer.

Arch. 'Sdeath, I'm glad on't ; this wound will do the business. I'll amuse the old lady and Mrs. Sullen about dressing my wound, while you carry off Dorinda.

Enter Lady Bountiful.

L. Bount. Gentlemen, could we understand how you would be gratified for the services——

Arch. Come, come, my lady, this is no time for compliments ; I'm wounded, Madam.

L. Bount. and Mrs. Sul. How, wounded !

Dor. I hope, Sir, you have received no hurt !

Aim. None but what you may cure---

[Makes love in dumb shew.

L. Boun. Let me see your arm, Sir---I must have some powder-sugar to stop the blood---O me !---an ugly gash ; upon my word, Sir, you must go to bed.

Arch. Ay, my lady, a bed would do very well---Madam, *[To Mrs. Sullen.]* will you do me the favour to conduct me to a chamber ?

L. Bount. Do, do, daughter---while I get the lint, and the probe, and the plaister ready.

[Runs out one way, Aim. carries off Dor. another.

Arch. Come, Madam, why don't you obey your mother's commands ?

Mrs. Sul. How can you, after what is past, have the confidence to ask me ?

Arch. And, if you go to that, how can you, after what is past, have the confidence to deny me ?---Was not this blood shed in your defence, and my life exposed for your protection ? Look'e, Madam, I'm none of your romantic fools that fight giants and monsters for nothing ; my valour is downright Swifts ; I am a soldier of fortune, and must be paid.

Mrs. Sul. 'Tis ungenerous in you, Sir, to upbraid me with your services.

Arch. 'Tis ungenerous in you, Madam, not to reward 'em.

Mrs.

Mrs. Sul. How ! at the expence of my honour ?

Arch. Honour ! Can honour consist with ingratitude ? If you would deal like a woman of honour, do like a man of honour. D'ye think I would deny you in such a case ?

Enter Gipsy.

Gip. Madam, my lady ordered me to tell you, that your brother is below, at the gate.

Mrs. Sul. My brother ! Heavens be prais'd !---Sir, he shall thank you for your services, he has it in his power.

Arch. Who is your brother, Madam ?

Mrs. Sul. Sir Charles Freeman. You'll excuse me, Sir, I must go and receive him.

Arch. Sir Charles Freeman ! 'Sdeath and hell !---my old acquaintance. Now, unless Aimwell has made good use of his time, all our fair machine goes fouse into the sea like the Edystone. *[Exit.*

SCENE changes to the gallery in the same house.

Enter Aimwell and Dorinda.

Dor. Well, well, my lord, you have conquered. Your late generous action, will, I hope, plead for my easy yielding ; though, I must own, your lordship had a friend in fort before.

Aim. The sweets of Hybla dwell upon her tongue.
—Here, doctor—

Enter Foigard with a book.

Foig. Are you prepared, bote ?

Dor. I'm ready : but first, my lord, one word—
I have a frightful example of a hasty marriage in my own family ; when I reflect upon't, it shocks me. Pray, my lord, consider a little—

Aim. Consider ! Do you doubt my honour, or my love ?

Dor. Neither. I do believe you equally just as
VOL. II. G brave

brave---And were your whole sex drawn out for me to chuse, I shou'd not cast a look upon the multitude, if you were absent---But, my lord, I'm a woman: colours, concealments may hide a thousand faults in me ---Therefore know me better first; I hardly dare affirm I know myself in any thing except my love.

Aim. Such goodness who cou'd injure? I find myself unequal to the task of villain. She has gained my soul, and made it honest like her own---I cannot hurt her. [*Aside.*] Doctor, retire. [*Exit Foigard.*] Madam, behold your lover and your profelyte, and judge of my passion by my conversion---I'm all a lie, nor dare I give a fiction to your arms; I'm all a counterfeit, except my passion.

Dor. Forbid it, heaven! A counterfeit!

Aim. I am no lord, but a poor needy man, come with a mean and scandalous design, to prey upon your fortune:-----but the beauties of your mind and person have so won me from myself, that, like a trusty servant, I prefer the interest of my mistress to my own.

Dor. Sure, I have had the dream of some poor mariner; a sleeping image of a welcome port, and wake involv'd in storms'--Pray, Sir, who are you?

Aim. Brother to the man whose title I usurped, but stranger to his honour or his fortune.

Dor. Matchless honesty!--Once I was proud, Sir, of your wealth and title, but now am prouder that you want it. Now I can shew my love was justly levelled, and had no aim but love. Doctor, come in.

Enter Foigard at one door, Gipsy at another, who whispers Dorinda.

Your pardon, Sir; we sha'n't want you now, Sir. You must excuse me----I'll wait on you presently.

[*Exit with Gipsy.*]

Foig. Upon my shoul, now dis is foolish. [*Exit.*]

Aim. Gone! and bid the priest depart---It has an ominous look.

Enter

Enter Archer,

Arch. Courage, Tom----Shall I wish you joy?

Aim. No.

Arch. Oons! man, what ha' you been doing?

Aim. O, Archer, my honesty, I fear, has ruined me.

Arch. How!

Aim. I have discovered myself.

Arch. Discovered! And without my consent? What! Have I embark'd my small remains in the same bottom with yours, and you dispose of all without my partnership?

Aim. O, Archer, I own my fault.

Arch. After conviction---'Tis then too late for pardon---You may remember, Mr. Aimwell, that you propos'd this folly---As you begun, so end it---Henceforth I'll hunt my fortune fingle-----So farewell.

Aim. Stay, my dear Archer, but a minute.

Arch. Stay! What, to be despis'd, expos'd, and laughed at!---No, I would sooner change conditions with the worst of the rogues we just now bound, than bear one scornful smile from the proud knight that once I treated as my equal.

Aim. What knight?

Arch. Sir Charles Freeman, brother to the lady that I had almost---But no matter for that; 'tis a cursed night's work, and so I leave you to make the best on't.

Aim. Freeman!---One word, Archer. Still I have hopes; methought she received my confession with pleasure.

Arch. 'Sdeath, who doubts it?

Aim. She consented after to the match; and still I dare believe she will be just.

Arch. To herself, I warrant her, as you shou'd have been.

Aim. By all my hopes she comes, and smiling comes.

Enter Dorinda mighty gay.

Dor. Come, my dear lord—I fly with impatience to your arms——The minutes of my absence were a tedious year. Where’s this priest?

Enter Foigard.

Arch. Oons, a brave girl!

Dor. I suppose, my lord, this gentleman is privy to our affairs?

Arch. Yes, yes, Madam, I’m to be your father.

Dor. Come, priest, do your office.

Arch. Make haste, make haste, couple ’em any way.
[*Takes Aimwell’s band.*] Come, Madam, I’m to give you——

Dor. My mind’s altered; I won’t.

Arch. Eh——

Aim. I’m confounded.

Foig. Upon my shoul, and so is my shelf.

Arch. What’s the matter now, Madam?

Dor. Look’e, Sir, one generous action deserves another——This gentleman’s honour obliged him to hide nothing from me; my justice engages me to conceal nothing from him; in short, Sir, you are the person that you thought you counterfeited; you are the true lord viscount Aimwell, and I wish your lordship joy. Now, priest, you may be gone; if my lord is now pleas’d with the match, let his lordship marry me in the face of the world.

Aim. Archer, what does she mean?

Dor. Here’s a witness for my truth.

Enter Sir Charles and Mrs. Sullen.

Sir Ch. My dear lord Aimwell, I wish you joy.

Aim. Of what?

Sir Ch. Of your honour and estate. Your brother died the day before I left London; and all your friends have writ after you to Brussels; among the rest I did myself the honour.

Arch. Heark’e, Sir knight, don’t you banter now?
Sir.

Sir Cb. 'Tis truth, upon my honour.

Aim. Thanks to the pregnant stars that formed this accident.

Arch. Thanks to the womb of time that brought it forth ; away with it.

Aim. Thanks to my guardian angel that led me to the prize——— [Taking Dorinda's hand.

Arch. And double thanks to the noble Sir Charles Freeman. My lord, I wish you joy. My lady, I wish you joy —— I gad, Sir Freeman, you're the honestest fellow living——'Sdeath, I'm grown strangely airy upon this matter—My lord, how d'ye?—A word, my lord. Don't you remember something of a previous agreement that intitles me to the moiety of this lady's fortune, which, I think, will amount to ten thousand pounds?

Aim. Not a penny, Archer. You wou'd ha' cut my throat just now, because I wou'd not deceive this lady.

Arch. Ay, and I'll cut your throat still, if you shou'd deceive her now.

Aim. That's what I expect ; and to end the dispute, the lady's fortune is twenty thousand pounds ; we'll divide stakes ; take the twenty thousand pounds, or the lady.

Dor. How ! Is your lordship so indifferent ?

Arch. No, no, no, Madam, his lordship knows very well that I'll take the money ; I leave you to his lordship, and so we're both provided for.

Enter Foigard.

Foig. Arra fait, de people do say you be all robb'd ; joy,

Aim. The ladies have been in some danger, Sir, as you saw.

Foig. Upon my shoul our inn be rob too.

Aim. Our inn ! By whom ?

Foig. Upon my shalvation, our landlord has robb'd himself, and run away wid de money.

Arch. Robbed himself !

78 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Foig. Ay fait ? and me too of a hundred pounds.

Arch. Robb'd you of a hundred pounds !

Foig. Yes, fait honny, that I did owe to him.

Aim. Our money's gone, Frank.

Arch. Rot the money, my wench is gone——
Sçavez vous quelque chose de Mademoiselle Cherry ?

Enter a fellow with a strong box and letter.

Fell. Is there one Martin here ?

Arch. Ay, ay, --who wants him ?

Fell. I have a box here, and a letter for him.

Aim. [*Taking the box.*] Ha, ha, ha, what's here ?
Legerdemain ! By this light, my lord, our money again. But this unfolds the riddle. [*Opening the letter, reads.*] Hum, hum, hum——O, 'tis for the public good, and must be communicated to the company.

Mr. Martin,

My father, being afraid of an impeachment by the rogues that are taken to-night, is gone off ; but if you can procure him a pardon, he'll make great discoveries that may be useful to the country. Cou'd I have met you instead of your master to night, I wou'd have delivered myself into your hands, with a sum that much exceeds that in your strong box, which I have sent you, with an assurance to my dear Martin, that I shall ever be his most faithful friend till death,

Cherry Boniface.

There's a billet-doux for you——As for the father, I think he ought to be encouraged ; and for the daughter——pray, my lord, persuade your bride to take her into her service instead of Gipsy.

Aim. I can assure you, Madam, your deliverance was owing to her discovery.

Der. Your command, my lord, will do without the obligation. I'll take care of her.

Sir Cb. This good company meets opportunely in favour of a design I have in behalf of my unfortunate sister. I intend to part her from her husband——Gentlemen, will you assist me ?

Arch. Assist you ! 'Sdeath, who wou'd not ?

Foig. Ay, upon my shoul, we'll all assist.

Enter

Enter Sullen.

Sul. What's all this? They tell me, spouse, that you had like to have been robb'd.

Mrs. Sul. Truly, spouse, I was pretty near it—— had not these two gentlemen interpos'd.

Sul. How came these gentleman here?

Mrs. Sul. That's his way of returning thanks, you must know.

Foig. Ay, but upon my conscience de question be à-propos for all dat.

Sir Ch. You promis'd last night, Sir, that you would deliver your lady to me this morning.

Sul. Humph.

Arch. Humph! What do you mean by Humph? —Sir, you shall deliver her——In short, Sir, we have saved you and your family; and if you are not civil, we'll unbind the rogues, join with 'em, and set fire to your house——What does the man mean? Not part with his wife.

Foig. Arra, not part wid your wife! Upon my shoul, de man dosh not understand common shivility.

Mrs. Sul. Hold, gentlemen, all things here must move by consent. Compulsion would spoil us. Let my dear and I talk the matter over, and you shall judge it between us.

Sul. Let me know first, who are to be our judges. —Pray, Sir, who are you?

Sir Ch. I am Sir Charles Freeman, come to take away your wife.

Sul. And you, good Sir?

Aim. Thomas viscount Aimwell, come to take away your sister.

Sul. And you, pray Sir?

Arch. Francis Archer, esq. come——

Sul. To take away my mother, I hope——Gentlemen, you're heartily welcome. I never met with three more obliging people since I was born——And now, my dear, if you please, you shall have the first word.

Arch.

80 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

Arch. And the last, for five pounds. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Sul. Spouse.

Sul. Rib.

Mrs. Sul. How long have you been marry'd?

Sul. By the almanack, fourteen months;—but by my account, fourteen years.

Mrs. Sul. 'Tis thereabout by my reckoning.

Foig. Upon my confidence dere accounts vil agree.

Mrs. Sul. Pray, spouse, what did you marry for?

Sul. To get an heir to my estate.

Sir Ch. And have you succeeded?

Sul. No.

Arch. The condition fails of his side——Pray, Madam, what did you marry for?

Mrs. Sul. To support the weakness of my sex by the strength of his, and to enjoy the pleasures of an agreeable society.

Sir Ch. Are your expectations answer'd?

Mrs. Sul. No.

Foig. Arra honeys, a clear caase, a clear caase!

Sir Ch. What are the bars to your mutual contentment?

Mrs. Sul. In the first place, I can't drink ale with him.

Sul. Nor can I drink tea with her.

Mrs. Sul. I can't hunt with you.

Sul. Nor can I dance with you.

Mrs. Sul. I hate cocking and racing.

Sul. I abhor ombre and picquet.

Mrs. Sul. Your silence is intolerable.

Sul. Your prating is worse.

' *Mrs. Sul.* Have we not been a perpetual offence to each other——a gnawing vulture at the heart?

' *Sul.* A frightful goblin to the sight.

' *Mrs. Sul.* A porcupine to the feeling.

' *Sul.* Perpetual wormwood to the taste.

Mrs. Sul. Is there on earth a thing we can agree in?

Sul. Yes——to part.

Mrs. Sul. With all my heart.

Sul. Your hand.

Mrs. Sul. Here.

Sul. These hands joined us, these shall part us—
Away——

Mrs. Sul. East.

Sul. West.

Mrs. Sul. North.

Sul. South ; far as the poles asunder.

Foig. Upon my shoul, a very pretty shereemony.

Sir Ch. Now, Mr. Sullen, there wants only my sister's fortune to make us easy.

Sul. Sir Charles, you love your sister, and I love her fortune ; every one to his fancy.

Arch. Then you won't refund.

Sul. Not a stiver.

Arch. What is her portion ?

Sir Ch. Twenty thousand pounds, Sir.

Arch. I'll pay it. My lord, I thank him, has enabled me, and, if the lady pleases, she shall go home with me. This night's adventure has prov'd strangely lucky to us all—For captain Gibbet, in his walk, has made bold, Mr. Sullen, with your study and escritore, and has taken out all the writings of your estate, all the articles of marriage with your lady, bills, bonds, leases, receipts, to an infinite value ; I took 'em from him, and will deliver them to Sir Charles.

' [Gives him a parcel of papers and parchments.]

Sul. How, my writings ! my head aches consumedly. Well, gentlemen, you shall her fortune, but I can't talk. If you have a mind, Sir Charles, to be merry, and celebrate my sister's wedding and my divorce, you may command my house ! but my head aches consumedly—Scrub, bring me a dram.

Arch. 'Twou'd be hard to guess which of these parties is the better pleas'd, the couple join'd, or the couple parted ; the one rejoicing in hopes of an untasted happiness, and the other in their deliverance from an experienced misery.

Both

82 BEAUX STRATAGEM.

*Both happy in their several states we find;
These parted by consent, and those conjoin'd.
Consent, if mutual, saves the lawyer's fee;
Consent is law enough to set you free.*

END of the FIFTH ACT.



New Books published by J. Bell.

A New Edition, being the Sixth, Price 2s. 6d.

Dedicated, by Permission, to

Lord Viscount LIGONIER.

**PRINCIPLES of POLITENESS,
PART I.**

By the late Lord CHESTERFIELD.

Methodized and digested under distinct heads, with
Additions,

By the Rev. Dr. JOHN TRUSLER.

Containing every instruction necessary to complete
the Gentleman and Man of Fashion, to teach him a
knowledge of life, and make him well received in all
companies. For the improvement of youth, yet not
beneath the attention of any.

Also

By the same A U T H O R.

The Third Edition. Price 1s. 6d.

Addressed to and calculated for YOUNG LADIES.

* * At the request of several Private Tutors and
Masters of Academies, the two preceding articles are
translated into French, in a classical and elegant stile,
by the CHEVALIER DE SAUSEUIL, in two
vols. Price 7s. bound. Allowance to those who take
a dozen sets.

**AN ELEGICAL POEM on the Fears
of DEATH.**

By the Rev. Dr. JOHN TRUSLER.

Price 1s. 6d.

**AN ESSAY on GLANDULAR SE-
CRETION; containing an experimental en-
quiry into the formation of PUS, and a critical exa-
mination into an opinion of Mr. John Hunter's,
"That the blood is alive." By JAMES HENDY,
M. D.**

Price 2s.

New Books published by J. Bell.

THE ODDS of the **GAME** of **BIL-**
LIARDS; with some useful observations that
should be attended to by every player. Accurately
calculated. Price 1s.

REMARKS on the **SERVICE** of the
CHURCH of **ENGLAND**, with directions
for our behaviour therein.

By the Rev. Dr. **JOHN TRUSLER**.

The Third Edition.

Price 4d. or 1l. 6s. per hundred to those who buy
them to give away. Very proper to be put into the
hands of youth, &c.

A **EASY WAY** to **PROLONG LIFE**.
PART I.

The Third Edition. Price 2s.

Being a Chemical Analysis, or, 'An Enquiry in-
to the nature and properties of all kinds of Foods,'
how far they are wholesome and agree with different
constitutions. Written so as to be intelligible to
every capacity. By a Medical Gentleman.

Also

PART II. Price 1s. 6d.

Containing many salutary observations on exercise,
sleep, drinking, smoking, bleeding, dram-drinking,
and the utility of taking physic in the spring.

THE **ŒCONOMIST**.

The Thirteenth Edition. Price 1s.

Shewing in a variety of estimates from 80l. a year
to upwards of 800l. how comfortably and genteely a
family may live with frugality for a little money; to-
gether with the cheapest method of keeping horses.

* * * An attention to these estimates will infallibly
tend to the comfort and happiness of thousands, as
they will teach the reader how to make a little go a
great way, and shew him what expences he may enter
into consistent with his fortune and situation in life.



J. Roberts del.

Published for Balls Bridge Theatre June the 4.th 1776.

J. Thompson sc.

*M^r FOOTE in the Character of FONDLEWIFE.
Speak, I say have you consider'd what it is
to Cuckold your Husband?*

BELL'S EDITION.

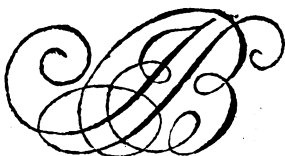
THE
OLD BATCHELOR.

A COMEDY, by Mr. CONGREVE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,
By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,
By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

*Quem tulit ad scenam vetoſo gloria curru,
Exanimat lentus ſpectator, ſedulus inflat.
Sic leve, ſic parvum eſt, animum quod laudis avarum
Subruit, aut reficit—* HORAT. Epist. I. Lib. ii.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCCLXXVI.

P R O L O G U E.

HOW this vile world is chang'd ! In former days,
 Prologues were serious speeches before plays ;
 Grave solemn things, as graces are to feasts ;
 Where poets begg'd a blessing from their guests :
 But now, no more like suppliants we come ;
 A play makes war, and prologue is the drum ;
 Arm'd with keen satire, and with pointed wit,
 We threaten you who do for judges sit,
 To save our plays, or else we'll damn your pit.
 But for your comfort, it falls out to day,
 We've a young author, and his first-born play ;
 So, standing only on his good behaviour,
 He's very civil, and intreats your favour.
 Not but the man has malice, would he shew it,
 But, on my conscience, he's a bashful poet ;
 You think that strange—no matter, he'll out-grow it.
 Well, I'm his advocate——by me he prays you,
 (I don't know whether I shall speak to please you)
 He prays——O bless me ! what shall I do now ?
 Hang me if I know what he prays, or how !
 And 'twas the prettiest prologue as he wrote it !
 Well, the deuce take me, if I han't forgot it.
 O Lord ! for Heaven's sake, excuse the play,
 Because, you know, if it be damn'd-to-day,
 I shall be hang'd for wanting what to say.
 For my sake then——But I'm in such confusion,
 I cannot stay to bear your resolution. [Runs off.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

<i>Heartwell</i> , a surly old bachelor, pretending to slight women, secretly in love with <i>Silvia</i> ,	}	Mr. Burton.
<i>Bellmour</i> , in love with <i>Belinda</i> ,		
<i>Vainlove</i> , capricious in his love, in love with <i>Araminta</i> ,	}	Mr. Palmer.
<i>Sharper</i> ,		
Sir <i>Joseph Wittol</i> ,		Mr. Packer.
Captain <i>Bluff</i> ,		Mr. Lee.
<i>Fondlewife</i> , a banker,		Mr. King.
<i>Setter</i> , a pimp.		Mr. Love.
Servant to <i>Fondlewife</i> .		Mr. Yates.
		Mr. Baddeley.

W O M E N.

<i>Araminta</i> , in love with <i>Vainlove</i> ,	}	Mrs. Davis.
<i>Belinda</i> , her cousin, an affected lady, in love with <i>Bellmour</i> ,		
<i>Letitia</i> , wife to <i>Fondlewife</i> ,		Miss Haughton.
<i>Silvia</i> , <i>Vainlove</i> 's forsaken mistress,		Miss Pope.
<i>Lucy</i> , her maid,		Miss Plym.
<i>Betty</i> ,		Mrs. Bennet.
Boy and Footmen.		Miss Mills.

S C E N E, L O N D O N.

THE

THE
OLD BATCHELOR.

A C T I.

S C E N E *the Street.*

Bellmour and Vainlove, meeting.

B E L L M O U R.

Vainlove, and abroad so early! Good morrow; I thought a contemplative lover could no more have parted with his bed in a morning, than he could have slept in't.

Vain. Bellmour, good morrow—Why, the truth on't is, these early fallies are not usual to me; but business, as you see, Sir—[*Shewing letters.*] And business must be follow'd, or be lost.

Bell. Business!—And so must time, my friend, be close pursued or lost. Business is the rub of life, perverts our aim, casts off the bias, and leaves us wide and short of the intended mark.

Vain. Pleasure, I guess, you mean.

Bell. Ay, what else has meaning?

Vain. Oh, the wife will tell you—

Bell. More than they believe—or understand.

Vain. How, how, Ned, a wife man say more than he understands?

A 3

Bell.

6 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Bell. Ay, ay, wisdom's nothing but a pretending to know and believe more than we really do. You read of but one wise man, and all that he knew was, that he knew nothing. Come, come, leave business to idlers, and wisdom to fools; they have need of 'em: wit be my faculty, and pleasure my occupation; and let father Time shake his glass. Let low and earthly souls grovel 'till they have work'd themselves six feet deep into a grave—Business is not my element—I roll in a higher orb, and dwell—

Vain. In castles i'th' air, of thy own building; that's thy element, Ned—Well, as high a flier as you are, I have a lure may make you stoop.

[*Flings a letter.*]

Bell. Aye, marry, Sir, I have a hawk's eye at a woman's hand—There's more elegancy in the false spelling of this superscription [*Takes up the letter.*] than in all Cicero—Let me see—How now! *Dear, perfidious Vainlove.*

[*Reads.*]

Vain. Hold, hold, 'sife, that's the wrong.

Bell. Nay, let's see the name; (*Silvia!*) how can'st thou be ungrateful to that creature? She's extremely pretty, and loves thee intirely—I have heard her breathe such raptures about thee—

Vain. Ay, or any body that she's about—

Bell. No, faith, Frank, you wrong her; she has been just to you.

Vain. That's pleasant, by my troth, from thee, who hast had her.

Bell. Never—her affections: 'tis true, by Heav'n, she own'd it to my face; 'and blushing like the virgin morn, when it disclos'd the cheat which that 'trusty bawd of nature, night, had hid', confess'd her soul was true to you, tho' I by treachery had stol'n the bliss—

Vain. So was true as turtle—in imagination, Ned, ha? Preach this doctrine to husbands, and the married women will adore thee.

Bell. Why, faith I think it will do well enough—if the husband be out of the way, for the wife to shew her

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 7

her fondness and impatience of his absence, by chusing a lover as like him as she can, and what is unlike, she may help out with her own fancy.

Vain. But is it not an abuse to the lover to be made a blind of?

Bell. As you say, the abuse is to the lover, not the husband; for 'tis an argument of her zeal towards him, that she will enjoy him in effigy.

Vain. It must be a very superstitious country, where such zeal passes for true devotion. I doubt it will be damn'd by all our protestant husbands for flat idolatry—But if you can make alderman Fondlewife of your persuasion, this letter will be needless.

Bell. What, the old banker, with the handsome wife?

Vain. Ay.

Bell. Let me see, Lætitia! Oh, 'tis a delicious morsel. Dear Frank, thou art the truest friend in in the world.

Vain. Ay, am I not? to be continually starting of hares for you to course. We were certainly cut out for one another; for my temper quits an amour, just where thine takes it up—But read that, it is an appointment for me, this evening, when Fondlewife will be gone out of town to meet the master of a ship, about the return of a venture which he's in danger of losing. Read, read.

Bell. Reads. Hum, hum—*Out of town this evening, and talks of sending for Mr. Spintext to keep me company; but I'll take care he shall not be at home.* Good! Spintext! Oh, the fanatick one-ey'd parson!

Vain. Ay.

Bell. reads. Hum, hum—*That your conversation will be much more agreeable, if you can counterfeit his habit to blind the servants.* Very good! Then I must be disguised—With all my heart—'It adds a
' gusto to an amour; gives it the greater resemblance
' of theft; and, among us lewd mortals, the deeper
' the sin, the sweeter.' Frank, I'm amaz'd at thy good-nature—

Vain.

8 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Vain. Faith, I hate love, when 'tis forc'd upon a man, as I do wine——And this business is none of my seeking; I only happened to be once or twice where Lætitia was the handsomest woman in company, so, consequently, apply'd myself to her—And it seems she has taken me at my word——Had you been there, or any body, t'ad been the same.

Bell. I wish I may succeed as the same.

Vain. Never doubt it; ' for if the spirit of cuckoldom be once raised up in a woman, the devil can't lay it, 'till she has don't.

Bell. Pry'thee what sort of fellow is Fondlewife?

Vain. A kind of mongrel zealot, sometimes very precise and peevish: but I have seen him pleasant enough in his way; much addicted to jealousy, but more to fondness: so that as he's often jealous without a cause, he's as often satisfied without reason.

Bell. A very even temper, and fit for my purpose. I must get your man Setter to provide my disguise.

Vain. Ay, you may take him for good and all, if you will, for you have made him fit for nobody else——Well——

Bell. You're going to visit in return of Silvia's letter——Poor rogue! Any hour of the day or night will serve her——But do you know nothing of a new rival there?

Vain. Yes, Heartwell, that, surly old, pretended woman-hater, thinks her virtuous; that's one reason why I fail her: I would have her fret herself out of conceit with me, that she may entertain some thoughts of him. I know he visits her every day.

Bell. Yet rails on still, and thinks his love unknown to us; a little time will swell him so, he must be forc'd to give it birth; and the discovery must needs be very pleasant from himself; to see what pains he will take, and how he will strain to be delivered of a secret, when he has miscarried of it already.

Vain. Well, good morrow; let's dine together; I'll meet at the old place.

Bell. With all my heart; it lies convenient for us
to

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 9

to pay our afternoon services to our mistresses; I find I am damnably in love, I'm so uneasy for not having seen Belinda yesterday.

Vain. But I saw my Araminta, yet am as impatient. [Exit.

Bell. Why, what a cormorant in love am I! who not contented with the slavery of honourable love in one place, 'and the pleasure of enjoying some half 'a score mistresses of my own acquiring,' must yet take Vainlove's business upon my hands, because it lay too heavy upon his; 'so am not only forc'd to lie 'with other men's wives for 'em, but must also undertake the harder task of obliging their mistresses' — I must take up, or I shall never hold out; 'flesh 'and blood cannot bear it always.

Enter Sharper.

Sharp. I'm sorry to see this, Ned: if once a man comes to his soliloquies, I give him for gone.

Bell. Sharper, I'm glad to see thee.

Sharp. What, is Belinda cruel, that you are so thoughtful?

Bell. No, faith, not for that——But there's a business of consequence fall'n out to-day, that requires some consideration.

Sharp. Prithee, what mighty business of consequence canst thou have?

Bell. Why, you must know 'tis a piece of work towards the finishing of an alderman; it seems I must put the last hand to it, and dub him cuckold, that he may be of equal dignity with the rest of his brethren: so I must beg Belinda's pardon.

Sharp. Faith, e'en give her over for good and all: you can have no hopes of getting her for a mistress; and she is too proud, too inconstant, too affected, too witty, and too handsome, for a wife.

Bell. But she can't have too much money—There's twelve thousand pounds, Tom.—'Tis true she is excessively foppish and affected: but, in my conscience, I believe the baggage loves me; for she never speaks well of me herself, nor suffers any body else to rail at me. Then, as I told you, there's twelve thousand pounds

8 THE OLD BACHELOR.

pounds—Hum—Why, faith, upon second thoughts, she does not appear to be so very affected neither— Give her her due, I think the woman's a woman, and that's all. As such, I am sure I shall like her ; for the devil take me if I don't love all the sex.

Sharp. And here comes one who swears as heartily he hates all the sex.

Enter Heartwell.

Bell. Who ? Heartwell ! Ay, but he knows better things — How now, George, where hast thou been snarling odious truths, ' and entertaining company, like a physician, with discourses of their diseases and infirmities ? What fine lady hast thou been putting out of conceit with herself, and persuading, that the face she had been making all the morning, was none of her own ;' for I know thou art as unmannerly and as unwelcome to a woman, as a looking-glass after the small-pox.

Heart. I confess I have not been sneering fulsome lies, and nauseous flattery, fawning upon a little tawdry whore that will fawn upon me again, and entertain any puppy that comes, like a tumbler, with the same tricks over and over : for such, I guess, may have been your late employment.

Bell. Wou'd thou had'st come a little sooner, Vain-love would have wrought thy conversion, and been a champion for the cause.

Heart. What, has he been here ? That's one of love's April-fools, is always upon some errand that's to no purpose, ever embarking in adventures, yet never comes to harbour.

Sharp. That's because he always sets out in foul weather, loves to buffet with the winds, meet the tide, and sail in the teeth of opposition.

Heart. What, has he not dropt anchor at Araminta ?

Bell. Truth on't is, she fits his temper best, is a kind of floating island ; sometimes seems in reach, then vanishes, and keeps him busied in the search.

Sharp. She had need have a good share of sense to manage so capricious a lover.

Bell.

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 11

Bell. Faith, I don't know. He's of a temper the most easy to himself in the world ; ' he takes as much
' always of an amour as he cares for, and quits it
' when it grows stale or unpleasant.

' *Sharp.* An argument of very little passion, very
' good understanding, and very ill nature.

' *Heart.* And proves that Vainlove plays the fool
' with discretion.

Sharp. You, Bellmour, are bound in gratitude to stickle for him ; you with pleasure reap that fruit, which he takes pains to sow. He does the drudgery in the mine, and you stamp your image on the gold.

Bell. He's of another opinion, and says I do the drudgery in the mine. Well, we have each our share of sport, and each that which he likes best ; 'tis his diversion to set, 'tis mine to cover the partridge.

Heart. And it should be mine to let 'em go again.

Sharp. Not till you had mouth'd a little, George, I think that's all thou art fit for now.

Heart. Good, Mr. young fellow, you're mistaken ; as able as yourself, and as nimble too, though I mayn't have so much mercury in my limbs. 'Tis true indeed I don't force appetite, but ' wait the natural call
' of my lust, and ' think it time enough to be wicked, after I have had the temptation.

Bell. Time enough ! ay, too soon, I should rather have expected from a person of your gravity.

Heart. Yet it is oftentimes too late with some of you young, termagant, flashy sinners—you have all the guilt of the intention, and none of the pleasure of the practice—'Tis true you are so eager in pursuit of the temptation, that you save the devil the trouble of leading you into it : Nor is it out of discretion, that you don't swallow that very hook yourselves have baited, but you are eloy'd with the preparative, and what you mean for a whet, turns the edge of your puny stomach. ' Your love is like your courage,
' which you shew for the first year or two upon all
' occasions ; 'till in a little time, being disabled or
' disarmed, you abate of your vigour ; and that daring
' blade,

12 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

‘ blade, which was so often drawn, is bound to the
‘ peace for ever hereafter.

Bell. Thou art an old fornicator of a singular good principle indeed ! and art for encouraging youth, that they may be as wicked as thou art at thy years.

Heart. I am for having every body be what they pretend to be ; ‘ a whoremaster be a whoremaster ;’ and not, like Vainlove, kiss a lap-dog with passion, when it would disgust him from the lady’s own lips.

Bell. ‘ That only happens sometimes, where the
‘ dog has the sweeter breath, for the more cleanly
‘ conveyance.’ But, George, you must not quarrel with little gallantries of this nature. Women are often won by ‘em. Who would refuse to kiss a lap-dog if it were preliminary to the lips of his lady ?

Sharp. Or omit playing with her fan, ‘ and cooling her if she were hot, when it might intitle him
‘ to the office of warming her when she should be
‘ cold.

Bell. Or what is it to read a play in a rainy day ! Though you should be now and then interrupted in a witty scene, and she perhaps preserve her laughter ‘till the jest were over ; even that may be borne with, considering the reward in prospect.

Heart. I confess, you that are women’s asses, bear greater burdens ; are forced to undergo dressing, dancing, singing, fighting, whining, rhyming, flattering, lying, grinning, cringing, and the drudgery of loving to boot.

Bell. O brute ! the drudgery of loving !

Heart. Ay, why to come to love through all these incumbrances, is like coming to an estate overcharg’d with debts ; which by the time you have paid, yields no further profit than what the bare tillage and manuring of the land will produce, at the expence of your own sweat.

Bell. Prithee, how dost thou love ?

Sharp. He ! he hates the sex.

Heart. So I hate physic too——yet I may love to take it for my health.

Bell. Well come off, George, if at any time you should be taken straying.

Sharp. He has need of such an excuse, considering the present state of his body.

Heart. How d'ye mean?

Sharp. Why, if wenching be phyfic, as you call it, then, I may say, marriage is entering into a course of phyfic.

Bell. How, George, does the wind blow there!

Heart. It will as soon blow north and by south—Marry, quotha! I hope in heaven I have a greater portion of grace; and I think I have baited too many of those traps, to be caught in one myself.

Bell. Who the devil would have thee? unless 'twere an oister-woman, to propagate young fry for Billingsgate—Thy talent will never recommend thee to any thing of better quality.

Heart. My talent is chiefly that of speaking truth, which I don't expect should ever recommend me to people of quality—I thank heaven, I have very honestly purchased the hatred of all the great families in town.

Sharp. And you, in return of spleen, hate them. But could you hope to be received into the alliance of a noble family?

Heart. No, I hope I shall never merit that affliction—to be punished with a wife of birth—be a stag of the first head, and bear my horns aloft, like one of the supporters of my wife's coat. 'Sdeath, I would not be a cuckold to e'er an illustrious whore in England.

Bell. What not to make your family, man, and provide for your children?

Sharp. For her children, you mean.

Heart. Ay, there you've nick'd it—there's the devil upon devil—Oh, the pride and joy of heart 'twould be to me, to have my son and heir resemble such a duke—to have a fleering coxcomb scoff and cry, Mr. your son's mighty like his grace, has just his smile and air of's face. Then replies another—

14 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Methinks he has more of the marquis of such a place, about his nose and eyes; though he has my lord What-d'ye-call's mouth to a tittle—Then, I, to put it off as unconcerned, come chuck the infant under the chin, force a smile, and cry, Ay, the boy takes after his mother's relations—when the devil and she knows, 'tis a little compound of the whole body of nobility.

Bell. }
Sharp. } Ha, ha, ha.

Bell. Well, but George, I have one question to ask you ———

Heart. Pshaw, I have prattled away my time—I hope you are in no haste for an answer—for I shan't stay now. [Looking on his watch.

Bell. Nay, prithee, George——

Heart. No, besides my business, I see a fool coming this way. Adieu. [Exit.

Bell. What does he mean? Oh, 'tis Sir Joseph Wittoll, with his friend; but I see he has turned the corner, and goes another way.

Sharp. What, in the name of wonder, is it?

Bell. Why, a fool.

Sharp. 'Tis a tawdry outside.

Bell. And a very beggarly lining—yet he may be worth your acquaintance—A little of thy chymistry, Tom, may extract gold from that dirt.

Sharp. Say you so? 'Faith, I am as poor as a chymist, and would be as industrious. But what was he that followed him? Is not he a dragon that watches those golden pippins?

Bell. Hang him, no, he a dragon! if he be, 'tis a very peaceful one; I can insure his anger dormant; or should he seem to rouse, 'tis but well lashing him, and he will sleep like a top.

Sharp. Ay, is he of that kidney?

Bell. Yet is adored by that bigot, Sir Joseph Wittoll, as the image of valour. He calls him his back, and indeed they are never asunder—yet last night, I know not by what mischance, the knight was alone, and had fallen into the hands of some night-walkers,
who,

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 15

who, I suppose, would have pillaged him: but I chanced to come by, and rescued him; though I believe he was heartily frightened, for as soon as ever he was loose he ran away, without staying to see who had helped him.

Sharp. Is that bully of his in the army?

Bell. No, but is a pretender, and wears the habit of a soldier; 'which now-a-days as often cloaks cowardice, as a black gown does atheism.'——You must know he has been abroad—went purely to run away from a campaign; enriched himself with the plunder of a few oaths—and here vents 'em against the general, who slighting men of merit, and preferring only those of interest, has made him quit the service.

Sharp. Wherein, no doubt, he magnifies his own performance.

Bell. Speaks miracles; is the drum to his own praise—the only implement of a soldier he resembles; like that, being full of blustering noise and emptiness—

Sharp. And, like that, of no use but to be beaten.

Bell. Right; but then the comparison breaks; for he will take a drubbing with as little noise as a pulpit cushion.

Sharp. His name, and I have done.

Bell. Why, that, to pass it current too, he has gilded with a title; he is called captain Bluff.

Sharp. Well, I'll endeavour his acquaintance—you steer another course, are bound

For love's island; I, for the golden coast,
May each succeed in what he wishes most.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

Sir Joseph Wittoll, Sharper following.

SHARPER.

SURE that's he, and alone.

Sir Jo. Um——Ay, this, this is the very damned place: the inhuman cannibals, the bloody-minded villains, would have butcher'd me last night. No doubt, they would have flea'd me alive, have sold my skin, and devoured me.

Sharp. How's this!

Sir Jo. An it hadn't been for a civil gentleman as came by and frighted 'em away—but, agad, I durst not stay to give him thanks.

Sharp. This must be Bellmour, he means——Ha! I have a thought——

Sir Jo. Zook, would the captain would come; the very remembrance makes me quake; agad, I shall never be reconciled to this place heartily.

Sharp. 'Tis but trying, and being where I am at worst, now luck!——Curs'd fortune! this must be the place, this damn'd unlucky place——

Sir Jo. Agad, and so 'tis——Why here has been more mischief done, I perceive.

Sharp. No, 'tis gone, 'tis lost——ten thousand devils on that chance which drew me hither! Ay, here, just here; this spot to me is hell; nothing to be found, but the despair of what I've lost.

[*Looking about as in search.*]

Sir Jo. Poor gentleman——By the lord Harry, I'll stay no longer, for I have found too——

Sharp. Ha! who's that has found? What have you found? restore it quickly, or by——

Sir Jo. Not I, Sir, not I, as I've a soul to be saved, I have found nothing but what has been to my loss, as I may say, and as you were saying, Sir.

Sharp.

Sharp. O, your servant, Sir, you are safe then it seems; 'tis an ill wind that blows nobody good. Well, you may rejoice over my ill-fortune, since it paid the price of your ransom.

Sir Jo. I rejoice! agad, not I, Sir. I'm very sorry for your loss, with all my heart, blood, and guts, Sir; and if you did but know me, you'd ne'er say I were so ill-natur'd.

Sharp. Know you! Why can you be so ungrateful, to forget me!

Sir Jo. O, lord, forget him! No, no, Sir, I don't forget you——because I never saw your face before, agad. Ha, ha, ha.

Sharp. How!

[*Angrily.*]

Sir Jo. Stay, stay, Sir, let me recollect——he's a damn'd angry fellow——I believe I had better remember him, till I can get out of his sight; but out o'fight out o'mind, agad.

[*Aside.*]

Sharp. Methought the service I did you last night, Sir, in preserving you from those ruffians, might have taken better root in your shallow memory.

Sir Jo. Gads-daggers-belts-blades and scabbards, this is the very gentleman! How shall I make him a return suitable to the greatness of his merit——I had a pretty thing to that purpose, if he han't frighted it out of my memory. Hem! hem!——Sir, I most submissively implore your pardon for my transgression of ingratitude and omission; having my intire dependence, Sir, upon the superfluity of your goodness, which, like an inundation, will, I hope, totally immerge the recollection of my error, and leave me floating in your sight, upon the full blown bladders of repentance——by the help of which, I shall once more hope to swim into your favour.

[*Bows.*]

Sharp. So-h, O, Sir, I am easily pacify'd; the acknowledgment of a gentleman——

Sir Jo. Acknowledgment! Sir, I am all over acknowledgment, and will not stick to shew it in the greatest extremity, by night or by day, in sickness or in health, winter or summer; all seasons and occa-

18 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

fions shall testify the reality and gratitude of your superabundant humble servant, Sir Joseph Wittoll, knight. Hem! hem!

Sharp. Sir Joseph Wittoll!

Sir Jo. The same, Sir, of Wittoll-Hall, in Comitatu Bucks.

Sharp. Is it possible! Then I am happy to have obliged the mirror of knighthood and pink of courtesy in the age. Let me embrace you.

Sir Jo. O lord, Sir!

Sharp. My loss I esteem as a trifle, repaid with interest, since it has purchas'd me the friendship and acquaintance of the person in the world whose character I admire.

Sir Jo. You are only pleased to say so, Sir—— But pray, if I may be so bold, what is that loss you mentioned?

Sharp. O, term it no longer so, Sir. In the scuffle, last night, I only dropt a bill of a hundred pound, which, I confess, I came half despairing to recover; but thanks to my better fortune——

Sir Jo. You have found it, Sir, then it seems; I profess I'm heartily glad——

Sharp. Sir, your humble servant—I don't question but you are; that you have so cheap an opportunity of expressing your gratitude and generosity. Since the paying so trivial a sum, will wholly acquit you and doubly engage me.

Sir Jo. What a dickens does he mean by a trivial sum? [*Aside.*] But han't you found it, Sir?

Sharp. No otherwise, I vow to God, but in my hopes in you, Sir.

Sir Jo. Humh.

Sharp. But that's sufficient———'Twere injustice to doubt the honour of Sir Joseph Wittoll.

Sir Jo. O lord, Sir.

Sharp. You are above, I'm sure, a thought so low, to suffer me to lose what was ventured in your service. Nay, 'twas in a manner——paid down for your deliverance;

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 19

verance; 'twas so much lent you——and you scorn, I'll say that for you——

Sir *Jo.* Nay, I'll say that for myself, with your leave, Sir, I do scorn a dirty thing. But, agad, I'm a little out of pocket at present.

Sharp. 'Pshaw, you can't want a hundred pound. Your word is sufficient any where. 'Tis but borrowing so much dirt, you have large acres, and can soon repay it—Money is but dirt, Sir Joseph—mere dirt.

Sir *Jo.* But I profess, 'tis a dirt I have washed my hands of at present; I have laid it all out upon my back.

Sharp. Are you so extravagant in clothes, Sir Joseph?

Sir *Jo.* Ha, ha, ha, a very good jest, I profess; ha, ha, ha, a very good jest, and I did not know that I had said it, and that's a better jest than t'other. 'Tis a sign you and I ha'n't been long acquainted; you have lost a good jest for want of knowing me—I only mean a friend of mine, whom I call my back; he sticks as close to me, and follows me through all dangers——he is indeed back, breast, and headpiece, as it were, to me—agad, he's a brave fellow—Pauh, I am quite another thing, when I am with him. I don't fear the devil, bless us, almost, if he be by. Ah——had he been with me last night——

Sharp. If he had, Sir, what then? He could have done no more, nor perhaps have suffer'd so much——had he a hundred pound to lose? [*Angrily.*]

Sir *Jo.* O lord, Sir, by no means—but I might have saved a hundred pound. [*Aside.*] I meant innocently, as I hope to be saved, Sir—a damned hot fellow. [*Aside.*] Only as I was saying, I let him have all my ready money to redeem his great sword from limbo—But, Sir, I have a letter of credit to alderman Fondlewife, as far as two hundred pounds, and this afternoon you shall see I am a person, such a one as you would wish to have met with——

Sharp. That you are, I'll be sworn. [*Aside.*] Why that's great, and like yourself,

Enter

20 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Enter Captain Bluff.

Sir Jo. O, here a' comes——Ay, my Hector of Troy! welcome, my bully, my back; agad, my heart has gone a pit-pat for thee.

Bluff. How now, my young knight! Not for fear, I hope; he that knows me, must be a stranger to fear.

Sir Jo. Nay, agad, I hate fear, ever since I had like to have died of a fright——But——

Bluff. But! Look you here, boy, here's your antidote, here's your Jesuit's powder for a shaking fit——But who hast thou got with thee, is he of mettle?

[Laying his hand upon his sword.]

Sir Jo. Ay, bully, a devilish smart fellow: 'a will fight like a cock.

Bluff. Say you so? then I honour him——But has he been abroad? for every cock will fight upon his own dunghill.

Sir Jo. I don't know, but I'll present you——

Bluff. I'll recommend myself——Sir, I honour you: I understand you love fighting; I reverence a man that loves fighting, Sir, I kiss your hilts.

Sharp. Sir, your servant, but you are misinformed; for unless it be to serve my particular friend, as Sir Joseph here, my country, or my religion, or in some very justifiable cause, I'm not for it.

Bluff. O lord, I beg your pardon, Sir, I find you are not of my palate, you can't relish a dish of fighting, without sweet sauce. Now, I think——fighting for fighting sake's sufficient cause; fighting, to me's religion and the laws.

Sir Jo. Ah, well said, my hero; was not that great, Sir? By the lord Harry, he says true; fighting is meat, drink, and cloth to him. But, back, this gentleman is one of the best friends I have in the world, and saved my life last night——You know I told you.

Bluff. Ay! Then I honour him again——Sir, may I crave your name?

Sharp.

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 21

Sharp. Ah, Sir, my name's Sharper.

Sir Jo. Pray, Mr. Sharper, embrace my back—
Very well—by the Lord Harry, Mr. Sharper, he's
as brave as Cannibal, are not you, Bully-Back?

Sharp. Hannibal, I believe you mean, Sir Joseph.

Bluff. Undoubtedly he did, Sir; faith, Hannibal
was a very pretty fellow—but, Sir Joseph, compari-
sons are odious—Hannibal was a very pretty fel-
low in those days, it must be granted—But alas,
Sir! were he alive now, he would be nothing, nothing
in the earth.

Sharp. How, Sir! I make a doubt if there be at
this day a greater general breathing.

Bluff. Oh, excuse me, Sir; have you serv'd a-
broad, Sir?

Sharp. Not I, really, Sir?

Bluff. Oh, I thought so—Why, then you can
know nothing, Sir; I am afraid you scarce know the
history of the late war in Flanders, with all its par-
ticulars.

Sharp. Not I, Sir, no more than public letters or
Gazettes tell us.

Bluff. Gazette! Why there again, now—Why,
Sir, there are not three words of truth, the year
round, put into the Gazette—I'll tell you a
strange thing, now, as to that—You must know,
Sir, I was resident in Flanders the last campaign;
had a small post there; but no matter for that—
Perhaps, Sir, there was scarce any thing of moment
done, but an humble servant of your's, that shall be
nameless, was an eye-witness of—I won't say had the
greatest share in't: tho' I might say that too, since
I name nobody, you know—Well, Mr. Sharper,
would you think it? In all this time—as I hope for
a truncheon—this rascally Gazette-writer never so
much as once mentioned me—Not once, by the wars!
—Took no more notice, than as if Nol Bluff had not
been in the land of the living.

Sharp. Strange!

Sir Jo. Yet, by the Lord Harry, 'tis true, Mr.
Sharper;

22 THE OLD BATCHELOR

Sharper; for I went every day to coffee-houses to read the Gazette myself.

Bluff. Ay, ay, no matter——You see, Mr. Sharper, after all, I am content to retire—Live a private person—Scipio and others have done it.

Sharp. Impudent rogue! [*Aside.*]

Sir Jo. Ay, this damn'd modesty of yours——Agad, if he would put in for't, he might be made general himself yet.

Bluff. O fy, no, Sir Joseph——You know I hate this.

Sir Jo. Let me but tell Mr. Sharper a little, how you eat fire once out of the mouth of a cannon——agad he did; those impenetrable whiskers of his have confronted flames——

Bluff. Death, what do you mean, Sir Joseph!

Sir Jo. Look you now, I tell you he's so modest he'll own nothing.

Bluff. Pish! you have put me out, I have forgot what I was about. Pray, hold your tongue, and give me leave. [*Angrily.*]

Sir Jo. I am dumb.

Bluff. This sword, I think, I was telling you of, Mr. Sharper——This sword, I'll maintain to be the best divine, anatomist, lawyer, or casuist in Europe; it shall decide a controversy, or split a cause——

Sir Jo. Nay, now I must speak; it will split a hair; by the Lord Harry, I have seen it.

Bluff. Zouns, Sir, it's a lie, you have not seen it, nor shan't see it; Sir, I say you can't see; what d'ye say to that, now?

Sir Jo. I am blind.

Bluff. Death! had any other man interrupted me——

Sir Jo. Good Mr. Sharper, speak to him; I dare not look that way.

Sharp. Captain, Sir Joseph's penitent.

Bluff. O I am calm, Sir, calm as a discharged culverin——But 'twas indiscreet, when you know what will provoke me——Nay, come, Sir Joseph, you know my heat's soon over.

Sir Jo.

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 23

Sir Jo. Well, I am a fool sometimes——But I'm sorry.

Bluff. Enough.

Sir Jo. Come, we'll go take a glass to drown animosities. Mr. Sharper, will you partake?

Sharp. I wait on you, Sir; nay, pray, captain——you are Sir Joseph's back. [Exit.

SCENE, Araminta's apartment.

Araminta and Belinda, Betty waiting.

Belin. Ah! nay, dear——pr'ythee good, dear, sweet cousin, no more. Oh gad, I swear you'd make one sick to hear you.

Aram. Bless me! what have I said to move you thus?

Belin. O you have raved, talked idly, and all in commendation of that filthy, awkward, two-legg'd creature, man——you don't know what you've said, your fever has transported you.

Aram. If love be the fever which you mean, kind Heav'n avert the cure: let me have oil to feed that flame, and never let it be extinct, 'till I myself am ashes.

Belin. There was a whine!—O gad, I hate your horrid fancy—this love is the devil; and sure to be in love, is to be possess'd—'Tis in the head, the heart, the blood, the——all over——O gad, you are quite spoil'd—I shall loath the sight of mankind for your sake.

Aram. Fy! this is gross affectation——A little of Bellmour's company would change the scene.

Belin. Filthy fellow! I wonder, cousin——

Aram. I wonder, cousin, you should imagine I don't perceive you love him.

Belin. Oh, I love your hideous fancy! Ha, ha, ha, love a man!

Aram. Love a man! yes, you would not love a beast.

Belin.

24 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Belin. Of all beasts, not an afs—which is so like your Vainlove—Lard, I have seen an afs look so chagrín, ha, ha, ha! (you must pardon me, I can't help laughing) that an absolute lover would have concluded the poor creature to have had darts, and flames, and altars, and all that, in his breast. Araminta, come, I'll talk seriously to you now; could you but see, with my eyes, the buffoonry of one scene of address, a lover, set out with all his equipage and appurtenances; O gad! sure you would——But you play the game, and consequently can't see the miscarriages obvious to every stander by.

Aram. Yes, yes, I can see something near it, when you and Bellmour meet. You don't know that you dreamt of Bellmour last night, and call'd him aloud in your sleep.

Belin. Pish! I can't help dreaming of the devil sometimes; would you from thence infer I love him?

Aram. But that's not all; you caught me in your arms when you named him, and press'd me to your bosom—Sure, if I had not pinch'd you till you wak'd, you had stifled me with kisses.

Belin. O barbarous aspersión!

Aram. No aspersión, cousin, we are alone—Nay I can tell you more.

Belin. I deny it all.

Aram. What, before you hear it?

Belin. My denial is premeditated, like your malice—Lard, cousin, you talk odly—Whatever the matter is, o' my soul, I'm afraid you'll follow evil courses.

Aram. Ha, ha, ha! this is pleasant.

Belin. You may laugh, but——

Aram. Ha, ha, ha!

Belin. You think the malicious grin becomes you—The devil take Bellmour—Why do you tell me of him?

Aram. Oh, is it come out—now you are angry, I am sure you love him. I tell nobody else, cousin—I have not betray'd you yet.

Belin. Pr'ythee, tell it all the world; it's false.

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 25

Aram. Come, then, kifs and friends.

Belin. Pish.

Aram. Pr'ythee don't be so peevish.

Belin. Pr'ythee don't be so impertinent—Betty.

Aram. Ha, ha, ha!

Betty. Did your ladyship call, Madam?

Belin. Get my hoods and tippet, and bid the footman call a chair. [Exit Betty.]

Aram. I hope you are not going out in dudgeon, cousin.

Enter Footman.

Foot. Madam, there are——

Belin. Is there a chair?

Foot. No, Madam, there are Mr. Bellmour and Mr. Vainlove, to wait upon your ladyship.

Aram. Are they below;

Foot. No, Madam, they sent before, to know if you were at home.

Belin. The visit's to you, cousin, I suppose I am at my liberty.

Aram. Be ready to shew 'em up. [Exit Foot.]

Enter Betty, with hoods and looking-glasses.

I can't tell, cousin, I believe we are equally concerned; but if you continue your humour, it won't be very entertaining—I know she'd fain be persuaded to stay. [Aside.]

Belin. I shall oblige you in leaving you to the full and free enjoyment of that conversation you admire. Let me see; hold the glass—Lard, I look wretchedly to-day!

Aram. Betty, why don't you help my cousin?

[Putting on her hoods.]

Belin. Hold off your fits, and see that he gets a chair with a high roof, or a very low seat—Stay, come back here, you, Mrs. Fidget—you are so ready to go to the footman—Here, take 'em all again, my mind's chang'd, I won't go. [Exit Betty.]

Aram. So, this I expected—You won't oblige

VOL. II.

C

me

26 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

me, then, cousin, and let me have all the company to my elf.

Belin. No; upon deliberation, I have too much charity to trust you to yourself. The devil watches all opportunities; and in this favourable disposition of your mind, Heaven knows how far you may be tempted: I am tender of your reputation.

Aram. I am oblig'd to you—But who's malicious now, Belinda?

Belin. Not I; witness my heart, I stay out of pure affection.

Aram. In my conscience I believe you.

Enter Bellmour, Vainlove, and footman.

Bell. So, fortune be prais'd! To find you both within, ladies, is——

Aram. No miracle, I hope.

Bell. Not o' your side, Madam, I confess—But my tyrant, there, and I, are two buckets that can never come together.

Belin. Nor are ever like —— Yet we often meet, and clash.

Bell. How, never like! marry, Hymen forbid. But this is to run so extravagantly in debt; I have laid out such a world of love in your service, that you think you can never be able to pay me all; so shun me, for the same reason that you would a dun.

Belin. Ah, on my conscience, and the most impertinent and troublesome of duns—— A dun for money will be quiet, when he sees his debtor has not wherewithal—— But a dun for love is an eternal torment, that never rests——

Bell. 'Till he has created love where there was none, and then gets it for his pains. For importunity in love, like importunity at court, first creates its own interest, and then pursues it for the favour.

Aram. Favours that are got by impudence and importunity, are like discoveries from the rack, when the afflicted person, for his ease, sometimes confesses secrets his heart knows nothing of.

Vain.

Vain. I should rather think, favours, so gain'd, to be due rewards to indefatigable devotion——For as love is a deity, he must be serv'd by prayer.

Belin. O gad, would you would all pray to Love, then, and let us alone.

Vain. You are the temples of Love, and 'tis through you our devotion must be convey'd.

Aram. Rather, poor silly idols of your own making, which, upon the least displeasure, you forsake, and set up new——Every man, now, changes his mistress and his religion, as his humour varies, or his interest.

Vain. O Madam——

Aram. Nay, come, I find we are growing serious, and then we are in great danger of being dull——‘ If my musick-master be not gone, I’ll entertain you with a new song, which comes pretty near my own opinion of love, and your sex—Who’s there? Is Mr. Gavot gone? [Calls.

Foot. ‘ Only to the next door, Madam; I’ll call him. [Exit.

Bell. Why, you won’t hear me with patience.

Aram. What’s the matter, cousin?

Bell. Nothing, Madam, only——

Belin. Pr’ythee hold thy tongue——Lard, he has so pester’d me with flames and stuff——I think I shan’t endure the fight of a fire this twelve-month.

Bell. Yet all can’t melt that cruel, frozen heart.

Belin. ‘ O gad, I hate your hideous fancy’—you said that once before——if you must talk impertinently, for Heaven’s sake, let it be with variety; don’t come always, like the devil, wrapt in flames—I’ll not hear a sentence more, that begins with an, I burn—or an, I beseech you, Madam.

Bell. But tell me how you would be ador’d—I am very tractable.

Belin. Then, know, I would be ador’d in silence.

Bell. Humph, I thought so, that you might have all the talk to yourself—You had better let me speak;

18 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

for if my thoughts fly to any pitch, I shall make villainous signs.

Belin. What will you get by that? to make such signs as I won't understand.

Bell. Ay, but if I'm tongue-ty'd, I must have all my actions free, to——quicken your apprehension—and, I gad, let me tell you, my most prevailing argument is express'd in dumb-shew.

‘ *Enter Musick-master.*

‘ *Aram.* O I am glad we shall have a song to divert the discourse——Pray oblige us with the last new song.

‘ S O N G.

I.

- ‘ Thus to a ripe, consenting maid,
- ‘ Poor, old, repenting Delia said,
- ‘ Would you long preserve your lover?
- ‘ Would you still his goddess reign?
- ‘ Never let him all discover,
- ‘ Never let him much obtain.

II.

- ‘ Men will admire, adore and die,
- ‘ While wishing at your feet they lie:
- ‘ But admitting their embraces,
- ‘ Wakes 'em from the golden dream;
- ‘ Nothing new besides our faces,
- ‘ Every woman is the same.

‘ *Aram.* So, how d'ye like the song, gentlemen?

‘ *Bell.* O, very well perform'd—but I don't much admire the words.

‘ *Aram.* I expected it——there's too much truth in 'em: if Mr. Gavot will walk with us in the garden, we'll have it once again——you may like it better at second hearing. You'll bring my cousin.

Aram.

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 29

* *Aram.* If you'll walk into the next room, I'll entertain you with a song, to divert the discourse—
You'll bring my cousin.

Bell. Faith, Madam, I dare not speak to her; but I'll make signs. [*Addresses Belinda in dumb show.*]

Belin. Oh, foh! your dumb rhetorick is more ridiculous than your talking impertinence; 'as an ape 'is a much more troublesome animal than a parrot.

* *Aram.* Ay, cousin, and 'tis a sign the creatures 'mimick nature well; for there are few men but do 'more silly things than they say.

Bell. 'Well, I find my apishness has paid the ransom for my speech, and set it at liberty—tho', I confess, I could be well enough pleas'd to drive on a love bargain, in that silent manner—'twould save a man a world of lying and swearing at the year's end. Besides, I have had a little experience, that brings to mind—

*When wit and reason both have fail'd to move;
Kind looks and actions (from success) do prove,
Ev'n silence may be eloquent in love.* }

The END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *the Street.*

Silvia and Lucy.

SILVIA.

WILL he not come, then?

Lucy. Yes, yes, come, I warrant him, if you will go in, and be ready to receive him.

* This speech is inserted, on account of the song, &c. being omitted in the representation.

C 3

Silv.

30 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Silv. Why did you not tell me?—Whom mean you?

Lucy. Whom you should mean, Heartwell.

Silv. Senseless creature, I meant my Vainlove.

Lucy. You may as soon hope to recover your own maidenhead as his love. Therefore, e'en set your heart at rest; and in the name of opportunity mind your own business. Strike, Heartwell, home, before the bait's worn off the hook. Age will come. He nibbled fairly yesterday, and, no doubt, will be eager enough to-day to swallow the temptation.

Silv. Well, since there's no remedy—Yet tell me—for I wou'd know, though to the anguish of my soul; how did he refuse? Tell me—how did he receive my letter, in anger or in scorn?

Lucy. Neither; but what was ten times worse, with damn'd, senseless indifference. By this light I could have spit in his face—Receive it! Why he received it as I would one of your lovers that should come empty-handed; as a court lord does his mercer's bill, or a begging dedication—he received it, as if't had been a letter from his wife.

Silv. What! did he not read it?

Lucy. Humm'd it over, gave you his respects, and said, he would take time to peruse it---but then he was in haste.

Silv. Respects, and peruse it! He's gone, and Araminta has bewitch'd him from me---Oh, how the name of rival fires my blood---'I could curse 'em both;' eternal jealousy attend her love, and disappointment meet his. 'Oh, that I could revenge the torment he has caus'd---Methinks, I feel the woman strong within me, and vengeance kindles in the room of love.'

Lucy. I have that in my head may make mischief.

Silv. How, dear Lucy?

Lucy. You know Araminta's dissembled coyness has won, and keeps him hers—

Silv. Could we persuade him, that she loves another—

Lucy.

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 31

Lucy. No, you're out; could we persuade him, that she dotes on him, himself—Contrive a kind letter as from her, 'twould disgust his nicety, and take away his stomach.

Silv. Impossible! 'twill never take.

Lucy. Trouble not your head. Let me alone—I will inform myself of what pass between 'em to-day, and about it straight—Hold, I'm mistaken, or that's Heartwell, who stands talking at the corner---'tis he ---go get you in, Madam, receive him pleasantly, dress up your face in innocence and smiles, and dissemble the very want of dissimulation—You know what will take him.

Silv. 'Tis as hard to counterfeit love, as it is to conceal it: but I'll do my weak endeavour, though I fear I have no art.

Lucy. Hang art, Madam, and trust to nature for dissembling.

Man, was by nature, woman's creature made.

We never are but by ourselves betray'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Heartwell, Vainlove and Bellmour following.

Bell. Hift, hift, is not that Heartwell going to Silvia?

Vain. He's talking to himself, I think; pr'ythee let's try if we can hear him.

Heart. Why, whither, in the devil's name, am I a going now? Hum!—let me think—Is not this Silvia's house, the cave of that enchantress, and which consequently I ought to shun as I would infection? To enter here, is to put on the envenom'd shirt, to run into the embraces of a fever, and in some raving fit, be led to plunge myself into that more consuming fire, a woman's arms. Ha! well recollected, I will recover my reason, and be gone.

Bell. Now Venus forbid!

Vain. Hush——

Heart. Well, why do you not move? Feet, do your office—Not one inch; ho, foregad, I'm caught—There stands my north, and thither my needle points—Now

32 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

—Now could I curse myself, yet cannot repent. O thou delicious, damn'd, dear, destructive woman! 'Sdeath, how the young fellows will hoot me! I shall be the jest of the town; nay, in two days, I expect to be chronicled in ditty, and sung in woeful ballad, to the tune of the superannuated maiden's comfort, or the batchelor's fall; and upon the third, I shall be hang'd in effigy, pasted up for the exemplary ornament of 'necessary houses and' cobbler's stalls—Death, I can't think on't—I'll run into the danger to lose the apprehension. [Exit.]

Bell. A very certain remedy, *probatum est*—Ha, ha, ha, poor George, thou art i'th' right, thou hast sold thyself to laughter; the ill-natured town will find the jest just where thou hast lost it. Ha, ha, how a' struggled, like an old lawyer between two fees.

Vain. Or a young wench, between pleasure and reputation.

Bell. Or, as you did to-day, when, half afraid, you snatch'd a kiss from Araminta.

Vain. She has made a quarrel on't.

Bell. Pauh, women are only angry at such offences, to have the pleasure of forgiving 'em.

Vain. And I love to have the pleasure of making my peace——I should not esteem a pardon, if too easily won.

Bell. Thou dost not know what thou would'st be at; whether thou would'st have her angry or pleas'd. Could'st thou be content to marry Araminta?

Vain. Could you be content to go to Heav'n?

Bell. Hum, not immediately, in my conscience, not heartily? I'd do a little more good in my generation first, in order to deserve it.

Vain. Nor I to marry Araminta, 'till I merit her.

Bell. But how the devil dost thou expect to get her, if she never yield?

Vain. That's true; but I would——

Bell. Marry her without her consent. Thou'rt a riddle beyond woman——

Enter

Enter Setter.

Trusty Setter, what tidings? How goes the project?

Setter. As all wicked projects do, Sir, 'where the devil prevents our endearments' with success.

Bell. A good hearing, Setter.

Vain. Well, I'll leave you with your engineer.

Bell. And hast thou provided necessaries?

Setter. All, all, Sir. The large sanctified hat, and the little precise band, with a swinging long spiritual cloak, to cover carnal knavery—not forgetting the black patch, which Tribulation Spintext wears, as I'm informed, upon one eye, as a penal mourning for the ogling offences of his youth; and some say, with that eye, he first discovered the frailty of his wife.

Bell. Well, in this fanatic father's habit, will I confess Lætitia.

Setter. Rather prepare her for confession, Sir, by helping her to sin.

Bell. Be at your master's lodging in the evening, I shall use the robes. *[Exit Bell. and Vain.]*

Setter. I shall, Sir—I wonder to which of these two gentlemen I do most properly appertain—the one uses me as his attendant; the other, being the better acquainted with my parts, employs me as a pimp. Why, that's much the more honourable employment—by all means—I follow one as my master, t'other follows me as his conductor.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. There's the hang-dog, his man—I had a power over him in the reign of my mistress; but he is too true a valet de chambre not to affect his master's faults; and consequently is revolted from his allegiance.

Setter. Undoubtedly, 'tis impossible to be a pimp and not a man of parts; that is, without being politic, diligent, secret, wary, and so forth—And to all this valiant as Hercules—that is, passively valiant and actively

actively obedient. Ah! Setter, what a treasure is here lost for want of being known?

Lucy. Here's some villainy a-foot, he's so thoughtful; may be I may discover something in my mask—Worthy Sir, a word with you. [*Puts on her mask.*]

Setter. Why, if I were known, I might come to be a great man——

Lucy. Not to interrupt your meditation——

Setter. And I should not be the first that has procured his greatness by pimping.

Lucy. Now poverty and the pox light upon thee, for a contemplative pimp.

Setter. Ha! what art, who thus maliciously hast awakened me from my dream of glory? Speak, thou vile disturber——

Lucy. Of thy most vile cogitations——thou poor, conceited wretch, how wert thou valuing thyself, upon thy master's employment? For he's the head pimp to Mr. Bellmour.

Setter. Good words, damsel, or I shall——But how dost thou know my master or me?

Lucy. Yes, I know both master and man to be——

Setter. To be men perhaps; nay, 'faith, like enough; I often march in the rear of my master, and enter the breaches which he has made.

Lucy. Ay, the breach of faith, which he has begun. Thou traitor to thy lawful princess.

Setter. Why, how now! pr'ythee, who art? Lay by that worldly face, and produce your natural vizard.

Lucy. No, sirrah, I'll keep it on to abuse thee, and leave thee without hopes of revenge.

Setter. Oh! I begin to smoke ye. Thou art some forsaken Abigail, we have dallied with thee heretofore——and art come to tickle thy imagination with remembrance of iniquity past.

Lucy. No, thou pitiful flatterer of thy master's imperfections; thou maukin, made up of the shreds and parings of his superfluous fopperies.

Setter. Thou art thy mistress's soul self, composed of her unfulfilled iniquities and clothing.

Lucy.

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 35

Lucy. Hang thee——beggar's cur——Thy master is but a mumper in love, lies canting at the gate; but never dares presume to enter the house.

Setter. Thou art the wicket to thy mistress's gate, to be opened for all comers. In fine, thou art the high road to thy mistress.

Lucy. Beast, filthy toad, I can hold no longer, look and tremble. [Unmasks.]

Setter. How, Mrs. Lucy!

Lucy. I wonder, thou hast the impudence to look me in the face.

Setter. Adsbud, who is in fault, mistress of mine? Who flung the first stone? Who undervalued my function? And who the devil could know you by instinct?

Lucy. You could know my office by instinct, and be hanged, which you have slandered most abominably. It vexes me not what you said of my person; but that my innocent calling should be exposed and scandaliz'd——I cannot bear it.

Setter. Nay, faith, Lucy, I'm sorry; I'll own myself to blame, though we were both in fault as to our offices——Come, I'll make you any reparation.

Lucy. Swear.

Setter. I do swear to the utmost of my power.

Lucy. To be brief then; what is the reason your master did not appear to-day, according to the summons I brought him?

Setter. To answer you as briefly——He has a cause to be tried in another court.

Lucy. Come, tell me in plain terms, how forward he is with Araminta.

Setter. Too forward to be turned back——Though he's a little in disgrace at present about a kiss which he forced. You and I can kiss, Lucy, without all that.

Lucy. Stand off——He's a precious jewel.

Setter. And therefore you'd have him to set in your lady's locket.

Lucy. Where is he now?

Setter.

36 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Setter. He'll be in the piazza presently.

Lucy. Remember to day's behaviour——Let me see you with a penitent face.

Setter. What no token of amity, Lucy? You and I don't use to part with dry lips.

Lucy. No, no, avaunt——I'll not be flabber'd and kiss'd now——I'm not i'th' humour.

Setter. I'll not quit you so——I'll follow and put you into the humour. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Sir Joseph Wittoll and Bluff.

Bluff. And so out of your unwonted generosity—

Sir Jo. And good-nature, back; I am good natur'd and I can't help it.

Bluff. You have given him a note upon Fondlewife for a hundred pound.

Sir Jo. Ay, ay, poor fellow, he ventur'd fair for't.

Bluff. You have disobliged me in it—for I have occasion for the money, and if you would look me in the face again and live, go, and force him to redeliver you the note—go——and bring it me hither. I'll stay here for you.

Sir Jo. You may stay 'till the day of judgment then, by the lord Harry. I know better things to than to be run through the guts for a hundred pound. Why, I gave that hundred pound for being saved, an d'ye think, an there were no danger, I'll be so ungrateful to take it from the gentleman again?

Bluff. Well, go to him from me——Tell him, I say, he must refund——or bilbo's the word, and slaughter will ensue——if he refuse, tell him——but whisper that——tell him——I'll pink his soul——but whisper that softly to him.

Sir Jo. So softly, that he shall never hear on't, I warrant you——Why, what a devil's the matter, bully, are you mad? Or d'ye think I'm mad? Agad, for my part, I don't love to be the messenger of ill news; 'tis an ungrateful office——So tell him yourself.

Bluff.

Bluff. By these hilts, I believe he frightened you into this composition. I believe you gave it him out of fear, pure paltry fear——Confess.

Sir Jo. No, no, hang't, I was not afraid, neither——though I confess he did in a manner snap me up——yet I can't say that it was altogether out of fear, but partly to prevent mischief—for he was a devilish choleric fellow. And if my choler had been up too, agad, there would have been mischief done, that's flat. And yet, I believe, if you had been by, I would as soon have let him a'had a hundred of my teeth. Adshart, if he should come now, just when I'm angry, I'd tell him——Mum.

Enter Bellmour and Sharper.

Bell. Thou'rt a lucky rogue; there's your benefactor, you ought to return him thanks, now you have received the favour.

Sharp. Sir Joseph—Your note was accepted, and the money paid at sight. I'm come to return my thanks.

Sir Jo. They won't be accepted so readily as the bill, Sir.

Bell. I doubt the knight repents, Tom—He looks like the knight of the sorrowful face.

Sharp. This is a double generosity——Do me a kindness, and refuse my thanks——But I hope you are not offended, that I offered them, without any offence to you, Sir.

Sir Jo. May be I am, Sir; may be I am not, Sir——may be I am both, Sir.—What then? I hope I may be offended.

Sharp. Hey day! Captain, what's the matter? You can tell.

Bluff. Mr. Sharper, the matter is plain——Sir Joseph has found out your trick, and does not care to be put upon, being a man of honour.

Sharp. Trick, Sir!

Sir Jo. Ay, trick, Sir, and won't be put upon, Sir, being a man of honour, Sir; and so, Sir——

Sharp. Heark'e, Sir Joseph, a word with ye——in consideration of some favours lately received, I would

38 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

not have you draw yourself into a premunire, by trusting to that sign of a man there—that pop-gun charged with wind.

Sir Jo. O lord, O lord, captain, come justify yourself—I'll give him the lie, if you'll stand to it.

Sharp. Nay, then I'll be beforehand with you, take that—Oafe. [Cuffs him.]

Sir Jo. Captain, will you see this? Won't you pink his soul?

Bluff. Hush, 'tis not so convenient now—I shall find a time.

Sharp. What do you mutter about a time, rascal—You were the incendiary—There's to put you in mind of your time—A memorandum. [Kicks him.]

Bluff. Oh, this is your time, Sir, you had best make use on't.

Sharp. I gad, and so I will. There's again for you. [Kicks him.]

Bluff. You are obliging, Sir, but this is too public a place to thank you in: but in your ear—You are to be seen again.

Sharp. Ay, thou inimitable coward, and to be felt—as for example. [Kicks him.]

Bell. Ha, ha, ha, pr'ythee come away; 'tis scandalous to kick this puppy, unless a man were cold, and had no other way to get himself a heat.

[Exit Sharper.]

Bluff. Very well—very fine—But 'tis no matter—Is not this fine, Sir Joseph?

Sir Jo. Indifferent, agad, in my opinion very indifferent—I'd rather go plain all my life, than wear such finery.

Bluff. Death and hell, to be affronted thus! I'll die before I'll suffer it. [Draws.]

Sir Jo. O lord, his anger was not raised before—Nay, dear captain, don't be in a passion now he's gone—Put up, put up, dear back, 'tis your Sir Joseph begs. Come let me kiss thee. So, so, put up, put up.

Bluff. By heav'n, 'tis not to be put up.

Sir Jo. What, bully?

Bluff. The affront.

Sir

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 39

Sir Jo. No, agad, no more 'tis, for that's put up already, thy sword I mean.

Bluff. Well, Sir Joseph, at your intreaty—But were not you, my friend, abus'd, and cuff'd, and kick'd?
[Putting up his sword.]

Sir Jo. Ay, ay, so were you too; no matter, 'tis past.

Bluff. By the immortal thunder of great guns, 'tis false—he sucks not vital air who dares affirm it to this face.
[Looks big.]

Sir Jo. To that face, I grant you, captain—No, no, I grant you—Not to that face, by the lord Harry.—If you had put on your fighting face before, you had done his business—he durst as soon have kiss'd you, as kick'd you to your face—But a man can no more help what's done behind his back, than what's said.—Come, we'll think no more of what's past.

Bluff. I'll call a council of war within to consider of my revenge to come.
[Exeunt.]

SCENE, Silvia's Apartment.

Enter Heartwell and Silvia.

S O N G.

As Amoret and Thyrsis lay
Melting the hours in gentle play;
Joining faces, mingling kisses,
And exchanging harmless blisses.
He trembling cry'd, with eager haste,
O let me feed as well as taste,
I die, if I'm not wholly blest.

After the song, a dance of anticks.

Sil. Indeed, it is very fine—I could look upon 'em all day.

Heart. Well, has this prevail'd for me, and will you look upon me?

D 2

Silv.

40 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Silv. If you could sing and dance so, I should love to look upon you too.

Heart. Why, 'twas I sung and danc'd; I gave music to the voice, and life to their measures—Look you here, Silvia. [*Pulling out a purse and chinking it.*] Here are songs and dances, poetry and music—hark! how sweetly one guinea rhymes to another—and how they dance to the music of their own chink. This buys all t'other—and this thou shalt have; this, and all that I am worth for the purchase of thy love. Say, is it mine then, ha? Speak, firen!—Oons, why do I look on her! Yet I must!—Speak, dear angel, devil, saint, witch; do not rack me with suspense.

Silv. Nay, don't stare at me so!—You make me blush—I cannot look.

Heart. Oh, manhood, where art thou! What am I come to? A woman's toy, at these years! Death, a bearded baby for a girl to dandle. 'O dotage, dotage! That ever that noble passion, lust, should ebb to this degree—No reflux of vigorous blood; but milky love supplies the empty channels, and prompts me to the softness of a child—a mere infant, and would suck.' Can you love me, Silvia? Speak.

Silv. I dare not speak 'till I believe you, and indeed I'm afraid to believe you yet.

Heart. Death! how her innocence torments and pleases me! Lying, child, is indeed the art of love; and men are generally masters in it: but I'm so newly entered, you cannot distrust me of any skill in the treacherous mystery—Now, by my soul, I cannot lie, though it were to serve a friend or gain a mistress.

Silv. Must you lie then, if you say you love me?

Heart. No, no, dear ignorance, thou beauteous changeling—I tell thee, I do love thee, and tell it for a truth, a naked truth, which I'm ashamed to discover.

Silv. But love, they say, is a tender thing, 'that will smooth frowns, and make calm an angry face; will soften a rugged temper, and make ill-humoured people

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 41

‘ people good.’ You look ready to fright one, and talk as if your passion were not love, but anger.

Heart. ’Tis both; for I am angry with myself, when I am pleased with you—And a pox upon me for loving thee so well——‘ yet I must on——’Tis a ‘ bearded arrow, and will more easily be thrust forward than draw back.’

Silv. Indeed, if I were well assur’d you lov’d; but how can I be well assur’d?

Heart. Take the symptoms—and ask all the tyrants of thy sex, if their fools are not known by this party-coloured livery—I am melancholic, when thou art absent; look like an ass, when thou art present; wake for thee, when I should sleep; and even dream of thee, when I am awake; sigh much, drink little, eat less, court solitude, am grown very entertaining to myself, and, as I am informed, very troublesome to every body else. If this be not love, it is madness, and then it is pardonable——Nay, yet a more certain sign than all this; I give thee my money.

Silv. Ay, but that is no sign; for they say, gentlemen will give money to any naughty woman to come ‘ to bed ’ to them---O Gemini, I hope you don’t mean so—for I won’t be a whore.

Heart. The more is the pity. [*Aside.*]

Silv. Nay, if you would marry me, you should not come to ‘ bed to ’ me---‘ you have such a beard, and ‘ would so prickle one.’ But do you intend to marry me?

Heart. That a fool should ask such a malicious question! Death! I shall be drawn in, before I know where I am—However, I find I am pretty sure of her consent, if I am put to it. [*Aside.*] Marry you? N, no, I’ll love you.

Silv. Nay, but if you love me, you must marry me; what, don’t I know my father lov’d my mother, and was marry’d to her?

Heart. Ay, ay, in old days people married where they lov’d; but that fashion is chang’d, child.

42 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Silv. Never tell me that : I know 'tis not chang'd
' by myself ; for I love you, and would marry you.

Heart. I'll have my beard shav'd, it shan't hurt
' thee, and we'll go to bed.'

Silv. No, no, I'm not such a fool neither, but I can
keep myself honest.—Here, I won't keep any thing
that's yours, I hate you now, [*Throws the purse.*] and
I'll never see you again, 'cause you'd have me naught.

[*Going.*]

Heart. Damn her, let her go, and a good riddance
—Yet so much tenderness and beauty—and honesty
together is a jewel—Stay, Silvia—But then to mar-
ry—Why every man plays the fool once in his life :
but to marry is playing the fool all one's life long.

Silv. What did you call me for ?

Heart. I'll give thee all I have. And thou shalt live
with me in every thing so like my wife, the world
shall believe it : nay, thou shalt think so thyself—
Only let me not think so.

Silv. No, I'll die before I'll be your whore—
as well as I love you.

Heart. [*Aside.*] A woman, and ignorant, may be
honest, when 'tis out of obstinacy and contradiction—
But, 'sdeath, it is but a may-be, and upon scurvy
terms---Well, farewell then——if I can get out of
sight, I may get the better of myself.

Silv. Well——good bye. [*Turns and weeps.*]

Heart. Ha! Nay, come, we'll kiss at parting.
[*Kisses her.*] By Heav'n her kiss is sweeter than liber-
ty—I will marry thee—There thou hast don't.
All my resolves melted in that kiss—One more.

Silv. But when ?

Heart. I'm impatient 'till it be done ; I will not
give myself liberty to think, lest I should cool—I
will about a licence straight——in the evening ex-
pect me—One kiss more to confirm me mad ; so.

[*Exit Heart.*]

Silv. Ha, ha, ha, an old fox trap'd——

Enter

Enter Lucy.

Bless me! you frightened me, I thought he had been come again, and had heard me.

'*Lucy.* Lord, Madam, I met your lover in as much haste, as if he had been going for a midwife.

'*Sir.* He's going for a parson, girl, the forerunner of a midwife, some nine months hence——

'Well, I find dissembling to our sex is as natural as swimming to a negro. We may depend upon our skill to save us at a plunge, though till then we never make the experiment.'—But how hast thou succeeded?

Lucy. As you would wish—since there is no reclaiming Vainlove; I have found out a pique she has taken at him; and have fram'd a letter that makes her sue for reconciliation first. I know that will do—walk in and I'll shew it you. Come, Madam, you're like to have a happy time on't, both your love and anger satisfied!—All that can charm our sex conspire to please you.

That woman sure enjoys a blessed night.

Whom love and vengeance both, at once delight.

END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT

44 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

A C T IV.

SCENE, *the Street.*

Enter Bellmour, in Fanatick Habit, and Setter.

BELLMOUR.

'TIS pretty near the hour. [*Looking on his watch.*] Well, and how, Setter, ha, does my hypocrisy fit me, ha? Does it sit easy on me?

Setter. O most religiously well, Sir.

Bell. I wonder why all our young fellows should glory in an opinion of atheism; when they may be so much more conveniently lewd under the coverlet of religion.

Setter. 'Sbud, Sir, away quickly, there's Fondlewife just turn'd the corner, and's coming this way.

Bell. Gads so, there he is, he must not see me.

Enter Fondlewife and Barnaby.

Fond. I say, I will tarry at home.

Bar. But, Sir.

Fond. Good lack! I profess the spirit of contradiction hath possess'd the lad--I say, I will tarry at home, varlet.

Bar. I have done, Sir, then farewell five hundred pound.

Fond. Ha, how's that? Stay, stay, did you leave word, say you, with his wife? With Comfort herself.

Bar. I did; and Comfort will send Tribulation hither as soon as ever he comes home--I could have brought young Mr. Prig, to have kept my mistress company in the mean time: but you say-----

Fond. How, how, say varlet! I say let him not come near my doors, I say he is a wanton young Levite, and pampereth himself up with dainties, that he may look lovely in the eyes of women--Sincerely, I am afraid, he hath already defiled the tabernacle of

of our sister Comfort; while her good husband is de-
luded by his godly appearance——I say, that even
lust doth sparkle in his eyes, and glow upon his
cheeks, and that I would as soon trust my wife with a
lord's high-fed chaplain.

Bar. Sir, the hour draws nigh——and nothing
will be done there 'till you come.

Fond. And nothing can be done here 'till I go—So
that I'll tarry, d'ye see.

Bar. And run the hazard to lose your affair, Sir!

Fond. Good lack, good lack——I profess it is a
sufficient vexation, for a man to have a handsome
wife.

Bar. Never, Sir, but when the man is an insuf-
ficient husband. 'Tis then, indeed, like the vanity
of taking a fine house, and yet be fore'd to let lodg-
ings, to help to pay the rent.

Fond. I profess, a very apt comparison, varlet.
Go, and bid my Cocky come out to me; I will give
her some instructions; I will reason with her before
I go. [*Exit Bar.*] And in the mean time, I will rea-
son with myself——Tell me, Isaac, why art thou
jealous; why art thou distrustful of the wife of thy
bosom?—Because she is young and vigorous, and
I am old and impotent——Then, why didst thou
marry, Isaac?——Because she was beautiful and
tempting, and because I was obstinate and doating;
'so that my inclination was, and is still, greater than
'my power'——And will not that which tempted
thee, also tempt others, who will tempt her, Isaac?
——I fear it much——But does not thy wife love
thee, nay, doat upon thee?——Yes——Why, then?
Ay, but to say truth, she's fonder of me, than she
has reason to be; and in the way of trade, we still
suspect the smoothest dealers of the deepest designs
——And that she has some designs deeper than thou
canst reach, th' hast experimented, Isaac——But
mum.

Enter

46 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Enter Lætitia.

Læt. I hope my dearest jewel is not going to leave me——are you, Nykin?

Fond. Wife——Have you thoroughly consider'd how detestable, how heinous, and how crying a sin, the sin of adultery is? Have you weigh'd it, I say?

Læt. Bless me, what means my dear!

Fond. [*Aside.*] I profess she has an alluring eye; I am doubtful whether I shall trust her, even with Tribulation himself——Speak, I say, have you considered what it is to cuckold your husband?

Læt. [*Aside.*] I'm amaz'd: sure he has discovered nothing——Who has wrong'd me to my dearest? I hope my jewel does not think, that ever I had any such thing in my head, or ever will have.

Fond. No, no, I tell you I shall have it in my head.

Læt. [*Aside.*] I know not what to think. But I'm resolv'd to find the meaning of it——Unkind dear! Was it for this you sent to call me? Is it not affliction enough that you are to leave me, but you must study to encrease it by unjust suspicions? [*Crying.*] Well——well——you know my fondness, and you love to tyrannize——Go on, cruel man, do; triumph over my poor heart, while it holds, which cannot be long, with this usage of yours——But that's what you want——Well, you will have your ends soon——You will——You will——Yes, it will break to oblige you. [*Sighs.*

Fond. Verily, I fear I have carried the jest too far.—Nay, look you, now, if she does not weep——'tis the fondest fool—Nay, Cocky, Cocky, nay, dear Cocky, don't cry, I was but in jest, I was not, ifeek.

Læt. [*Aside.*] O then, all's safe. I was terribly frightened——My affliction is always your jest, barbarous man! Oh, that I should love to this degree! yet——

Fond. Nay, Cocky,

Læt. No, no you are weary of me, that's it——that's all, you would get another wife——another fond fool, to break her heart——Well, be as cruel as you can

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 47

can to me, I'll pray for you; and when I am dead with grief, may you have one that will love as you well as I have done: I shall be contented to lie at peace in my cold grave—since it will please you.

[Sighs.]

Fond. Good lack, good lack, she would melt a heart of oak—I profess I can hold no longer—Nay, dear Cocky—I feck you'll break my heart—I feck you will—See, you have made me weep—made poor Nykin weep—Nay, come kifs, buss poor Nykin—and I won't leave thee—I'll lose all first.

Læt. [Aside.] How! Heaven forbid! that will be carrying the jest too far, indeed.

Fond. Won't you kifs Nykin?

Læt. Go, naughty Nykin, you don't love me.

Fond. Kifs, kifs, ifeck I do.

Læt. No, you don't.

[She kisses him.]

Fond. What, not love Cocky?

Læt. No—h.

[Sighs.]

Fond. I profess I do love thee better than five hundred pounds—and so thou shalt say, for I'll leave it to stay with thee.

Læt. No, you shan't neglect your business for me—No; indeed you fant, Nykin—If you don't go, I'll think you been dealous of me still.

Fond. He, he, he, wilt thou, poor fool? Then, I will go; I won't be dealous—Poor Cocky, kifs Nykin, kifs Nykin; ee, ee, ee—Here will be the good man anon, to talk to Cocky, and teach her how a wife ought to behave herself.

Læt. [Aside.] I hope to have one that will shew me how a husband ought to behave himself—I shall be glad to learn to please my jewel.

[Kiss.]

Fond. That's my good dear—Come, kifs Nykin once more, and then get you in—So—Get you in, get you in. By, by.

Læt. By, Nykin.

Fond. By, Cocky.

Læt.

48 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Let. By, Nykin.

Fond. By, Cocky, by, by.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Vainlove and Sharper.

Sharp. How! Araminta lost!

Vain. To confirm what I have said, read this——

[*Gives a letter.*]

Sharp. [Reads.] *Hum, hum—And what then appear'd a fault, upon reflection, seems only an effect of a too powerful passion. I'm afraid I give too great a proof of my own at this time—I am in disorder for what I have written. But something, I know not what, forc'd me. I only beg a favourable censure of this, and am your*

Araminta.

Sharp. Lost! Pray Heaven thou hast not lost thy wits. Here, here, she's thy own, man, sign'd and seal'd, too—To her, man—a delicious melon, pure, and consenting ripe, and only waits thy cutting up——She has been breeding love to thee all this while, and just now she's deliver'd of it.

Vain. 'Tis an untimely fruit, and she has miscarried of her love.

Sharp. Never leave this damn'd, ill-natur'd whimsy, Frank? Thou hast a sickly, peevish appetite; only chews love, and cannot digest it.

Vain. Yes, when I feed myself——But I hate to be cramm'd——By Heav'n, there's not a woman will give a man the pleasure of a chase: 'my sport is 'always balk'd, or cut short. I stumble over the 'game I would pursue'——'Tis dull and unnatural to have a hare run full in the hounds' mouth; and would disastse the keenest hunter——I would have overtaken, not have met my game.

Sharp. However, I hope you don't mean to forsake it; that will be but a kind of mongrel cur's trick. Well, are you for the Mall?

Vain. No, she will be there this evening——Yes, I will go too——and she shall see her error in——

Sharp. In her choice, I gad——But thou can't not be so great a brute as to slight her?

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 49

Vain. 'I should disappoint her if I did not'——
By her management, I should think she expects it.

All naturally fly what does pursue :
'Tis fit men should be coy, when women woo.

SCENE, a room in Fondlewife's house.

A Servant introducing Bellmour in a fanatick habit, with a patch upon one eye, and a book in his hand.

Serv. Here's a chair, Sir, if you please to repose yourself. My mistress is coming, Sir. *[Exit.*

Bell. Secure in my disguise, I have out-fac'd suspicion, and ev'n dar'd discovery.—This cloak my sanctity, and trusty Scarron's novels my prayer-book—Methinks I am the very picture of Montufar, in the Hypocrites—Oh, she comes.

Enter Lætitia.

*So breaks Aurora through the veil of night,
Thus fly the clouds, divided by her light,
And ev'ry eye receives a new-born sight.* }

[Throwing off his cloak, patch, &c.

Læt. Thus strew'd with blushes, like——Ah!
Heav'n defend me! Who's this?

[Discovering him, starts.

Bell. Your lover.

Læt. Vainlove's friend! I know his face, and he has betray'd me to him. *[Aside.*

Bell. You are surprized. Did you not expect a lover, Madam? Those eyes shone kindly on my first appearance, tho' now they are o'er-cast.

Læt. I may well be surpriz'd at your person and impudence; they are both new to me—You are not what your first appearance promised: the piety of your habit was welcome, but not the hypocrisy.

Bell. Rather the hypocrisy was welcome, but not the hypocrite.

VOL. II.

E

Læt.

50 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Læt. Who are you, Sir? You have mistaken the house, sure.

Bell. I have directions in my pocket, which agree with every thing but your unkindness.

[*Pulls out the letter.*]

Læt. My letter! Base Vainlove! Then 'tis too late to dissemble. [*Aside.*] 'Tis plain, then, you have mistaken the person. [*Going.*]

Bell. If we part so, I'm mistaken——Hold, hold, Madam——I confess I have run into an error——I beg your pardon a thousand times——What an eternal blockhead am I! Can you forgive me the disorder I have put you into?——But it is a mistake which any body might have made.

Læt. What can this mean? 'Tis impossible he should be mistaken, after all this——A handsome fellow, if he had not surpriz'd me. Methinks, now I look on him again, I would not have him mistaken. [*Aside.*] We are all liable to mistakes, Sir; if you own it to be so, there needs no farther apology.

Bell. Nay, faith, Madam, 'tis a pleasant one, and worth your hearing. Expecting a friend, last night, at his lodgings, 'till 'twas late; my intimacy with him gave me the freedom of his bed: he not coming home all night, a letter was deliver'd to me, by a servant, in the morning: upon the perusal, I found the contents so charming, that I could think of nothing all day, but putting 'em in practice——'till just now, (the first time I ever look'd on the superscription) I am the most surpriz'd in the world to find it directed to Mr. Vainlove. Gad, Madam, I ask you a million of pardons, and will make you any satisfaction.

Læt. I am discover'd——and either Vainlove is not guilty, or he has handsomely excus'd him. [*Aside.*]

Bell. You appear concern'd, Madam.

Læt. I hope you are a gentleman——and since you are privy to a weak woman's failing, won't turn it to the prejudice of her reputation. You look as if you had more honour——

Bell.

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 51

Bell. And more love; or my face is a false witness, and deserves to be pillory'd——No, by Heaven, I swear——

Lat. Nay, don't swear if you'd have me to believe you; but promise——

Bell. Well, I promise——A promise is so cold—give me leave to swear—by those eyes, those killing eyes; by those healing lips—Oh! press the soft charm close to mine, and seal 'em up for ever.

Lat. Upon that condition. [*He kisses her.*]

Bell. Eternity was in that moment—One more, upon any condition.

Lat. Nay, now—I never saw any thing so agreeably impudent. [*Aside.*] Won't you censure me for this, now?—but 'tis to buy your silence. [*Kiss.*] Oh, but what am I doing!

Bell. No tongue can express it---not thy own; nor any thing, but thy lips. I am faint with the excess of bliss ---Oh, for love's sake, lead me any whither, where I may lay down;---quickly, for I am afraid I shall have a fit.

Lat. Bless me! What fit?

Bell. Oh, a convulsion---I feel the symptoms.

Lat. Does it hold you long? I'm afraid to carry you into my chamber.

Bell. Oh, no: let me lay down upon the bed;-----the fit will be soon over. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *St. James's Park.*

Araminta and Belinda meeting.

Bel. Lard, my dear: I am glad I have met you—I have been at the Exchange since, and am so tir'd—

Aram. Why, what's the matter?

Bel. Oh, the most inhuman barbarous hackney-coach! I am jolted to a jelly—Am not I horridly touz'd? [*Pulls out a pocket-glass.*]

Aram. Your head's a little out of order.

52 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Bel. A little ! O frightful ! What a furious phyzz I have ! O most rueful ! Ha, ha, ha ! O gad, I hope nobody will come this way, till I have put myself in repair—Ah ! my dear——I have seen such unhewn creatures since——Ha, ha, ha ! I can't for my soul help thinking that I look just like one of 'em——Good dear, pin this, and I'll tell you——Very well ---So, thank you, my dear——But, as I was telling you---Pish, this is the untoward'st lock——So, as I was telling you——How d'ye like me now ? Hideous, ha ? Frightful still ? Or how ?

Aram. No, no ; you're very well as can be.

Bel. And so——But where did I leave off, my dear ? I was telling you——

Aram. You were about to tell me something, child ---but you left off before you began.

Bel. Oh, a most comical sight : a country squire, with the equipage of a wife and two daughters, came to Mrs. Snipwell's shop while I was there——But, Oh, gad ! two such unlick'd cubs !

Aram. I warrant, plump, cherry-cheek'd country girls.

Bel. Ay, O' my conscience, fat as barn-door fowls : but so bedeck'd, you would have taken 'em for Friesland hens, with their feathers growing the wrong way——O, such out-landish creatures ! Such Tramon-tanæ, and foreigners to the fashion, or any thing in practice ! I had no patience to behold——I undertook the modelling of one of their fronts, the more modern structure——

Aram. Bless me, cousin ; why would you affront any body so ? They might be gentlewomen of a very good family——

Bel. Of a very ancient one, I dare swear, by their dress——Affront ! Pshaw, how you're mistaken ! The poor creature, I warrant, was as full of courtesies, as if I had been her godmother. The truth on't is, I did endeavour to make her look like a christian——and she was sensible of it ; for she thank'd me, and gave me two apples, piping hot, out of her under-petticoat pocket—Ha, ha, ha—And t'other did so
stare

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 53

stare and gape——I fancied her like the front of her father's hall; her eyes were the two jut-windows, and her mouth the great door, most hospitably kept open for the entertainment of travelling flies.

Aram. So, then, you have been diverted. What did they buy?

Bel. Why, the father bought a powder-horn, and an almanack, and a comb-case; the mother, a great fruz-tower, and a fat amber necklace; the daughters, only tore two pair of kid-leather gloves, with trying 'em on——Oh, gad, here comes the fool that din'd at my lady Freelove's t'other day.

Enter Sir Joseph and Bluff.

Aram. May be he may not know us again.

Ecl. We'll put on our masks to secure his ignorance.

[They put on their masks.]

Sir Jo. Nay, gad, I'll pick up; I'm resolv'd to make a night on't——I'll go to alderman Fondlewife by and by, and get fifty pieces more from him. Adtlidikins, bully, we'll wallow in wine and women. Why, this fame Madeira-wine has made me as light as a grasshopper——Hift, hift, bully, dost thou see those tearers; *[Sings.] Look you what here is—— Look you what here is——Toll——loll—— dera——toll——loll——* Agad, t'other glafs of Madeira, and I durst have attack'd 'em in my own proper person, without your help.

Bluff. Come on then, knight——But d'ye know what to say to 'em?

Sir Jo. Say: Pooh. Pox, I've enough to say——never fear it——that is, if I can but think on't: truth is, I have but a treacherous memory.

Bel. Oh, frightful! Cousin, what shall we do? These things come towards us.

Aram. No matter——I see Vainlove coming this way——and, to confess my failing, I am willing to give him an opportunity of making his peace with me——and to rid me of these coxcombs, when I seem oppress'd with 'em, will be a fair one.

E 3

Bluff.

54 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Bluff. Ladies, by these hilts, you are well met.

Aram. We are afraid not.

Bluff. What says my pretty little knapsack carrier?

[*To Belinda.*

Bel. O monstrous filthy fellow! Good slovenly captain Huff, Bluff, what is your hideous name? Begone: you stink of brandy and tobacco, most soldier-like. Foh!

[*Spits.*

Sir *Jo.* Now am I slap dash down in the mouth, and have not one word to say!

[*Aside.*

Aram. I hope my fool has not confidence enough to be troublesome.

[*Aside.*

Sir *Jo.* Hem! Pray, madam, which way's the wind?

Aram. A pithy question—Have you sent your wits for a venture, Sir, that you enquire?

Sir *Jo.* Nay, now I'm in—I can prattle like a magpie.

[*Aside.*

Enter Sharper and Vainlove, at some distance.

Bel. Dear Araminta, I'm tir'd.

Aram. 'Tis but pulling off our masks, and obliging Vainlove to know us. I'll be rid of my fool by fair means—Well, Sir Joseph, you shall see my face—But, begone immediately—I see one that will be jealous, to find me in discourse with you—Be discreet—No reply; but away.

[*Unmasks.*

Sir *Jo.* The great fortune, that din'd at my lady Freelove's! Sir Joseph, thou art a made man. Agad, I'm in love up to the ears. But I'll be discreet, and hush.

[*Aside.*

Bluff. Nay, by the world, I'll see your face.

Bel. You shall.

[*Unmasks.*

Sharp. Ladies, your humble servant—We were afraid, you would not have given us leave to know you.

Aram. We thought to have been private—But we find fools have the same advantage over a face in a mask, that a coward has, while the sword is in the scabbard—So were forced to draw in our own defence.

Bluff.

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 55

Bluff. My blood rises at that fellow : I can't stay where he is ; and I must not draw in the park.

[*To Sir Joseph.*

Sir Jo. I wish I durst stay to let her know my lodging—— [Exeunt *Sir Jo. and Bluff.*

Sharp. There is in true beauty, as in courage, somewhat, which narrow souls cannot dare to admire—and see, the owls are fled, as at the break of day.

Bel. Very courtly—I believe Mr. Vainlove has not rubb'd his eyes since break of day neither, he looks as if he durst not approach—Nay, come cousin, be friends with him—I swear he looks so very simply, ha, ha, ha ! Well, a lover in the state of separation from his mistress, is like a body without a soul. Mr. Vainlove, shall I be bound for your good behaviour for the future ?

Vain. Now must I pretend ignorance equal to hers, of what she knows as well as I. [*Aside.*] Men are apt to offend, 'tis true, where they find most goodness to forgive—But, Madam, I hope I shall prove of a temper not to abuse mercy, by committing new offences.

Aram. So cold !

[*Aside.*

Bel. I have broke the ice for you, Mr. Vainlove, and so I leave you. Come, Mr. Sharper, you and I will take a turn, and laugh at the vulgar—both the great vulgar and the small—Oh, gad ! I have a great passion for Cowley——Don't you admire him ?

Sharp. Oh, Madam ! He was our English Horace.

Bel. Oh, so fine ! So extremely fine ! So every thing in the world that I like—O Lord, walk this way—I see a couple, I'll give you their history.

[Exeunt *Belinda and Sharp.*

Vain. I find, Madam, the formality of the law must be observ'd, tho' the penalty of it be dispens'd with ; and an offender must plead to his arraignment, though he has his pardon in his pocket.

Aram. I'm amaz'd ! This insolence exceeds t'other ;—whoever has encourag'd you to this assurance——
presum.

36 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

presuming upon the easiness of my temper, has much deceiv'd you, and so you shall find.

Vain. Hey day! Which way now! Here's fine doubling. *[Aside.]*

Aram. Base man! Was it not enough to affront me with your saucy passion?

Vain. You have given that passion a much kinder epithet than saucy, in another place.

Aram. Another place! Some villainous design to blast my honour—But tho' thou hadst all the treachery and malice of thy sex, thou canst not lay a blemish on my fame——No, I have not err'd in one favourable thought of mankind——‘How time might have deceiv'd me in you, I know not; my opinion was but ‘young, and your early baseness has prevented its ‘growing to a wrong belief’——Unworthy and ungrateful! Begone and never see me more.

Vain. Did I dream? Or do I dream? Shall I believe my eyes or ears? The vision is here still—Your passion, Madam, will admit of no farther reasoning—But here's a silent witness of your acquaintance. *[Takes out a letter, and offers it: she snatches it, and throws it away.]*

Aram. There's poison in every thing you touch---- blisters will follow——

Vain. That tongue which denies what the hands have done—

Aram. Still mystically senseless and impudent—I find I must leave the place.

Vain. No, Madam, I'm gone—She knows her name's to it, which she will be unwilling to expose to the censure of the first finder. *[Exit.]*

Aram. Woman's obstinacy made me blind, to what woman's curiosity now tempts me to see.

[Takes up the letter, and exit.]

Enter Belinda and Sharper,

Bel. Nay, we have spared nobody, I swear. Mr. Sharper, you're a pure man; where did you get this excellent talent of railing?

Sharp:

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 57

Sharp. Faith, Madam, the talent was born with me.—I confess, I have taken care to improve it; to qualify me for the society of ladies.

Belin. Nay, sure railing is the best qualification in a woman's man.

Enter Footman.

Sharp. The second best——indeed, I think.

Bel. How now, Pace? Where's my cousin?

Foot. She's not very well, Madam, and has sent to know, if your ladyship would have the coach come again for you.

Belin. O Lord, no, I'll go along with her. Come, Mr. Sharper.

SCENE, *a Chamber in Fondlewife's House.*

Enter Lætitia and Bellmour, his cloak, hat, &c. lying loose about the chamber.

Bell. Here's nobody, nor no noise——'twas nothing but your fears.

Læt. I durst have sworn I had heard my monster's voice——I swear, I was heartily frightened——Feel how my heart beats.

Bell. 'Tis an alarm to love——Come in again, and let us——

Fond. [*Without.*] Cocky, cocky, where are you, cocky? I'm come home.

Læt. Ah! there he is, make haste, gather up your things!

Fond. Cocky, cocky, open the door.

Bell. Pox choak him, would his horns were in his throat. My patch, my patch.

[*Looking about, and gathering up his things.*]

Læt. My jewel, art thou there? No matter for your patch——You s'an't tum in, Nykin——Run into my chamber, quickly, quickly. You s'an't tum in.

Fond. Nay, pr'ythee, dear, ifeck I'm in haste.

Læt.

58 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Læt. Then I'll let you in. *[Opens the door.]*

Enter Fondlewife and Sir Joseph.

Fond. Kifs, dear——I met the master of the ship by the way——And I must have my papers of accounts out of your cabinet.

Læt. Oh, I'm undone! *[Aside.]*

Sir Jo. Pray, first let me have fifty pounds, good alderman, for I'm in haste.

Fond. A hundred has already been paid by your order. Fifty? I have the sum ready in gold, in my closet. *[Exit Fond.]*

Sir Jo. Agad, it's a curious, fine, pretty rogue; I'll speak to her——Pray, Madam, what news d'ye hear?

Læt. Sir, I seldom stir abroad.

[Walks about in disorder.]

Sir Jo. I wonder at that, Madam, for 'tis most curious fine weather.

Læt. Methinks, 't has been very ill weather.

Sir Jo. As you say, Madam, 'tis pretty bad weather, and has been so a great while.

Enter Fondlewife.

Fond. Here are fifty pieces in this purse, Sir Joseph—If you will tarry a moment, 'till I fetch my papers, I'll wait upon you down stairs.

Læt. Ruin'd, past redemption! What shall I do—Ha! this fool may be of use. *[Aside.]* *[As Fondlewife is going into the chamber, she runs to Sir Joseph, almost pushes him down, and cries out.]* Stand off, rude ruffian! Help me, my dear——O blefs me! Why will you leave me alone with such a satyr?

Fond. Blefs us! What's the matter? What's the matter?

Læt. Your back was no sooner turn'd, but like a lion, he came open-mouth'd upon me; and would have ravished a kifs from me by main force.

Sir Jo. Oh, Lord! Oh, terrible! Ha, ha, ha! is your wife mad, alderman?

Læt.

Læt. Oh! I'm sick with the fright. Won't you take him out of my sight?

Fond. Oh, traitor! I'm astonished. Oh, bloody-minded traitor!

Sir Jo. Hey-day! Traitor yourself——By the lord Harry, I was in most danger of being ravish'd, if you go to that.

Fond. Oh, how the blasphemous wretch swears! Out of my house, thou son of the whore of Babylon; offspring of Bell and the dragon——Bless us! Ravish my wife! my Dinah! Oh, Shechemite! Begone, I say.

Sir Jo. Why, the devil's in the people, I think.

Læt. Oh! won't you follow and see him out of doors, my dear?

Fond. I'll shut this door to secure him from coming back——Give me the key of your cabinet, cocky——Ravish my wife before my face! I warrant he's a Papist in his heart, at least, 'if not a Frenchman.'

Læt. What can I do now? [*Aside.*] Oh! my dear, I have been in such a fright, that I forgot to tell you, poor Mr. Spintext has a sad fit of the cholic, and is forced to lie down upon our bed——You'll disturb him; I can tread softer.

Fond. Alack, poor man——no, no—you don't know the papers—I won't disturb him; give me the key.

[*She gives him the key, goes to the chamber door, and speaks aloud.*]

Læt. 'Tis nobody but Mr. Fondlewife; Mr. Spintext, lie still on your stomach; lying on your stomach will ease you of the cholic.

Fond. Ay, ay, lie still, lie still; don't let me disturb you. [*Exit Fond.*]

Læt. Sure, when he does not see his face, he won't discover him. Dear Fortune, help me but this once, and I'll never run in thy debt again——But this opportunity is the devil.

Fondlewife returns with papers.

Fond. Good lack! good lack!——I profess, the poor man is in great torment, he lies as flat——Dear, you

60 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

you should heat a trencher, or a napkin——Where's Deborah? Let her clap some warm thing to his stomach, or chafe it with a warm hand, rather than fail. What book's this?

[Sees the book that Bellmour forgot.

Lat. Mr. Spintext's prayer-book, dear——Pray heav'n it be a prayer-book. [Aside.

Fond. Good man! I warrant he dropped it on purpose, that you might take it up, and read some of the pious ejaculations [Taking up the book.] O bless me! O monstrous! A prayer-book! Ay, this is the devil's Pater-noster. Hold, let me see, The Innocent Adultery.

Lat. Misfortune! now all's ruin'd again. [Aside.

Bell. [Peeping.] Damn'd chance! If I had gone to a whoring with the Practice of Piety in my pocket, I had never been discovered.

Fond. Adultery and innocent! O lord! Here's doctrine! Ay, here's discipline!

Lat. Dear husband, I'm amaz'd——Sure it is a good book, and only tends to the speculation of sin.

Fond. Speculation! No, no; something went farther than speculation, when I was not to be let in——Where is this apocryphal elder? I'll ferret him.

Lat. I'm so distracted, I can't think of a lie.

[Aside.

[Fondlewife hauls out Bellmour.

Fond. Come out here, thou Ananias incarnate——Who, how now! who have we here?

Lat. Ha!

[Scrieks, as surpriz'd.

Fond. Oh, thou salacious woman! Am I then brutified? Ay, I feel it here! I sprout, I bud, I blossom, I am ripe horn-mad. But who, in the devil's name, are you? Mercy on me for swearing. But——

Lat. Oh, goodness keep us! Who's this? Who are you? What are you?

Bell. Soh!

Lat. In the name of the——Oh! Good, my dear, don't come near it, I'm afraid 'tis the devil! indeed it has hoofs, dear.

Found.

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 61

Fond. Indeed, and I have horns, dear. The devil, no, I am afraid, 'tis the flesh, thou harlot! Dear, with the pox. Come, firen, speak, confess, who is this reverend, rampant pastor?

Læt. Indeed, and indeed now, my dear Nykin—I never saw this wicked man before.

Fond. Oh, it is a man then, it seems.

Læt. Rather, sure, 'tis a wolf in the cloathing of a sheep.

Fond. Thou art a devil in his proper cloathing, woman's flesh. What, you know nothing of him, but his fleece here—You don't love mutton?—You Magdalen uncoverted.

Bell. Well, now, I know my cue—that is, very honourably to excuse her, and very impudently accuse myself. [*Aside.*

Læt. Why then, I wish I may never enter into the heav'n of your embraces again, my dear, if ever I saw his face before.

Fond. O lord! O strange! I am in admiration of your impudence. Look at him a little better; he is more modest, I warrant you, than to deny it. Come, were you two never face to face before? Speak.

Bell. Since all artifice is vain—and I think myself oblig'd to speak the truth, in justice to your wife—No.

Fond. Humph.

Læt. No, indeed, dear.

Fond. Nay, I find you are both in a story; that I must confess. But, what—not to be cured of the cholic? Don't you know your patient, Mrs. Quack? Oh, lie upon your stomach; lying upon your stomach will cure you of the cholic. Ah! Answer me, Jezabel!

Læt. Let the wicked man answer for himself; does he think that I have nothing to do but excuse him; 'tis enough, if I can clear my own innocence to my own dear.

Bell. By my troth, and so 'tis—I have been a little too backward, that's the truth on't.

VOL. II.

F

End.

62 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Fond. Come, Sir, who are you, in the first place?
nd what are you?

Bell. A whore-master.

Fond. Very concise.

Læt. O beastly, impudent creature.

Fond. Well, Sir, and what came you hither for?

Bell. To lie with your wife.

Fond. Good again——A very civil person this, and, I believe, speaks truth.

Læt. Oh, insupportable impudence!

Fond. Well, Sir,——Pray be cover'd——and you have——Heh! You have finish'd the matter, heh? And I am, as I should be, a sort of a civil perquisite to a whore-master, called a Cuckold, heh. Is it not so? Come, I'm inclining to believe every word you say.

Bell. Why, faith, I must confess, so I designed you——But you were a little unlucky in coming so soon, and hindered the making of your own fortune.

Fond. Humph. Nay, if you mince the matter once, and go back of your word, you are not the person I took you for. Come, come, go on boldly——What, don't be ashamed of your profession——Confess, confess, I shall love thee the better for't——I shall, I feck——What, dost think I don't know how to behave myself in the employment of a cuckold, and have been three years apprentice to matrimony? Come, come, plain-dealing is a jewel.

Bell. Well, since I see thou art a good honest fellow, I'll confess the whole matter to thee.

Fond. Oh, I am a very honest fellow——You never lay with an honest man's wife in your life.

Læt. How, my heart akes! All my comfort lies in his impudence, and, heav'n be prais'd, he has a considerable portion. [*Aside.*]

Bell. In short then, I was informed of the opportunity of your absence, by my spy; for, faith, honest Isaac, I have a long time design'd thee this favour: I knew Spintext was to come by your direction; but I laid a trap for him, and procured his habit, in which

I pass'd upon your servants, and was conducted hither. I pretended a fit of the cholic, to excuse my lying down upon your bed; hoping that when she heard of it, her good-nature would bring her to administer remedies for my distemper—You know what might have followed—But, like an uncivil person, you knock'd at the door, before your wife was come to me.

Fond. Ha! This is apocryphal; I may choose whether I will believe it or no.

Bell. That you may, faith, and I hope you won't believe a word on't—But I can't help telling the truth, for my life.

Fond. How! would not you have me believe you, say you?

Bell. No; for then you must of consequence part with your wife, and there will be some hopes of having her upon the public; then, the encouragement of a separate maintenance——

Fond. No, no; for that matter—when she and I part, she'll carry her separate maintenance about her.

Lat. Ah, cruel dear! how can you be so barbarous? You'll break my heart, if you talk of parting.

[*Cries.*

Fond. Ah, dissembling vermin!

Bel. How canst thou be so cruel, Isaac? Thou hast the heart of a mountain-tiger. By the faith of a sincere sinner, she's innocent for me. Go to him, Madam, fling your snowy arms about his stubborn neck. Bathe his relentless face in your salt trickling tears——

[*She goes and hangs upon his neck, and kisses him.*

Bellmour kisses her hand behind Fondlewife's back. So, a few soft words, and a kiss, and the good man melts. See how kind nature works, and boils over in him.

Lat. Indeed, my dear, I was but just come down stairs, when you knock'd at the door; and the maid told me, Mr. Spintext was ill of the cholic, upon our

64 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

bed. And won't you speak to me, cruel Nykin ? Indeed, I'll die, if you don't.

Fond. Ah ! No, no, I cannot speak, my heart's so full—I have been a tender husband, a tender yoke-fellow ; you know I have—But thou hast been a faithless Dalilah, and the Philistines—Heh ! Art thou not vile and unclean, heh ? Speak. [*Weeping.*

Lat. No——h. [*Sighing.*

Fond. Oh, that I could believe thee !

Lat. Oh, my heart will break ! [*Seeming to faint.*

Fond. Heh, how ! No, stay, stay, I will believe thee, I will.—Pray bend her forward, Sir.

Lat. Oh ! Oh ! Where is my dear ?

Fond. Here, here ; I do believe thee—I won't believe my own eyes.

Bell. For my part, I am so charm'd with the love of your turtle to you, that I'll go and solicit matrimony with all my might and main.

Fond. Well, well, Sir ; as long as I believe it, 'tis well enough. No thanks to you, Sir, for her virtue.—But, I'll shew you the way out of my house, if you please. Come, my dear. Nay, I will believe thee, I do, I feel.

Bell. See the great blessing of an easy faith ; opinion cannot err.

*No husband, by his wife, can be deceiv'd,
She still is virtuous, if she's so believ'd.*

END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V.

SCENE, *The Street.*

Enter Bellmour in a fanatick habit, Setter, Heartwell, and Lucy.

BELLMOUR.

Setter! well encounter'd.

Setter. Joy of your return, Sir. Have you made a good voyage; or have you brought your own lading back?

Bell. No, I have brought nothing but ballast back — 'made a delicious voyage, Setter; and might have rode at anchor in the port till this time, but the enemy surpriz'd us' — I would unrig.

Setter. I attend you, Sir.

Bell. Ha! Is not that Heartwell at Silvia's door; Begone quickly, I'll follow you: — I would not be known. Pox take 'em, they stand just in my way.

[Exit Setter.]

Heart. I'm impatient till it be done.

Lucy. That may be, without troubling yourself to go again for your brother's chaplain. Don't you see that stalking form of godliness?

Heart. Oh, ay, he's a fanatick.

Lucy. An executioner, qualified to do your business. He has been lawfully ordain'd.

Heart. I'll pay him well, if you'll break the matter to him.

Lucy. I warrant you — Do you go and prepare your bride.

[Exit Heart.]

Bell. Humph, fits the wind there? — What a lucky rogue am I! Oh, what sport will be here, if I can persuade this wench to secrecy?

Lucy. Sir; reverend Sir.

F 3

Bell.

66 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Bell. Madam.

[*Discovers himself.*]

Lucy. Now goodness have mercy upon me ! Mr. Bellmour ! is it you ?

Bell. Even I, what dost think ?

Lucy. Think ! that I shou'd not believe my eyes, and that you are not what you seem to be.

Bell. True. But to convince thee who I am, thou knowst my old token.

[*Kisses her.*]

Lucy. Nay, Mr. Bellmour : O Lard ! I believe you are a parson in good earnest, you kiss so devoutly.

Bell. Well, your business with me, Lucy ?

Lucy. I had none, but through mistake.

Bell. Which mistake you must go through with, Lucy——Come, I know the intrigue between Heartwell and your mistress ; and you mistook me for Tribulation Spintext, to marry 'em——Ha ! are not matters in this posture?——Confess ; come, I'll be faithful ; I will, i'faith.——What, disside in me, Lucy ?

Lucy. Alas-a-day ! You and Mr. Vainlove, between you, have ruin'd my poor mistress : you have made a gap in her reputation ! and can you blame her, if she make it up with a husband ?

Bell. Well, is it as I say ?

Lucy. Well, it is then : but you'll be secret ?

Bell. Phuh, secret, ay !—And to be out of thy debt, I'll trust thee with another secret. Your mistress must not marry Heartwell, Lucy.

Lucy. How ! O Lord !——

Bell. Nay, don't be in a passion, Lucy—I'll provide a fitter husband for her——Come, here's earnest of my good intentions for thee, too ; let this mollify.——[*Gives her money.*] Look you, Heartwell is my friend ; and though he be blind, I must not see him fall into the snare, and wittingly marry a whore.

Lucy. Where ! I'd have you to know my mistress scorns——

Bell. Nay, nay ; look you, Lucy ; there are whores of as good quality——But to the purpose, if you

you will give me leave to acquaint you with it——
Do you carry on the mistake of me : I'll marry 'em
——Nay, don't pause ; ——If you do, I'll spoil all.
——I have some private reasons for what I do, which
I'll tell you within.——In the mean time, I pro-
mise,——and rely upon me,——to help your mistress to
a husband : nay, and thee, too, Lucy——Here's
my hand, I will ; with a fresh assurance.

[Gives her more money.

Lucy. Ah, the devil is not so cunning——
You know my easy nature——Well, for once
I'll venture to serve you ; but if you do deceive me,
the curse of all kind, tender-hearted women light
upon you.

Bill. That's as much as to say, the pox take me.
——Well, lead on. [Exeunt.

Enter Vainlove, Sharper, and Setter.

Sharp. Just now, say you, gone in with Lucy ?

Set. I saw him, and stood at the corner where you
found me, and overheard all they said : Mr. Bellmour
is to marry 'em.

Sharp. Ha, ha ! 'twill be a pleasant cheat,——
I'll plague Heartwell, when I see him. Pr'ythee,
Frank, let's tease him ; make him fret, till he foam
at the mouth, and disgorge his matrimonial oath
with interest——Come, thou'rt musty——

Set. [To Sharper.] Sir, a word with you.

[Whispers him.

Vain. Sharper swears she has forsworn the letter——
I'm sure he tells me truth ;——but I am not sure she
told him truth——Yet she was unaffectedly concern'd,
he says ; and often blush'd with anger and surprize ;
——And so I remember in the Park——She had reason,
if I wrong her——I begin to doubt.

Sharp. Say't thou so !

Setter. This afternoon, Sir, about an hour before
my master receiv'd the letter.

Sharp. In my conscience, like enough.

Setter.

68 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Setter. Ay, I know her, Sir: at least, I'm sure I can fish it out of her: she's the very sluice to her lady's secrets. 'Tis but setting her mill a going, and I can drain her of 'em all.

Sharp. Here, Frank, your blood-hound has made out the fault. This letter, that so sticks in thy maw, is counterfeit; only a trick of Silvia, in revenge, contrived by Lucy.

Vain. Ha! It has a colour—But how do you know it, firrah?

Setter. I do suspect as much; ----because why, Sir, —She was pumping me about how your worship's affairs stood towards Madam Araminta; as, when you had seen her last; when you were to see her next; and, where you were to be found at that time; and such like.

Vain. And where did you tell her?

Setter. In the Piazza.

Vain. There I receiv'd the letter——It must be so——And why did you not find me out, to tell me this, before, sot?

Setter. Sir, I was employ'd for Mr. Bellmour.

Sharp. You were well employ'd——I think there is no objection to the excuse.

Vain. Pox o' my saucy credulity——If I have lost her, I deserve it. But if confession and repentance be of force, I'll win her, or weary her into a forgiveness. [Exit.

Sharp. Methinks I long to see Bellmour come forth.

[Enter Bellmour.

Setter. Talk of the devil——See, where comes.

Sharp. Hugging himself in his prosperous mischief——No real fanatick can look better pleas'd, after a successful sermon of sedition.

Bell. Sharper, fortify thy spleen: such a jest! Speak when thou art ready.

Sharp. Now, were I ill-natur'd, would I utterly disappoint thy mirth: 'hear thee tell thy mighty jest, with

‘ with as much gravity as a bishop hears venereal
‘ causes in the spiritual court :’ not so much as wrinkle
my face with one smile ; but let thee look simply,
and laugh by thyself.

Bell. Pshaw, no ; I have a better opinion of thy
wit——Gad, I defy thee. ——

Sharp. Were it not loss of time, you should
make the experiment. But honest Setter, here, over-
heard you with Lucy, and has told me all.

Bell. Nay, then, I thank thee for not putting me
out of countenance. But, to tell you something you
don’t know——I got an opportunity, after I had
married ’em, of discovering the cheat to Silvia.
She took it, at first, as another woman would the
like disappointment ; but my promise to make her
amends quickly with another husband, somewhat pa-
cify’d her.

Sharp. But how the devil do you think to acquit
yourself of your promise ? Will you marry her your-
self ?

Bell. I have no such intentions at present——
Prythee, wilt thou think a little for me ? I am sure
the ingenious Mr. Setter will assist.

Setter. O Lord, Sir !

Bell. I’ll leave him with you, and go shift my ha-
bit. [Exit.

Enter Sir Joseph, and Bluff.

Sharp. Heh ! Sure Fortune has sent this fool hither
on purpose. Setter, stand close ; seem not to observe
’em ; and, harke’e—— [Whispers.

Bluff. Fear him not——I am prepar’d for him now ;
and he shall find he might have safer rous’d a sleep-
ing lion.

Sir Jo. Hush, hush : don’t you see him ?

Bluff. Shew him to me. ——Where is he ?

Sir Jo. Nay, don’t speak so loud ——I don’t jest,
as I did a little while ago ——Look yonder ——Agad,
if he should hear the lion roar, he’d cudgel him into
an ass, and his primitive braying. Don’t you re-
member

member the story in Æsop's Fables, bully? A-gad, there are good morals to be pick'd out of Æsop's Fables, let me tell you that; and Renard the Fox, too.

Bluff. Damn your morals.

Sir Jo. Pr'ythee, don't speak so loud.

Bluff. Damn your morals; I must revenge the affront done to my honour. [*In a low voice.*]

Sir Jo. Ay, do, do, captain, if you think fitting — You may dispose of your own flesh as you think fitting, d'ye see: but, by the Lord Harry, I'll leave you. [*Stealing away upon his tiptoes.*]

Bluff. Prodigious! What, will you forsake your friend in extremity! You can't in honour refuse to carry him a challenge.

[*Almost whispering, and treading softly after him.*]

Sir Jo. Pr'ythee, what do you see in my face, that looks as if I would carry a challenge? Honour is your province, captain; take it — All the world know me to be a knight, and a man of worship.

Setter. I warrant you, Sir, I'm instructed.

Sharp. Impossible! Araminta take a liking to a fool! [*Aloud.*]

Setter. Her head runs on nothing else, nor she can talk of nothing else.

Sharp. I know she commended him all the while we were in the Park; but thought it had been only to make Vainlove jealous.

Sir Jo. How's this! Good bully, hold your breath, and let's hearken. A-gad, this must be I.

Sharp. Death, it can't be, — An oaf, an ideot, a wittal.

Sir Jo. Ay, now it's out; 'tis I, my own individual person.

Sharp. A wretch, that has flown for shelter to the lowest shrub of mankind, and seeks protection from a blasted coward.

Sir Jo. That's you, bully back.

[*Bluff frowns upon Sir Joseph.*]

Sharp. She has given Vainlove her promise to marry

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 71

marry him before to-morrow morning.—Has she not? [To Setter.]

Setter. She has, Sir;—And I have it in charge to attend her all this evening, in order to conduct her to the place appointed.

Sharp. Well, I'll go and inform your master; and do you press her to make all the haste imaginable.

[Exit.]

Setter. Were I a rogue, now, what a noble prize could I dispose of! A good pinnace, richly laden, and to launch forth under my auspicious convoy. Twelve thousand pounds, and all her rigging; besides what lies conceal'd under hatches—Ha! all this committed to my care!—Avaunt temptation—Setter, shew thyself a person of worth; be true to thy trust, and be reputed honest. Reputed honest! Hum; is that all? Ay; for to be honest is nothing; the reputation of it is all. Reputation! what have such poor rogues as I to do with reputation? 'tis above us; and for men of quality, they are above it; so that reputation is e'en as foolish a thing as honesty. And for my part, if I meet Sir Joseph, with a purse of gold in his hand, I'll dispose of mine to the best advantage.

Sir Jo. Heh, heh, heh: here 'tis for you, i'faith, Mr. Setter. Nay, I'll take you at your word.

[Chinking a purse.]

Setter. Sir Joseph! and the captain too! Undone, undone! I'm undone, my master's undone, my lady's undone, and all the business is undone.

Sir Jo. No, no, never fear, man, the lady's business shall be done. What—Come, Mr. Setter, I have over-heard all, and to speak, is but loss of time; but, if there be occasion, let these worthy gentlemen intercede for me.

[Gives him gold.]

Setter. O Lord, Sir! what d'ye mean? Corrupt my honesty,—They have, indeed, very persuading faces. But—

Sir Jo. 'Tis too little; there's more, man. There, take all—Now—

Setter.

72 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Setter. Well, Sir Joseph, you have such a winning way with you——

Sir Jo. And how, and how, good Setter, did the little rogue look, when she talk'd of Sir Joseph? Did not her eyes twinkle, and her mouth water? 'Did not she she pull up her little bubbies? And—Agad, 'I'm so overjoy'd—And stroke down her belly; and 'then step aside to tie her garter,' when she was thinking of her love? Heb, Setter!

Setter. O yes, Sir.

Sir Jo. How now, bully? What, melancholy, because I'm in the lady's favour?—No matter, I'll make your peace——I know they were a little smart upon you——But, I warrant I'll bring you into the lady's good graces.

Bluff. Pshaw! I have petitions to shew from other guests toys than she. Look here; these were sent me this morning—There, read. [*Shows letters.*] That—that's a scrawl of quality. Here, here's from a countess, too. Hum——No, hold——that's from a knight's wife, she sent it me by her husband——But here, both these are from persons of great quality.

Sir Jo. They are either from persons of great quality, or no quality at all, 'tis such a damn'd ugly hand.

[*While Sir Joseph reads, Bluff whispers* Setter.

Setter. Captain, I would do any thing to serve you; but this is so difficult——

Bluff. Not at all. Don't I know him?

Setter. You'll remember the conditions?——

Bluff. I'll giv't you under my hand——In the mean time, here's earnest. [*Gives him money.*] Come, knight——I'm capitulating with Mr. Setter, for you.

Sir Jo. Ah, honest Setter—Sirrah, I'll give thee any thing, 'but a night's lodging.' [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sharper, tugging in Heartwell.

Sharf. Nay, pr'ythee leave railing, and come along with

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 73

with me; may be she mayn't be within. 'Tis-but to yond' corner-house.

Heart. Whither? Whither? Which corner-house?

Sharp. Why, there; the two white posts.

Heart. And who would you visit there, say you? (Oons, how my heart akes.)

Sharp. Pshaw! thou'rt so troublesome and inquisitive—Why, I'll tell you; 'tis a young creature that Vainlove debauch'd, and has forsaken. Did you never hear Bellmour chide him about Silvia?

Heart. Death, and hell, and marriage! my wife. *[Aside.]*

Sharp. Why, thou art as musty as a new-married man, that had found his wife knowing the first night.

Heart. Hell, and the devil! Does he know it? But, hold——If he should not, I were a fool to discover it——I'll dissemble, and try him. *[Aside.]* Ha, ha, ha! Why, Tom, is that such an occasion of melancholy? Is it such an uncommon mischief?

Sharp. No, faith; I believe not.——Few women, but have their year of probation, before they are cloister'd in the narrow joys of wedlock. But, pr'ythee come along with me, or I'll go and have the lady to myself. B'w'y George. *[Going.]*

Heart. O torture! How he racks and tears me!—Death! Shall I own my shame, or wittingly let him go and whore my wife? No, that's insupportable—Oh, Sharper!

Sharp. How, now?

Heart. Oh, I am——marry'd.

Sharp. Now, hold spleen. *[Aside.]* Marry'd!

Heart. Certainly, irrecoverably marry'd.

Sharp. Heav'n forbid, man! How long?

Heart. Oh, an age, an age! I have been marry'd these two hours.

Sharp. My old batchelor marry'd! That were a jest. Ha, ha, ha!

VOL. II.

G

Heart.

74 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Heart. Death ! d'ye mock me ? Hearn ye, if either you esteem my friendship, or your own safety—come not near that house—that corner house—that hot brothel. Ask no questions.

Sharp. Mad, by this light. [*Exit Heart.*]
Thus grief still treads upon the heels of pleasure :
Marry'd in haste, we may repent at leisure.

Enter Setter.

Set. Some by experience find those words misplaced :

At leisure marry'd, they repent in haste,
As I suppose my master Heartwell.

Sharp. Here again, my Mercury !

Set. Sublimate, if you please, Sir : I think my achievements do deserve the epithet—Mercury was a pimp too ; but though I blush to own it at this time, I must confess, I am somewhat fallen from the dignity of my function, and do condescend to be scandalously employ'd in the promotion of vulgar matrimony.

Sharp. As how, dear dexterous pimp ?

Set. Why, to be brief, for I have weighty affairs depending—Our stratagem succeeded as you intended—Bluff turns arrant traitor ; bribes me to make a private conveyance of the lady to him, and put a sham-settlement upon Sir Joseph.

Sharp. O rogue ! Well, but I hope—

Set. No, no ; never fear me, Sir—I privately inform'd the knight of the treachery ; who has agreed, seemingly to be cheated, that the captain may be so in reality.

Sharp. Where's the bride ?

Set. Shifting clothes for the purpose, at a friend's house of mine. Here's company coming ; if you'll walk this way, Sir, I'll tell you. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Bellmour, Belinda, Araminta, and Vainlove.

Vain. Oh, 'twas frenzy all : cannot you forgive it ?——Men in madness have a title to you pity.

[*To Araminta.*]

Aram.

Aram.—Which they forfeit, when they are restor'd to their senses.

Vain. I am not presuming beyond a pardon.

Aram. You, who cou'd reproach me with one counterfeited, how insolent would a real pardon make you? But there's no need to forgive what is not worth my anger.

Belin. O' my conscience, I cou'd find in my heart to marry thee, purely to be rid of thee——At least, thou art so troublesome a lover, there's hopes thou'lt make a more than ordinary quiet husband.

[To Bellmour.

Bell. Say you so——Is that a maxim among ye?

Belin. Yes: you fluttering men of the mode have made marriage a mere French dish.

Bell. I hope there's no French sauce. [*Aside.*

Belin. You are so curious in the preparation, that is, your courtship, one wou'd think you meant a noble entertainment——But when we come to feed, 'tis all froth and poor, but in show. Nay, often; only remains, which have been I know not how many times warm'd for other company, and at last serv'd up cold to the wife.

Bell. That were a miserable wretch indeed, who could not afford one warm dish for the wife of his bosom——But you, timorous virgins, form a dreadful chimæra of a husband, as of a creature contrary to that soft, humble, pliant, easy thing, a lover; so gues at plagues in matrimony, in opposition to the pleasures of courtship. Alas! courtship to marriage, is but as the music in the play-house, 'till the curtain's drawn; but that once up, then opens the scene of pleasure.

Belin. Oh, fo!—no: rather, courtship to marriage, as a very witty prologue to a very dull play.

Enter Sharper.

Sharp. Hift,——Bellmour: if you'll bring the ladies, make haste to Sylvia's lodgings, before Heartwell has fretted himself out of breath.——

G 2

Bell.

76 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Bell. You have an opportunity now, Madam, to revenge yourself upon Heartwell, for affronting your squirrel. [To Belinda.]

Belin. Oh, the filthy rude beast.

Aram. 'Tis a lasting quarrel: I think he has never been at our house since.

Bell. But give yourselves the trouble to walk to that corner-house, and I'll tell you by the way what may divert and surprize you. [Exeunt.]

SCENE, Silvia's Lodgings.

Enter Heartwell and Boy.

Heart. Gone forth, say you, with her maid?

Boy. There was a man too that fetch'd 'em out—
Setter, I think they call him.

Heart. Soh——That precious pimp too—Damn'd, damn'd strumpet! Cou'd she not contain herself on her wedding day! Not hold out till night! O cursed state! How wide we err, when apprehensive of the load of life,

———We hope to find	}
That help which Nature meant in Womankind,	
To man that supplemental self design'd;	
But proves a burning caustic when apply'd,	
And Adam, sure, cou'd with more ease abide	}
The bone when broken, than when made a bride.	

Enter Bellmour, Belinda, Vainlove and Araminta.

Bell. Now, George, what rhyming: I thought the chimes of verse were past, when once the doleful marriage knell was rung.

Heart. Shame and confusion! I am exposed.

[Vainlove and Araminta talk apart.]

Belin. Joy, joy, Mr. Bridegroom; I give you joy, Sir.

Heart. 'Tis not in thy nature to give me joy——A woman can as soon give immortality.

Belin.

Belin. Ha, ha, ha! O gad, men grow such clowns when they are marry'd.

Bell. That they are fit for no company but their wives.

Belin. Nor for them neither, in a little time—I swear, at the month's end, you shall hardly find a marry'd man that will do a civil thing to his wife, or say a civil thing to any body else. How he looks already! Ha, ha, ha!

Bell. Ha, ha, ha!

Heart. Death! am I made your laughing stock? For you, Sir, I shall find a time; but take off your wasp here, or the clown may grow boisterous: I have a fly-flap.

Belin. You have occasion for't, your wife has been blown upon.

Bell. That's home.

Heart. Not friends or furies could have added to my vexation, or any thing else, but another woman—You've rack'd my patience; begone, or by—

Bell. Hold, hold! What the devil, thou wilt not draw upon a woman?

Vain. What's the matter?

Aram. Bless me! What have you done to him?

Belin. Only touch'd a gall'd beast 'till he winch'd.

Vain. Bellmour, give it over; you vex him too much; 'tis all serious to him.

Belin. Nay, I swear, I begin to pity him myself.

Heart. Damn your pity—But let me be calm a little—How have I deserv'd this of you, any of ye? Sir, have I impair'd the honour of your house, promis'd your sister marriage, and seduc'd her? Wherein have I injur'd you? Did I bring a physician to your father when he lay expiring, and endeavour to prolong his life, and you one and twenty? Madam, have I had an opportunity with you and baulk'd it? Did you ever offer me the favour and I refus'd it? Or——

Belin. Oh, foh! What does the filthy fellow mean? Lard, let me begone.

78 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Aram. Hang me, if I pity you; you are right enough serv'd.

' Bell. This is a little scurrilous tho'.

Vain. ' Nay, 'tis a fore of your own scratching—
Well, George——

Heart. You are the principal cause of all my present ills. If Silvia had not been your mistress, my wife might have been honest.

Vain. And if Silvia had not been your wife, my mistress might have been just—There we are even—but have a good heart, I heard of your misfortune, and am come to your relief.

Heart. When execution's over, you offer a reprieve.

Vain. What would you give ?

Heart. Oh ! any thing, every thing, a leg, or two, or an arm : ' nay, I would be divorc'd from my viri-
' lity, to be divorc'd from my wife.

Enter Sharper.

Vain. Don't offer so much, for here's one can sell you freedom cheaper.

Sharp. Vainlove, I have been a kind of a god-father to you, yonder. I have promis'd and vow'd some things in your name, which I think you are bound to perform.

Vain. No signing to a blank, friend.

Sharp. No; I'll deal fairly with you——'Tis a full and free discharge to Sir Joseph Wittol and Captain Bluff; for all injuries whatsoever, done unto you by them, until the present date hereof—How say you ?

Vain. Agreed.

Sharp. Then, let me beg these ladies to wear their masks a moment. Come in, gentlemen and ladies.

Heart. What the devil's all this to me !

Vain. Patience.

Enter Sir Joseph, Bluff, Silvia, Lucy, and Setter.

Bluff. All injuries whatsoever, Mr. Sharper.

Sir

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 79

Sir Jo. Ay, ay, whatsoever, captain, stick to that ; whatsoever.

Sharp. 'Tis done, these gentlemen are witnesses to the general release.

Vain. Ay, ay, to this instant moment—I have pass'd an act of oblivion.

Bluff. 'Tis very generous, Sir, since I needs must own——

Sir Jo. No, no, captain, you need not own ; heh, heh, heh, 'tis I must own——

Bluff.——That you are over-reach'd too, ha, ha, ha ! only a little art military used—only undermined, or so, as shall appear by the fair Araminta, my wife's permission. [*Lucy unmasks.*] Oh, the devil, cheated at last !

Sir Jo. Only a little art-military trick, captain, only countermin'd, or so——Mr. Vainlove, I suppose you know whom I have got——now, but all's forgiven.

Vain. I know whom you have not got. Pray, ladies, convince him. [*Aram. and Belin. unmask.*]

Sir Jo. Ah ! O lord, my heart akes—Ah, Setter, a rogue of all fides.

Sharp. Sir Joseph, you had better have pre-engaged this gentleman's pardon : for though Vainlove be so generous to forgive the loss of his mistress—I know not how Heartwell may take the loss of his wife.

[*Silvia unmasks.*]

Heart. My wife ! By this light 'tis she, the very cockatrice—Oh, Sharper ! Let me embrace thee—But art thou sure she is really marry'd to him ?

Setter. Really and lawfully married, I am witness.

Sharp. Bellmour will unriddle to you.

[*Heartwell goes to Bellmour.*]

Sir Jo. Pray, Madam, who are you ? For I find, you and I are like to better acquainted.

Silv. The worst of me is, that I am your wife—

Sharp. Come, Sir Joseph, your fortune is not so bad as your fear——A fine lady, and a lady of very good quality.

Sir

80 THE OLD BATCHELOR.

Sir Jo. Thanks to my knighthood, she's a lady—

Vain.—That deserves a fool with a better title—

Pray use her as my relation, or you shall hear on't.

Bluff. What, are you a woman of quality too, spouse?

Setter. And my relation; pray let her be respected accordingly—Well, honest Lucy, fare the well—I think you and I have been play-fellows, off and on, any time this seven years.

Lucy. Hold your prating—I'm thinking what vocation I shall follow while my spouse is planting laurels in the wars.

Bluff. No more wars, spouse, no more wars—While I plant laurels for my head abroad, I may find the branches sprout at home.

Heart. Bellmour, I approve thy mirth, and thank thee—And I cannot in gratitude, for I see which way thou art going, see thee fall into the same snare, out of which thou hast deliver'd me.

Bell. I thank thee, George, for thy good intention—But there is a fatality in marriage—for I find I'm resolute.

Heart. Then good counsel will be thrown away upon you—For my part, I have once escaped—And when I wed again, may she be—ugly, as an old bawd.

Vain. Ill-natur'd as an old maid—

Bell. Wanton as a young widow—

Sharp. And jealous as a barren wife.

Heart. Agreed.

Bell. Well; 'midst of these dreadful denunciations, and notwithstanding the warning and example before me, I commit myself to lasting durance.

Belin. Prisoner, make much of your fetters.

[Giving her hand.

Bell. Frank, will you keep us in countenance?

Vain. May I presume to hope so great a blessing?

Aram. We had better take the advantage of a little of our friends experience first.

Bell. O' my conscience she dare not consent, for fear

THE OLD BATCHELOR. 81

fear he shou'd recant. [*Aside.*] Well, we shall have your company to church in the morning——May be it may get you an appetite to see us fall before you,

' Setter, did not you tell me——

' *Setter.* They're at the door ; I'll call 'em in.

' A D A N C E.'

Bell. Now set me forward on a journey for life—
Come, take your fellow travellers. Old George, I'm
sorry to see thee still plod on alone.

Heart. With gaudy plumes, and gingling bells
made proud,

The youthful beast sets forth, and neighs aloud,
A morning-sun his tinsell'd harness gilds,
And the first stage a down-hill green-sward yields.
But, Oh!——

What rugged ways attend the noon of life !

Our sun declines, and with what anxious strife, }

What pain we tug that galling load, a wife. }

All courser the first heat with vigour run ;

But 'tis with whip and spur the race is won.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

END of the FIFTH ACT.

EPI.

E P I L O G U E

*AS a rash girl, who with all hazards run,
 And be enjoy'd, tho' sure to be undone ;
 Soon as her curiosity is over,
 Would give the world she could her toy recover :
 So fares it with our poet ; and I'm sent
 To tell you, he already does repent.* }
*Would you were all as forward, to keep Lent.
 Now the deed's done, the giddy thing has leisure
 To think o'th' sting, that's in the tail of pleasure.
 Methinks, I hear him in consideration :* }
*What will the world say ? Where's my reputation ?
 Now that's at stake——No, fool, 'tis out o' fashion.* }
*If loss of that should follow want of wit,
 How many undone men were in the pit !
 Why, that's some comfort to an author's fears,
 If he's an ass, he will be try'd by's peers.
 But hold——I am exceeding my commission ;
 My business here, was humbly to petition.
 But we're so us'd to rail on these occasions,
 I could not help one trial of your patience :
 For 'tis our way, you know, for fear o'th' worst,
 To be beforehand still, and cry fool first.
 How say you, sparks ? How do you stand affected ?
 I swear, young Bays within, is so dejected,
 'Twould grieve your hearts to see him ; shall I call him ?
 But then you cruel critics would so maul him !
 Yet, may be, you'll encourage a beginner ;
 But how ?——Just as the devil does a sinner.
 Women and wits are us'd e'en much at one,
 You gain your end, and damn 'em when you've done.*





J. Roberts del.

Published for the Dublin Theatre, July 1. 1776.

W. Miller sculp.

MR. MOODY in the Character of TEAGUE.

*I poor Irishman, & Christ save me, & save you all
I pray thee give me Sixpence good Masters.*

BELL'S EDITION.

THE
COMMITTEE.

A COMEDY, by the Hon. Sir R. HOWARD.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,
By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,
By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCLXXVI.

P R O L O G U E.

TO cheat the most judicious eyes, there be
 Ways in all trades, but this of poetry :
 Your tradesman shews his ware by some false light,
 To hide the faults and slightrness from your sight :
 Nay, though 'tis full of bracks, he'll boldly swear
 'Tis excellent, and so help off his ware.
 He'll rule your judgment by his confidence,
 Which in a poet you'd call impudence ;
 Nay, if the world afford the like again,
 He swears he'll give it you for nothing then.
 These are words too a poet dares not say ;
 Let it be good or bad, you're sure to pay.
 —Wou'd 'twere a penn'worth ;——but in this you are
 Able to judge, than he that made the ware ;
 However, his design was well enough,
 He try'd to shew some newer-fashion'd stuff.
 Not that the name Committee can be new,
 That has been too well known to most of you :
 But you may smile, for you have past your doom ;
 The poet dares not, his is st ill to come.

A 2

D R A-

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Colonel <i>Careless</i>	Mr. Brereton.
Colonel <i>Blunt</i>	Mr. Aickin.
Lieutenant <i>Story</i>	Mr. Fawcett.
<i>Nehemiah Catch</i>	Mr. Waldron, &c.
<i>Joseph Blemish</i>	} Committee Men.
<i>Jonathan Headstrong</i>	
<i>Ezekiel Scrape</i>	
Mr. <i>Day</i> , the Chairman to the committee	
<i>Abel</i> , Son to Mr. <i>Day</i>	Mr. Baddeley.
<i>Obadiab</i> , Clerk to the committee	Mr. Burton.
<i>Teague</i>	Mr. Parsons.
Tavern-Boy	Mr. Moody.
Bailiff	Mr. Everard.
Soldier	Mr. Griffith.
Two Chair-Men	Mr. Blanchard.
Gaol-Keeper	Mr. Heath, &c.
A Servant to Mr. <i>Day</i>	Mr. Kear.
A Stage Coachman	
Bookseller	Mr. Carpenter.
Porter	Mr. Wrighten.

W O M E N.

Mrs. <i>Ruth</i>	Miss Pope.
Mrs. <i>Day</i>	Mrs. Bradshaw.
Mrs. <i>Arbella</i>	Miss Jarrat.
Mrs. <i>Chat</i>	Mrs. Cartwright.

S C E N E, L O N D O N.

THE

THE C O M M I T T E E.

A C T I.

Enter Mrs. Day, brushing her hoods and scarfs, Mrs. Arbella, Mrs. Ruth, Col. Blunt, and a Stage-Coachman.

Mrs. DAY.

NOW, out upon't, how dusty 'tis! All things consider'd, 'tis better travelling in the winter; especially for us of the better sort, that ride in coachcs. And yet, to say truth, warm weather is both pleasant and comfortable; 'tis a thousand pities that fair weather should do any hurt.—Well said, honest coachman, thou hast done thy part! My son, Abel, paid for my place at Reading, did he not?

Coach. Yes, an't please you.

Mrs. D. Well, there's something extraordinary, to make thee drink.

Coach. By my whip, 'tis a groat of more than ordinary thinness.—Plague on this new gentry, how liberal they are. [*Aside.*] Farewel, young mistress; farewel, gentlemen. Pray when you come by Reading, let Toby carry you. [*Exit Coachman.*]

Mrs. D. Why how now, Mrs. Arbella! What, sad! Why, what's the matter?

Arbel. I am not very sad.

Mrs. D. Nay, by my honour, you need not, if you knew as much as I. Well—I'll tell you one thing; you are well enough; you need not fear, whoever does; say I told you so—if you do not hurt yourself; for as cunning as he is, and let him be as cunning as he will, I can see with half an eye, that

A 3.

my

6 THE COMMITTEE.

my son Abel means to take care of you in your composition, and will needs have you his guest. Ruth and you shall be bedfellows. I warrant, that same Abel many and many a time will wish his sister's place; or else his father ne'er got him. Though I say it, that shou'd not say it, yet I do say it——'tis a notable fellow——

Arbel. I am fallen into strange hands, if they prove as busy as her tongue—— [*Aside.*]

Mrs. D. And now you talk of this same Abel, I tell you but one thing: I wonder that neither he nor my husband's honour's chief clerk, Obadiah, is not here ready to attend me. I dare warrant my son Abel has been here two hours before us; 'Tis the veriest Princox; he will ever be galloping, and yet he is not full one and twenty, for all his appearances. He never stole this trick of galloping; his father was just such another before him, and wou'd gallop with the best of 'em: he and Mrs. Busie's husband, were counted the best horsemen in Reading, ay, and Berkshire to boot. I have rode formerly behind Mr. Busie, but in truth I cannot now endure to travel but in a coach; my own is at present in disorder, and so I was fain to shift in this; but I warrant you, if his honour, Mr. Day, chairman of the honourable committee of sequestrations, shou'd know that his wife rode in a stage-coach, he wou'd make the house too hot for some.——Why, how is't with you, Sir? what, weary of your journey?

[*To the Colonel.*]

Col. Bl. Her tongue will never tire. [*Aside.*]—So many, Mistress, riding in the coach, has a little dis-temper'd me with heat.

Mrs. D. So many, Sir! why there were but six—What wou'd you say if I should tell you, that I was one of the eleven that travell'd at one time in one coach?

Col. Bl. O, the devil! I have given her a new theme—— [*Aside.*]

Mrs. D. Why, I'll tell you—Can you guess how 'twas?

Col.

Col. B/. Not I, truly. But 'tis no matter, I do believe it.

Mrs. D. Look you, thus it was ; there was, in the first place, myself, and my husband I shou'd have said first, but his honour wou'd have pardon'd me, if he had heard me ; Mr. Busie that I told you of, and his wife ; the mayor of Reading and his wife ; and this Ruth that you see there, in one of our laps——but now, where do you think the rest were ?

Col. B/. A top o'th' coach, sure.

Mrs. D. Nay, I durst swear you wou'd never guess——why——wou'd you think it ; I had two growing in my belly, Mrs. Busie one in hers, and Mrs. Mayorefs of Reading a chopping boy, as it proved afterwards, in hers, as like the father as if it had been spit out of his mouth ; and if he had come out of his mouth, he had come out of as honest a man's mouth as any in forty miles of the head of him : for, wou'd you think it ? at the very same time when this same Ruth was sick, it being the first time the girl was ever coach'd, the good man, Mr. Mayor, I mean, that I spoke of, held his hat for the girl to ease her stomach in.——

Enter Abel, and Obadiah.

—O, are you come ! Long look'd for comes at last. ' What— you have a slow set pace, as well as your hasty ' scribble, sometimes : ' Did you not think it fit, that I shou'd have found attendance ready for me when I alighted ?

Oba. I ask your honour's pardon ; for I do profess unto your ladyship, I had attended sooner, but that his young honour, Mr. Abel, demurr'd me by his delays.

Mrs. D. Well, son Abel, you must be obey'd, and I partly, if not quite, guess your business ; providing for the entertainment of one I have in my eye. Read her and take her : Ah, is't not so ?

Abel. I have not been deficient in my care, forsooth.

Mrs. D. Will you never leave your forsooths ? Art thou not ashamed to let the clerk carry himself better, and shew more breeding, than his master's son.

Abel.

THE COMMITTEE.

Abel. If it please your honour, I have some business for your more private ear.

Mrs. D. Very well.

Ruth. What a lamentable condition has that gentleman been in! faith I pity him.

Arbel. Are you so apt to pity men?

Ruth. Yes, men that are humourfome, as I would children that are froward; I wou'd not make them cry on purpose.

Arbel. Well, I like his humour, I dare swear he's plain and honest.

Ruth. Plain enough of all conscience; faith I'll speak to him.

Arbel. Nay, pr'ythee don't; he'll think thee rude.

Ruth. Why then I'll think him an ass.—How is't after your journey, Sir?

Col. Bl. Why, I am worse after it.

Ruth. Do you love riding in a coach, Sir?

Col. Bl. No, forsooth, nor talking after riding in a coach.

Ruth. I shou'd be loath to interrupt your meditations, Sir: we may have the fruits hereafter.

Col. Bl. If you have, they shall break loose spite of my teeth.—This spawn is as bad as the great pike.

[*Aside.*]

Arbel. Pr'ythee peace!——Sir, we wish you all happiness.

Col. Bl. And quiet, good sweet ladies—I like her well enough.—Now wou'd not I have her say any more, for fear she should jeer too, and spoil my good opinion. If 'twere possible, I wou'd think well of one woman.

Mrs. Day. Come, Mrs. Arbella, 'tis as I told you, Abel has done it; say no more. Take her by the hand, Abel; I profess, she may venture to take thee for better for worse. Come, Mrs. the honourable committee will sit suddenly. Come, let's along. Farewel, Sir.

[*Ex. all but C. Blunt.*]

C. Bl. How! the committee ready to sit! Plague on their honours; for so my honour'd lady, that was one

one of the eleven, was pleas'd to call 'em. I had like to have come a day after the fair. 'Tis pretty, that such as I have been must compound for their having been rascals. Well, I must go look a lodging, and a solicitor: I'll find the arrantest rogue I can, too: for, according to the old saying, set a thief to catch a thief.

Enter Col. Careless, and Lieutenant.

C. *Car.* Dear Blunt, well met; when came you, man?

C. *Bl.* Dear Careless, I did not think to have met thee so suddenly. Lieutenant, your servant. I am landed just now, man.

C. *Car.* Thou speak'st as if thou had'st been at sea.

C. *Bl.* It's pretty well guest; I have been in a storm.

C. *Car.* What business brought thee?

C. *Bl.* May be the same with yours; I am come to compound with their honours.

C. *Car.* That's my business too. Why, the committee sits suddenly.

C. *Bl.* Yes, I know it; I heard so in the storm I told thee of.

C. *Car.* What storm, man?

C. *Bl.* Why, a tempest, as high as ever blew from woman's breath. I have rode in a stage coach, wedged in with half a dozen; one of them was a committee-man's wife; his name is Day; and she accordingly will be call'd, your honour, and your ladyship; 'with a tongue that wags as much faster than all other women's, as in the several motions of a watch, the hand of the minute moves faster than that of the hour.' There was her daughter, too; but a bastard, without question: for she had no resemblance to the rest of the notch'd rascals, and very pretty, and had wit enough to jeer a man in prosperity to death.—There was another gentlewoman, and she was handsome; nay, very handsome; but I kept her from being as bad as the rest.

C. *Car.* Pr'ythee how, man?

C. *Bl.* Why, she began with two or three good words, and I desired her she would be quiet while she was well.

Car.

10 THE COMMITTEE.

Car. Thou wer't not so mad?

Bl. I had been mad if I had not—But when we came to our journey's end, there met us two such formal and stately rascals, that yet pretended religion and open rebellion ever painted: they were the hopes and guide of the honourable family, viz. the eldest son, and the chiefeft clerk, rogues—and hereby hangs a tale.—This gentlewoman, I told thee I kept civil, by desiring her to say nothing, is a rich heiress of one that died in the king's service, and left his estate under sequestration. This young chicken has this kite snatch'd up, and designs her for this her eldest rascal.

Car. What a dull fellow wert thou, not to make love, and rescue her.

Bl. I'll wooe no woman.

Car. Wou'd'st thou have them court thee? A soldier, and not love a siege!—How now, who art thou?

Enter Teague.

Tea. A poor Irishman, Heav'n save me, and save all your three faces; give me a thirteen.

Car. I see thou wou'd'st not lose any thing for want of asking.

Tea. I can't afford it.

Car. Here, I am pretty near; there's sixpence for thy confidence.

Tea. By my troth it is too little; give me another sixpence-halfpenny, and I'll drink your healths.

Car. How long hast thou been in England?

Tea. Ever since I came here, and longer too, faith.

Car. What hast thou done since thou cam'st into England?

Tea. Serv'd Heav'n, and St. Ptarick, and my good sweet king, and my good sweet master; yes, indeed.

Car. And what dost thou do now?

Tea. Cry for them every day, upon my soul.

Car. Why, where's thy master?

Tea. He's dead, malleró, and left poor Teague. Upon my soul he never serv'd poor Teague so before in all his life.

Car. Who was thy master?

Tea.

THE COMMITTEE. 11

Tea. E'en the good colonel Danger.

Car. He was my dear and noble friend.

Tea. Yes, that he was, and poor Teague's too.

Car. What dost thou mean to do?

Tea. I will get a good master, if any good master wou'd get me; I cannot tell what to do else, by my foul; for I went to one Lilly's; he lives at that house, at the end of another house, by the may-pole house, and tells every body by one star, and t'other star, what good look they shall have; but he cou'd not tell nothing for poor Teague.

Car. Why, man?

Tea. Why, 'tis done by the stars and the planters; and he told me there were no stars for Irishmen. I told him there was as many stars in Ireland as in England, and more too; and if a good master cannot get me, I will run into Ireland, and see if the stars be not there still; and if they be, I will come back, and beat his pate, if he will not then tell me some good look, and some stars.

Car. Poor fellow! I pity him; I fancy he's simply honest.—Hast thou any trade?

Tea. Bo, bub bub bo! a trade, a trade! an Irishman with a trade! an Irishman scorns a trade; his blood is too thick for a trade. I will run for thee forty miles; but I scorn to have a trade.

Bl. Alas, poor simple fellow!

Car. I pity him; nor can I endure to see any man miserable that can weep for my prince and friend. Well, Teague, what sayest thou, if I will take thee?

Tea. Why, I say you cou'd not do a better thing.

Car. Thy master was my dear friend; wert thou with him when he was kill'd?

Tea. Yes, upon my soul, that I was; and I did howl over him, and I ask'd him why he died, but the devil burn the word he said to me; and i'faith I staid kissing his sweet face, 'till the rogues came upon me, and took all away from me, and left me nothing but this mantle; I have never any victuals, neither, but a little snuff.

Car.

12 THE COMMITTEE.

Car. Come, thou shalt live with me; love me as thou didst thy master.

Tea. That I will, if you will be good to poor Teague.

Car. Now, to our business; for I came but last night myself; and the lieutenant and I were just going to seek a solicitor.

Bl. One may serve us all; what say you, lieutenant, can you furnish us?

Lieu. Yes, I think I can help you to plough with a heifer of their own.

Car. Now I think on't, Blunt, why did'st not thou begin with the committee-man's cow?

Bl. Plague on her, she lowbell'd me so, that I thought of nothing, but stood shrinking like a dar'd lark.

Lieu. But, hark you, gentlemen, there's an ill-tasting dose to be swallow'd first; there's a covenant to be taken.

Tea. Well, what is that covenant? By my soul I will take it for my new master.

Car. Thank thee, Teague--A covenant, say'st thou?

Tea. Well, where is that covenant?

Car. We'll not swear, lieutenant.

Lieu. You must have no land, then.

Bl. Then, farewell acres, and may the dirt choak 'em.

Car. 'Tis but being reduc'd to Teague's equipage; 'twas a lucky thing to have a fellow that can teach one this cheap diet of snuff.

Tea. Oh, you shall have your belly full of it.

Lieu. Come, gentlemen, we must lose no more time; I'll carry you to my poor house, where you shall lodge: for, know, I am married to a most illustrious person, that had a kindness for me.

Car. Pr'ythee, how didst thou light upon this good fortune?

Lieu. Why, you see there are stars in England, tho' none in Ireland. Come, gentlemen, time calls us; you shall have my story hereafter. [*Ex. Bl. and lieu.*]

Car. Come, Teague; however, I have a suit of cloaths for thee; thou shalt lay by thy blanket for
some

some time. It may be, thee and I may be reduc'd together to thy country fashion.

Tea. Upon my soul, joy, I will carry thee to my little estate in Ireland.

Car. Hast thou got an estate?

Tea. By my soul, and I have; but the land is of such a nature, that if you had it for nothing, you wou'd scarce make your money of it.

Car. Why, there's the worst on't; the best will help itself. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Mr. Day, and Mrs. Day.

Mr. D. Welcome, sweet duck; I profess thou hast brought home good company, indeed; money and money's worth: if we can but now make sure of this heiress, Mrs. Arbella, for our son Abel.

Mrs. D. If we can! you are ever at your *ifs*; you're afraid of your own shadow; I can tell you one *if* more, that is, *if* I did not bear you up, your heart wou'd be down in your breeches at every turn. Well, if I were gone—there's another *if* for you.

Mr. D. I profess thou sayest true; I should not know what to do, indeed. I am beholden to thy good counsel for many a good thing; I had ne'er got Ruth, nor her estate, into my fingers else.

Mrs. D. Nay, in that business, too, you were at your *ifs*. Now, you see she goes currently for our own daughter; and this Arbella shall be our daughter too, or she shall have no estate.

Mr. D. If we cou'd but do that, wife!

Mrs. D. Yet again at your *ifs*?

Mr. D. I have done, I have done; to your counsel, good duck; you know I depend upon that.

Mrs. D. You may, well enough; you find the sweet on't; and, to say truth, 'tis known too well, that you rely upon it. In truth, they are ready to call me the committee-man; they well perceive the weight that lies upon me, husband.

Mr. D. Nay, good duck; no chiding now, but to your counsel.

Mrs. D. In the first place, (observe how I lay a design
B sign

sign in politicks) d'ye mark? counterfeit me a letter from the king, where he shall offer you great matters, to serve him and his interest under-hand. Very good; and in it let him remember his kind love and service to me. This will make them look about 'em, and think you somebody. Then promise them, if they'll be true friends to you, to live and die with them, and refuse all great offers; then, whilst 'tis warm, get the composition of Arbella's estate into your own power, upon your design of marrying her to Abel.

Mr. D. Excellent.

Mrs. D. Mark the luck on't too, their names sound alike; Abel and Arbella, they are the same to a trifle, it seemeth a providence.

Mr. D. Thou observe'st right, duck, thou canst see as far into a millstone as another.

Mrs. D. Pish! do not interrupt me.

Mr. D. I do not, good duck, I do not.

Mrs. D. You do not, and yet you do; you put me off from the concatenation of my discourse. Then, as I was saying, you may intimate to your honourable fellows, that one good turn deserves another. That language is understood amongst you, I take it, ha?

Mr. D. Yes, yes, we use those items often.

Mrs. D. Well, interrupt me not.

Mr. D. I do not, good wife.

Mrs. D. You do not, and yet you do. By this means get her composition put wholly into your hands; and then, no Abel, no land—But, in the mean time, I would have Abel do his part, too.

Mr. D. Ay, ay, there's a want; I found it.

Mrs. D. Yes, when I told you so before.

Mr. D. Why, that's true, duck, he is too backward; if I were in his place, and as young as I have been.

Mrs. D. O, you'd do wonders! But, now I think on't, there may be some use made of Ruth; 'tis a notable witty harlotry.

Mr. D. Aye, and so she is, duck; I always thought so.

Mrs. D. You thought so, when I told you I had thought on't first.—Let me see—It shall be so; we'll set her to instruct Abel, in the first place; and

then to incline Arbella; they are hand and glove; and women can do much with one another.

Mr. Day. Thou hast hit upon my own thoughts.

Mrs. D. Pray, call her in; you thought of that, too, did you not?

Mr. D. I will, duck. Ruth! why, Ruth!

Enter Ruth.

Ruth. Your pleasure, Sir?

Mr. D. Nay, 'tis my wife's desire, that——

Mrs. D. Well, if it be your wife's, she can best tell it herself, I suppose. D'ye hear, Ruth; you may do a business that may not be the worie for you. You know I use but few words.

Ruth. What does she call a few? [*Aside.*]

Mrs. D. Look you, now, as I said, to be short, and to the matter; my husband and I do design this Mrs. Arbella for our son Abel, and the young fellow is not forward enough. You conceive? Pr'ythee give him a little instructions how to demean himself, and in what manner to speak, which we call address, to her; 'for women best know what will please women.' Then, work on Arbella, on the other side; work, I say, my good girl; no more, but so. You know my custom is to use but few words. Much may be said in a little; you shan't repent it.

Mr. D. And I say something too, Ruth.

Mrs. D. What need you? Don't you see it all said already to your hand? What sayest thou, girl?

Ruth. I shall do my best—I wou'd not lose the sport for more than I'll speak of. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. D. Go, call Abel, good girl. [*Exit Ruth.*] By bringing this to pass, husband, we shall secure ourselves, if the king shou'd come; you'll be hanged else.

Mr. D. Oh, good wife, let's secure ourselves by all means. There's a wise saying: 'Tis good to have a shelter against every storm. I remember that.

Mrs. D. You may well, when you have heard me say it so often.

Enter Ruth, with Abel.

Mr. D. O, son Abel, d'ye hear——

Mrs. D. Pray hold your peace, and give every body leave to tell their own tale—D'ye hear, son Abel, I have formerly told you that Arbella wou'd be a good wife for you; a word's enough to the wise; some endeavours must be used, and you must not be deficient. I have spoken to your sister Ruth, to instruct you what to say, and how to carry yourself; observe her directions, as you'll answer the contrary; be confident, and put home. Ha, boy, hadst thou but thy mother's pate. Well, 'tis but a folly to talk of that that cannot be! Be sure you follow your sister's directions.

Mr. D. Be sure, boy.—well said, duck, I say.

[*Ex. Mr. and Mrs. Day.*]

Ruth. Now, brother Abel.

Ab. Now, sister Ruth.

Ruth. Hitherto he observes me punctually. [*Aside.*] Have you a month's mind to this gentlewoman, Mrs. Arbella?

Ab. I have not known her a week yet.

Ruth. O, cry you mercy, good brother Abel. Well, to begin then, you must alter your posture, ' and by ' your grave and high demeanor, make yourself appear a hole above Obadiah; lest your mistress should take you for such another scribble-scrabble as ' he is;' and always hold up your head, as if it were bolster'd up with high matters; your hands join'd flat together, projecting a little beyond the rest of your body, as ready to separate when you begin to open.

Ab. Must I go apace, or softly?

Ruth. O, gravely, by all means, as if you were loaded with weighty considerations—so—Very well, Now, to apply our prescription. Suppose, now, that I were your mistress, Arbella, and met you by accident—Keep your posture—so—and when you come just to me, start like a horse that has spy'd something on one side of him, and give a little gird out of the way, declaring that you did not see her before, by reason of your deep contemplations. Then you must speak. Let's hear.

Ab. Save you, mistress.

Ruth.

Ruth. O, fie, man! you shou'd begin thus: Pardon, Mistress, my profound contemplations, in which I was so buried that I did not see you:—and then, as she answers, proceed. I know what she'll say, I am so used to her.

Abel. This will do well, if I forget it not.

Ruth. Well, try once.

Abel. Pardon, Mistress, my profound contemplations, in which I was so hid, that you cou'd not see me.

Ruth. Better sport than I expected. [*Aside.*] Very well done, you're perfect. Then she will answer, Sir, I suppose you are so busied with state-affairs, that it may well hinder you from taking notice of any thing below them.

Abel. No, forsooth, I have some profound contemplations, but no state-affairs.

Ruth. O, fie, man! you must confess that the weighty affairs of state lie heavy upon you; but 'tis a burthen you must bear; and then shrug your shoulders.

Abel. Must I say so? I am afraid my mother will be angry, for she takes all the state matters upon herself.

Ruth. Pish! Did she not charge you to be ruled by me? Why, man, Arbella will never have you, if she be not made believe you can do great matters with parliament-men, and committee-men; how shou'd she hope for any good by you else in her composition?

Abel. I apprehend you now; I shall observe.

Ruth. 'Tis well; at this time, I'll say no more: put yourself in your posture—so—Now go look your mistress; I'll warrant you the town's our own.

Abel. I go. [*Exit Abel.*]

Ruth. Now I have fixed him, not to go off till he discharges on his mistress. I could burst with laughing.

Enter Arbella.

Arb. What do'st thou laugh at, Ruth?

Ruth. Didst thou meet my brother, Abel?

Arb. No.

Ruth. If thou hadst met him right, he had played at hard head with thee.

B. 3.

Arb.

18 THE COMMITTEE.

Arb. What do'st thou mean?

Ruth. Why, I have been teaching him too woove, by command of my superiors; and have instructed him to hold up his head so high, that of necessity he must run against every thing that comes in his way.

Arb. Who is he to woove?

Ruth. Even thy own sweet self.

Arb. Out upon him.

Ruth. Nay, thou wilt be rarely courted; I'll not spoil the sport by telling thee any thing before-hand. They have sent to Lilly; and his learning being built upon knowing what most people wou'd have him say, he has told them for a certain, that Abel shall have a rich heiress; and that must be you.

Arb. Must be?

Ruth. Yes, committee-men can compel, more than stars.

Arb. I fear this too late. You are their daughter, Ruth.

Ruth. I deny that.

Arb. How!

Ruth. Wonder not that I begin thus freely with you; 'tis to invite your confidence in me.

Arb. You amaze me.

Ruth. Pray do not wonder, nor suspect—When my father, Sir Basil Thoroughgood, died, I was very young, 'not above two years old:' 'tis too long to tell you how this rascal, being a trustee, catch'd me and my estate, 'being the sole heiress unto my father, 'into his gripes;' and now for some years has confirmed his unjust power by the unlawful power of the times. I fear they have designs as bad as this on you. You see I have no reserve, and endeavour to be thought worthy of your friendship.

Arb. I embrace it with as much clearness. Let us love and assist one another.—Wou'd they marry me to this their first-born puppy?

Ruth. No doubt, or keep your composition from you.

Arb. 'Twas my ill fortune to fall into such hands, foolishly

THE COMMITTEE. 19

foolishly enticed by fair words and large promises of assistance.

Ruth. Peace!

Enter Obadiah.

Obad. Mrs. Ruth, my master is demanding your company, together, and not singly, with Mrs. Arbella; you will find them in the parlour. The committee being ready to sit, calls upon my care and circumspection to set in order the weighty matters of state, for their wise and honourable inspection. [*Exit.*

Ruth. We come. Come, dear Arbella, never be perplex'd; chearful spirits are the best bladders to swim with: if thou art sad, the weight will sink thee. Be secret, and still know me for no other than what I seem to be, their daughter. Another time thou shalt know all particulars of my strange story.

Arb. Come, wench, they cannot bring us to compound for our humours; they shall be free still.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

Enter Teague.

TEAGUE.

I'Faith, my sweet master has sent me to a rascal; I have a great mind to go back and tell him so. He asked me, why he could not send one that cou'd speak English. Upon my soul, I was going to give him an Irish knock. The devil's in them all, they will not talk with me. I will go near to knock this man's pate, and that man Lilly's pate too—that I will: I will teach them prate to me. [*One cries books within.*] How now, what noises are that?—

Enter Bookseller.

Book. New books, new books! A desperate plot and engagement of the bloody cavaliers! Mr. Salt-marsh's alarum to the nation, after having been three days dead! Mercurius Britannicus, &c.

Teag.

Teag. How's that? They cannot live in Ireland after they are dead three days!

Book. Mercurius Britannicus, or the Weekly Post; or, The Solemn League and Covenant.

Teag. What is that you say? Is it the covenant you have?

Book. Yes; what then, Sir?

Teag. Which is that covenant?

Book. Why, this is the covenant.

Teag. Well, I must take that covenant.

Book. You take my commodities?

Teag. I must take that covenant, upon my soul now.

Book. Stand off, Sir, or I'll set you further.

Teag. Well, upon my soul now, I will take that covenant for my master.

Book. Your master must pay me for't then?

Teag. I must take it first, and my master will pay you afterwards.

Book. You must pay me now—

Teag. Oh, that I will—[*Knocks him down.*] Now you're paid, you thief o' the world. Here's covenants enough to poison the whole nation. [*Exit.*]

Book. What a devil ails this fellow? [*Crying.*] He did not come to rob me certainly, for he has not taken above two pennyworth of lamentable ware away; but I feel the rascal's fingers. I may light upon my wild Irishman again, and if I do, I will fix him with some catchpoles that shall be worse than his own country bogs. [*Exit.*]

Enter C. Careless, C. Blunt, and Lieutenant Story.

Lieu. And what say you, noble colonels? How, and how d'ye like my lady? I gave her the title of Illustrious, from those illustrious commodities which she deals in, hot water and tobacco.

Car. Pr'ythee, how cam'st thou to think of marrying?

Lieu. Why, that which hinders other men 'from those venereal conditions,' prompted me to matrimony, hunger and cold, colonel.

Car. Which you destroyed with a fat woman, 'strong water, and stinking tobacco.'

Lieu.

THE COMMITTEE. 21

‘ *Lieu.* No, faith, the woman conducted but little ;
‘ but the rest cou’d not be purchased without.

‘ *Car.* She’s beholden to you.

‘ *Lieu.* For all your mocking, she had been ruined,
‘ if it had not been for me.

‘ *Car.* Pr’ythee, make but that good.

‘ *Lieu.* With ease, Sir, — Why, look you, you
‘ must know she was always a most violent cavalier,
‘ and of a most ready and large faith ; abundance of
‘ rascals had found her soft place, and perpetually
‘ wou’d bring her news, news of all prices ; they
‘ would tell her news from half a crown, to a gill of
‘ hot water, or a pipe of the worst mundungus. I
‘ have observed their usual rates ; they wou’d bor-
‘ row half a crown upon a story of five thousand men
‘ up in the north ; a shilling upon a town’s revolting ;
‘ six-pence upon a small castle, and consume hot
‘ water and tobacco, whilst they were telling news of
‘ arms conveyed into several parts, and ammunition
‘ hid in cellars ; that at the last, if I had not mar-
‘ ried, and blow off these flies, she had been abso-
‘ lutely consumed.

‘ *Car.* Well, lieutenant, we are beholden to you
‘ for these hints ; we may be reduced to as bad.’ See
where Teague comes. Goodness, how he smiles.
Why so merry, Teague ?

Enter Teague smiling.

Teag. I have done a thing for you indeed.

Car. What hast thou done, man ?

Teag. Guess.

Car. I can’t.

Teag. Why, then, guess again—I have taken the
covenant.

Car. How came you by it ?

Teag. Very honestly ; I knocked a fellow down in
the street, and took from him.

Car. Was there ever such a fancy ? Why, did’st
thou think this was the way to take the covenant ?

Teag. I am sure it is the shortest, and the cheapest
way to take it.

Bl.

22 THE COMMITTEE.

Bl. I am pleased yet with the poor fellow's mistaken kindness; I dare warrant him honest, to the best of his understanding.

Car. This fellow, I prophesy, will bring me into many troubles by his mistakes: I must send him on no errand but, How d'ye: and to such as I wou'd have no answer from again.—Yet his simple honesty prevails with me, I cannot part with him.

Lieu. Come, gentlemen, time calls—How now, who's this?

Enter Obadiah, and four persons more with papers.

Car. I am a rogue if I have not seen a picture in hangings walk as fast.

Bl. Slife, man, this is that good man of the committee family that I told thee of, the very clerk; how the rogue's loaded with papers!—Those are the winding-sheets to many a poor gentleman's estate. 'Twere a good deed to burn them all.

Car. Why, thou art not mad?—Well met, Sir; pray do not you belong to the committee of sequestrations?

Obad. I do belong to that honourable committee, who are now ready to sit for the bringing on the work.

Bl. Oh, plague! what work, raf—

Car. Pr'ythee be quiet, man—Are they to sit presently?

Obad. As soon as I can get ready, my presence being material. [Exit.]

Car. What, wert thou mad? Would'st thou have beaten the clerk, when thou wert going to compound with the rascals, his masters?

Bl. The sight of any of the villains stirs me.

Lieu. Come, colonels; there's no trifling, let's make haste, and prepare your business; let's not lose this sitting. Come along, Teague. [Exeunt.]

Enter Arbella at one Door, Abel at another, as if he saw her not, and starts when he comes to her, as Ruth had taught him.

Arb. What's the meaning of this? I'll try to steal by him.

Abel.

Abel. Pardon, Mistress, my profound contemplations, in which I was so hid that you could not see me.

Arb. This is a set form—they allow it in every thing, but their prayers.

Abel. Now you should speak, forsooth.

Arb. 'Ruth, I have found you; but I'll spoil the 'dialogue.' [*Aside.*]—What should I say, Sir?

Abel. What you please, forsooth.

Arb. Why, truly, Sir, 'tis as you say; I did not see you.

Enter Ruth, as over-bearing them, and peeps.

Ruth. This is lucky.

Abel. No, forsooth, 'twas I that was not to see you.

Arb. Why, Sir, would your mother be angry if you shou'd?

Abel. No, no, quite contrary—I'll tell you that presently; but first I must say, that the weighty affairs lie heavy upon my neck and shoulders. [*Sbrugs.*

Arb. Wou'd he were tied neck and heels.—— This is a notable wench; look where the rascal peeps too; if I shou'd beckon to her she'd take no notice; she is resolved not to relieve me. [*Aside.*

Abel. Something I can do, and that with somebody; that is, with those that are somebodies.

Arb. Whist, whist, [*Beckons to Ruth, and she shakes her head.*] Pr'ythee, have some pity. O, unmerciful girl!

Abel. I know parliament-men, and sequestrators; I know committee-men, and committee-men know me.

Arb. You have great acquaintance, Sir?

Abel. Yes, they ask my opinion sometimes——

Arb. What weather 'twill be. Have you any skill, Sir?

Abel. When the weather is not good, we hold a fast.

Arb. And then it alters?

Abel. Assuredly.

Arb. In good time——No mercy, wench?

Abel. Our profound contemplations are caused by the

24 THE COMMITTEE.

the consternation of our spirits for the nation's good; we are in labour.

Arb. And I want a deliverance.—Hark ye, Ruth, take off your dog, or I'll turn bear indeed.

Ruth. I dare not; my mother will be angry.

Arb. O, hang you.

Abel. You shall perceive that I have some power, if you please to——

Arb. O, I am pleased, Sir, that you shou'd have power! I must look out my hoods and scarfs, Sir; 'tis almost time to go.

Abel. If it were not for the weighty matters of state which lie upon my shoulders, myself wou'd look them.

Arb. O, by no means, Sir; 'tis below your greatness—Some luck yet; she never came seasonably before.

Enter Mrs. Day.

Mrs. Day. Why, how now, Abel? Got so close to Mrs. Arbella; so close indeed! nay, then I smell something. Well, Mr. Abel, you have been so us'd to secrecy in counsel and weighty matters, that you have it at your fingers ends. Nay, look ye, mistress, look ye, look ye; mark Abel's eyes: ah, there he looks. Ruth, thou art a good girl; I find Abel has got ground.

Ruth. I forbore to come in, till I saw your honour first enter; but I have o'er-heard all.

Mrs. Day. And how has Abel behaved himself, wench, ha?

Ruth. O, beyond expectation! 'If it were lawful, I'd undertake he'd make nothing to get as many women's good-wills as he speaks to;' he'll not need much teaching; you may turn him loose.

Arb. O, this plaguy wench!

Mrs. Day. Say'st thou so, girl? It shall be something in thy way; a new gown, or so; it may be a better penny. Well said, Abel, I say; I did think thou wouldest come out with a piece of thy mother's at last:—But I had forgot, the committee are near upon

upon sitting. Ha, Mrs. you are crafty; you have made your composition before-hand. Ah, this Abel's as bad as a whole committee: take that item from me. Come, make haste, call the coach, Abel. Well said, Abel, I say. [*Exeunt Mrs. Day and Abel.*]

' *Arb.* We'll fetch our things and follow you.
' Now, wench, can'st thou ever hope to be forgiven?

' *Ruth.* Why, what's the matter?

' *Arb.* The matter! Cou'dst thou be so unmerciful, to see me practised on, and pelted at, by a blunderbuss charged with nothing but proofs, weighty affairs, spirit, profound contemplation, and such like?

' *Ruth.* Why, I was afraid to interrupt you; I thought it convenient to give you what time I cou'd, to make his young honour your friend.

' *Arb.* I am beholden to you: I may cry quittance.

' *Ruth.* But did you mark Abel's eyes? Ah, there were looks!

' *Arb.* Nay, pr'ythee give off; my hour's approaching, and I can't be heartily merry till it be past. Come, let's fetch our things; her ladyship's honour will stay for us.

' *Ruth.* I'll warrant ye, my brother Abel is not in order yet; he's brushing a hat almost a quarter of an hour, and as long a driving the lint from his black clothes, with his wet thumb.

' *Arb.* Come, pr'ythee hold thy peace, I shall laugh in's face else, when I see him come along.
' Now for an old shoe. [*Exeunt.*]

A Table set out.

The Committee, and Obadiah ordering books and papers.

Obad. Shall I read your honours last order, and give you the account of what you last debated?

Mr. Day. I first crave your favours, to communicate an important matter to this honourable board, in which I shall discover unto you my own sincerity, and zeal to the good cause.

Com. Proceed, Sir.

Mr. Day. The business is contained in this letter:

C

'tis

THE COMMITTEE.

'tis from no less a man than the king; and 'tis to me, as simple as I sit here. Is it your pleasures that our clerk should read it?

2 Com. Yes, pray give it him.

Obad. [*Reads.*] Mr. Day, we have received good intelligence of your great worth and ability, especially in state-matters; and therefore thought fit to offer you any preferment, or honour, that you shall desire, if you will become my intire friend. Pray remember my love and service to your discreet wife, and acquaint her with this; whose wisdom, I hear, is great. So recommending this to her and your wife consideration, I remain,

Your friend, C. K.

2 Com. C. K.!

Mr. D. Ay, that's for the king.

2 Com. I suspect—[*Aside.*] Who brought you this letter?

Mr. D. Oh, fie upon't! my wife forgot that particular. [*Aside.*]—Why, a fellow left it for me, and shrunk away when he had done. I warrant you, he was afraid I shou'd have laid hold on him. You see, brethren, what I reject; but I doubt not but to receive my reward; and I have now a business to offer, which in some measure may afford you an occasion.

2 Com. This letter was counterfeited certainly.

[*Aside.*]

Mr. D. But first be pleased to read your last order.

2 Com. What does he mean? That concerns me.

[*Aside.*]

Obad. The order is, that the composition arising out of Mr. Lashley's estate be and hereby is invested and allowed to the honourable Mr. Nathaniel Catch, for and in respect of his sufferings, and good service.

Mr. D. It is meet, very meet; we are bound in duty to strengthen ourselves against the day of trouble; when the common enemy shall endeavour to raise commotions in the land, and disturb our new-built Zion.

2 Com. Then I'll say nothing, but close with him:

‘ him : we must wink at one another.—I receive your
 ‘ sense of my services with a zealous kindness. Now,
 ‘ Mr. Day, I pray you propose your business.

Mr. D. I desire this honourable board to understand, that my wife being at Reading, and to come up in the stage-coach ; it happened that one Mrs. Arbella, a rich heiress of one of the cavalier party, came up also in the same coach. Her father being newly dead, and her estate before being under sequestration, my wife, who has a notable pate of her own, (you all know her) presently cast about to get her for my son Abel ; and accordingly invited her to my house ; where, though time was but short, yet my son Abel made use of it. They are without, ‘ as
 ‘ I suppose : but before we call them in, I pray let
 ‘ us handle such other matters as are before us.

‘ 1 Com. Let us hear then what estates besides lie
 ‘ before us, that we may see how large a field we have
 ‘ to walk in.

‘ 2 Com. Read.

‘ Obad. One of your last debates was upon the
 ‘ plea of an infant, whose estate is under sequestra-
 ‘ tion.

‘ Mr. D. And fit to be kept so till he comes of age,
 ‘ and may answer for himself ; that he may not be in
 ‘ possession of the land till he can promise he will not
 ‘ turn to the enemy.

‘ Obad. Here is another of almost the like nature ;
 ‘ an estate before your honours under sequestration.
 ‘ The plea is, that the party died without any offer of
 ‘ taking up arms ; but in his opinion, he was for the
 ‘ king. He has left his widow with child, which
 ‘ will be the heir ; and his trustees complain of wrong,
 ‘ and claim the estate.

‘ 2 Com. Well, the father, in his opinion, was a
 ‘ cavalier ?

‘ Obad. So it is given in.

‘ 2 Com. Nay, ’twas so, I warrant you ; and there’s
 ‘ a young cavalier in his widow’s belly ; I warrant
 ‘ you that too ; for the perverse generation encreaseth.

28 THE COMMITTEE.

‘ I move therefore, that their two estates may remain in the hands of our brethren here, and fellow-labourers, Mr. Joseph Blemish, and Mr. Jonathan Headstrong, and Mr. Ezekiel Scrape, and they to be accountable at our pleasures; whereby they may have a godly opportunity of doing good for themselves.

‘ Mr. D. Order it, order it.

‘ 3 Com. Since it is your pleasures, we are content to take the burthen upon us, and be stewards to the nation.

‘ 2 Com. Now verily it seemeth to me that the work goeth forward, when brethren hold together in unity.

‘ Mr. D. Well, if we have now finished, give me leave to tell you my wife is without,’ together with the gentlewoman that is to compound. She will needs have a finger in the pie.

‘ 3 Com. I profess we are to blame to let Mrs. Day wait so long.

Mr. D. We may not neglect the public for private respects. I hope, brethren, that you will please to cast the favour of your countenances upon Abel.

2, 3 Com. You wrong us to doubt it, brother Day. Call in the compounders.

Obad. Call in the compounders.

Por. Come in the compounders.

Enter Mrs. Day, Abel, Arbella, Ruth; and after them the Colonels, and Teague; they give the doorkeeper something, who seems to scrape.

Mr. D. Come, duck, I have told the honourable committee that you are one that will needs endeavour to do good for this gentlewoman.

2 Com. We are glad, Mrs. Day, that any occasion brings you hither.

Mrs. D. I thank your honours. I am desirous of doing good, which I know is always acceptable in your eyes.

Mr. D. Come on, son Abel, what have you to say?

Abel. I come unto your honours, full of profound contemplations for this gentlewoman.

Arbel.

THE COMMITTEE. 29

Arb. 'Slife, he's at's lesson, wench. [*Aside to Ruth.*

Ruth. Peace—Which whelp opens next? Oh, the wolf is going to bark. [*Aside.*

Mrs. D. May it please your honours, I shall presume to inform you, that my son Abel has settled his affections on this gentlewoman, and desires your honours favour to be shewn unto him in her composition.

2 Com. Say you so, Mrs. Day? Why the committee have taken it into their serious and pious consideration; together with Mr. Day's good service, upon some knowledge that is not fit to communicate.

Mrs. D. That was the letter I invented. [*Aside.*

2 Com. And the composition of this gentlewoman is configned to Mr. Day; that is, I suppose, to Mr. Abel, and so consequently to the gentlewoman. You may be thankful, mistress, for such good fortune; your estate's discharged, Mr. Day shall have the discharge.

Bl. O, damn the vultures! [*Aside.*

Car. Peace, man. [*Aside.*

Arb. I am willing to be thankful when I understand the benefit. I have no reason to compound for what's my own; but if I must, if a woman can be a delinquent, I desire to know my public censure, not to be left in private hands.

2 Com. Be contented, gentlewoman; the committee does this in favour of you. We understand how easily you can satisfy Mr. Abel; you may, if you please, be Mrs. Day.

Ruth. And then, good night to all. [*Aside.*

Arb. How, gentlemen! Are you private marriage-jobbers? D'ye make markets for one another?

2 Com. How's this, gentlewoman?

Bl. A brave noble creature! [*Aside.*

Car. Thou art smitten, Blunt; that other female too, methinks, shoots fire this way. [*Aside.*

Teag. Take care she don't burn your wig.

Mrs. D. I desire your honours to pardon her incessant words; perhaps she doth not imagine the good that is intended her.

30 THE COMMITTEE.

2 *Com.* Gentlewoman, the committee, for Mrs. Day's sake, passes by your expressions; 'you may spare your pains, you have the committee's resolution;' you may be your own enemy, if you will.

Arb. My own enemy!

Ruth. Pr'ythee peace, 'tis to no purpose to wrangle here; we must use other ways. [*Aside.*]

2 *Com.* Come on, gentlemen! What's your case? [*To the colonels.*]

Ruth. Arbella, there's the downright cavalier that came up in the coach with us. — On my life, there's a sprightly gentleman with him.

[*While they speak, the colonels pull the papers out, and deliver 'em.*]

Car. Our business is to compound for our estates; of which here are the particulars, which will agree with your own survey.

Teag. And here's the particulars of Teague's estate, forty cows, and the devil a bull amongst them.

Obad. The particulars are right.

Mr. D. Well, gentlemen, the rule is two years purchase; the first payment down, the other at six months end, and the estate to secure it.

Car. Can you afford it no cheaper?

2 *Com.* 'Tis our rule.

Car. Very well; 'tis but selling the rest to pay this, and our more lawful debts.

2 *Com.* But, gentlemen, before you are admitted, you are to take the covenant. You have not taken it yet, have you?

Car. No.

Teag. Upon my shoul, but he has now: I took it for him, and he has taken it from me, 'that he has.'

Ruth. What sport are we now like to have?

2 *Com.* What fellow's that?

Car. A poor simple fellow, that serves me. Peace, Teague.

Teag. Why, did not I knock the fellow down?

2 *Com.* Well, gentlemen, it remains, whether you'll take the covenant?

Car.

Tea. Why he has taken it.

Car. This is strange, and differs from your own principle, to impose on other men's consciences.

Mr. D. Pish, we are not here to dispute; we act according to our instructions, and we cannot admit any to compound without taking it; therefore your answer.

Tea. Was it for nothing I took the——

Car. Hold your tongue. No, we will not take it. Much good may it do them that have swallows large enough; 'twill work one day in their stomachs.

Bl. The day may come, when those that suffer for their consciences and honour may be rewarded.

Mr. D. Ay, ay, you make an idol of that honour.

Bl. Our worships then are different: you make that your idol which brings you interest; we can obey that which bids us lose it.

Arbel. Brave gentlemen!

[*Aside.*

Ruth. I stare at 'em till my eyes ache.

[*Aside.*

2 Com. Gentlemen, you are men of dangerous spirits. Know, we must keep our rules and instructions, lest we lose what Providence hath put into our hands.

Car. Providence! such as thieves rob by.

2 Com. What's that, Sir? Sir, you are too bold.

Car. Why in good sooth you may give losers leave to speak; I hope your honours, out of your bowels of compassion, will permit us to talk over our departing acres.

Mr. D. It is well you are so merry.

Car. O, ever whilst you live, clear souls make light hearts: faith, wou'd I might ask one question?

2 Com. Swear not then.

Car. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbours goods, there's a Rowland for your Oliver.

Tea. There's an Oliver for your Rowland, take that till the pot boils.

Car. My question is only, which of all you is to have our estates: or will you make traitors of them, draw 'em, and quarter 'em?

2 Com. You grow abusive.

Bl.

32 THE COMMITTEE.

Bl. No, no, 'tis only to intreat the honourable persons that will be pleased to be our house-keepers, to keep them in good reparations; we may take possession again, without the help of the covenant.

2 Com. You'll think better on't, and take this covenant.

Car. We will be as rotten first as their hearts that invented it.

Ruth. 'Slife, Arbella, we'll have these two men; there are not two such again to be had for love nor money.

Mr. D. Well, gentlemen, your follies light upon your own heads; we have no more to say.

Car. Why then hoist sails for a new world——

Tea. Ay, for old Ireland.

Car. D'ye hear, Blunt, what gentlewoman is that?

Bl. 'Tis their witty daughter I told thee of.

Car. I'll go speak to 'em; I'd fain convert that pretty covenanter.

Bl. Nay, pr'ythee let's go.

Car. Lady, I hope you'll have that good fortune, not to be troubled with the covenant.

Arbel. If they do, I'll not take it.

Bl. Brave lady! I must love her against my will—

Car. For you, pretty one, I hope your portion will be enlarged by our misfortunes. Remember your benefactors.

Ruth. If I had all your estates, I cou'd afford you as good a thing.

Car. Without taking the covenant?

Ruth. Yes, but I would invent another oath.

Car. Upon your lips?

Ruth. Nay, I am not bound to discover.

Bl. Pr'ythee come! Is this a time to spend in fooling.

Car. Now have I forgot every thing.

Bl. Come, let's go.

2 Com. Gentlemen, void the room.

Car. Sure, 'tis impossible that kite should get that pretty merlin.

Bl.

Bl. Come, pr'ythee let's go; these muck-worms will have earth enough to stop their mouths with, one day.

Car. Pray use our estates husband-like, and so our most honourable bailiffs, farewell. [*Exit.*]

Tea. Ay, bumbailly rascals——

Mr. D. You are rude. Door-keeper, put 'em forth there.

Por. Come forth, ye there; this is not a place for such as you.

Tea. Devil burn me, but ye are a rascal, that you are.

Por. And please your honours, this profane Irishman swore an oath at the door, even now, when I wou'd have put him out.

2 Com. Let him pay for't,

Por. Here, you must pay, or lie by the heels.

Tea. What must I pay by the heels? I will not pay by the heels. Master, ubbub boo!

Enter Carekiss.

Car. What's the matter?

Tea. This gander-fac'd gag says, I must pay by the heels.

Car. What have you done?

Tea. Only swore a bit of an oath.

Car. Here's a shilling, pay for't, and come along.

Tea. Well, I have not curs'd, how much had that been?

Por. That had been but six-pence.

Tea. Och, if I had but one six-pence-halfpenny in the world, but I wou'd give it for a curse to ease my stomach on you. My money is like a wild colt, I am oblig'd to drive it up in a corner to catch it. I have hold of it by the scruff of the neck. Here Mister, there's the shilling for the oath. And there's the six-pence-halfpenny for you, for the curse, beforehand; and now, my curse, and the curse of Cromwell, light upon you all, you thieves, you.

[*Knocks down the porter and exit.*]

Ruth. Hark ye, Arbella; 'twere a sin not to love these men.

Arbel.

34 THE COMMITTEE.

Arbel. I am not guilty, Ruth.

Mrs. D. Has this honourable board any other command?

2 Com. Nothing farther, good Mrs. Day.—Gentlewoman, you have nothing to care for, but be grateful and kind to Mr. Abel.

Arbel. I desire to know what I must directly trust to, or I will complain.

Mrs. D. The gentlewoman needeth no doubt, she shall suddenly perceive the good that is intended her, if she does not interpose in her own light.

Mr. D. I pray withdraw; the committee has pass'd their order, and they must now be private.

2 Com. Nay, pray, Mistress, withdraw. [*Exeunt all but the committee.*] 'So, brethren, we have finish'd this day's work; and let us always keep the bonds of unity unbroken, walking hand in hand, and scattering the enemy.

Mr. D. You may perceive they have spirits never to be reconcil'd; they walk according to nature, and are full of inward darkness.

2 Com. It is well truly for the good people, that they are so obstinate, whereby their estates may of right fall into the hands of the chosen, which truly is a mercy.

Mr. D. I think there remaineth nothing farther, but to adjourn 'till Monday. 'Take up the papers there, and bring home to me their honours order for Mrs. Arbella's estate. So, brethren, we separate ourselves to our particular endeavours, 'till we join in public on Monday, two of the clock;' and so peace remain with you. [*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

Enter Col. Careless, Col. Blunt, and Lieutenant Story.

LIEUTENANT.

BY my faith, a sad story. I did apprehend this covenant wou'd be the trap.

Car.

Car. Never did any rebels fish with such cormorants; no stoppage about their throats; the rascals are all swallow.

Bl. Now am I ready for any plot; I'll go find some of these agitants, and fill up a blank commission with my name. And if I can but find two or three gather'd together, they are sure of me; I will please myself, however, with endeavouring to cut their throats.

Car. Or do something to make them hang us, that we may but part on any terms.

Enter Teague.

How now, Teague! what says the learned—

Tea. Well then, upon my shoul, the man in the great cloak, with the long sleeves, is mad, that he is.

Car. Mad, Teague!

Tea. Yes i'faith is he; he said, I was sent to make game of him.

Car. Why, what didst thou say to him?

Tea. I ask'd him if he wou'd take any counsel.

Car. 'Slife, he might well enough think thou mock'dst him. Why, thou should'st have ask'd him when we might have come for counsel.

Tea. Well, that is all one, is it not? If he wou'd take any counsel, or you wou'd take any counsel, is not that all one then?

Car. Was there ever such a mistake?

Bl. Pr'ythee never be troubled at this; we are past counsel. If we had but a friend amongst them, that cou'd but slide us by this covenant.

Car. Nothing anger'd me so, as that my old kitchen-stuff acquaintance, turn'd her head another way, and seem'd not to know me.

Bl. How! kitchenstuff acquaintance?

Car. Mrs. Day, that commanded the party in the stage-coach, was my father's kitchen-maid, and in days of yore was called Gillian.

Lieu. Hark ye, colonel; what if you did visit this translated kitchen-maid?

Tea. Well, how is that? a kitchen-maid! where is she now?

Bl.

Bl. The lieutenant advises well.

Car. Nay, stay, stay; in the first place, I'll send Teague to her, to tell her I have a little business with her, and desire to know when I may have leave to wait on her.

Bl. We shall have Teague mistake again.

Tea. I will not mistake the kitchen-maid. Whither must I go now, to mistake that kitchen-maid?

Car. But d'ye hear, Teague? you must take no notice of that, upon thy life; but, on the contrary, at every word you must say, your ladyship, and your honour. As for example, when you have made a leg, you must begin thus; My master presents his service to your ladyship, and having some business with your honour, desires to know when he may have leave to wait upon your ladyship. [*Teague turns his back on the Col.*] Blockhead, you must not turn your back.

Tea. Oh, no, Sir, I always turn my face to a lady— But was she your father's kitchen maid?

Car. Why, what then?

Tea. Upon my shoul, I shall laugh upon her face, for all I wou'd not have a mind to do it.

Car. Not for a hundred pounds, Teague; you must be sure to set your countenance, and look very soberly, before you begin.

Tea. If I should think then of any kettles, or spits, or any thing that will put a mind into my head of a kirchen, I shou'd laugh then, shou'd I not?

Car. Not for a thousand pounds, Teague; thou may'st undo us all.

Tea. Well, I will hope I will not laugh then: I will keep my mouth if I can, that I will, from running to one side, and t'other side. Well now, where does this Mrs. Tay live.

Lieu. Come, Teague, I'll walk along with thee, and shew thee the house, that thou may'st not mistake that, however.

Tea. Shew me the door, and I'll find the house myself.

Car. Pr'ythee do, lieutenant.

Tea. O, Sir, what is Mrs. Tay's name?

Car. Have a care, Teague; thou shalt find us in the Temple. [*Exeunt Lieutenant and Teague.*]

Now, Blunt, have I another design.

Bl. What further design can'st thou have?

Car. Why, by this means I may chance to see these women again, and get into their acquaintance.

Bl. With both, man?

Car. 'Slife, thou art jealous; dost love either of 'em?

Bl. Nay, I can't tell; all is not as 'twas.

Car. Like a man that is not well, and yet knows, not what ails him.

Bl. Thou art something near the matter; but I'll cure myself with considering, that no woman can ever care for me.

Car. And why, pr'ythee?

Bl. Because I can say nothing to them.

Car. The less thou can'st say, they'll like thee the better; she'll think 'tis love that has ham-string'd thy tongue. Besides, man, a woman can't abide any thing in the house should talk, but she and her parrot. What, is it the cavalier girl thou lik'st?

Bl. Can'st thou love any of the other breed?

Car. Not honestly—yet I confess that ill-begotten, pretty rascal never look'd towards me, but she scatter'd sparks as fast as kindling charcoal; thine's grown already to an honest flame. Come, Blunt, when Teague comes we will resolve on something.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Arbella and Ruth.

Arb. Come, now, a word of our own matters. How dost thou hope to get thy estate again?

Ruth. You shall drink first; I was just going to ask you how you would get yours again. You are as fast, as if you were under covert-baron.

Arb. But I have more hopes than thou hast.

Ruth. Not a scruple more, if there were but scales that could weigh hopes; for these rascals must be hang'd, before either of us shall get our own. You

D

may

38 THE COMMITTEE.

‘ may eat and drink out of yours, as I do, and be a
 ‘ sojourner with Abel.

‘ *Arb.* I am hamper’d; but I’ll not entangle my-
 ‘ self with Mr. Abel’s conjugal cords—Nay, I am
 ‘ more hamper’d than thou thinkest; for if thou art
 ‘ in as bad case as I, (you understand me) hold up thy
 ‘ finger.

‘ *Ruth.* Behold! Nay, I’ll ne’er forsake thee. [*Ruth*
 ‘ *holds up her finger.*] If I were not smitten, I wou’d
 ‘ persuade myself to be in love, if ’twere but to bear
 ‘ thee company.

‘ *Arb.* Dear girl! Hark ye, Ruth, the composition-
 ‘ day made an end of all; all’s gone.

‘ *Ruth.* Nay, that fatal day put me into the condi-
 ‘ tion of a compounder too; there was my heart
 ‘ brought under sequestration.

‘ *Arb.* That day, wench!

‘ *Ruth.* Yes, that very day, with two or three for-
 ‘ cible looks, ’twas driven an inch, at least, out of its
 ‘ old place. Sense or reason can’t find the way to’t now.

‘ *Arb.* That day, that very day! If you and I should
 ‘ like the same man?

‘ *Ruth.* Fie upon’t! as I live thou mak’st me start.
 ‘ Now dare not I ask which thou lik’st.

‘ *Arb.* Wou’d they were now to come in, that we
 ‘ might watch one another’s eyes, and discover by
 ‘ signs. I am not able to ask thee, neither.

‘ *Ruth.* Nor I to tell thee. Shall we go ask Lilly
 ‘ which it is?

‘ *Arb.* Out upon him! Nay, there’s no need of
 ‘ stars; we know ourselves, if we durst speak.

‘ *Ruth.* Pish! I’ll speak; if it be the same, we’ll
 ‘ draw cuts.

‘ *Arb.* No; hark ye, Ruth, do you act them both,
 ‘ for you saw their several humours, and then watch
 ‘ my eyes where I appear most concern’d. I can’t
 ‘ dissemble, for my heart.

‘ *Ruth.* I dare swear that will hinder thee to dis-
 ‘ semble, indeed—Come, have at you, then; I’ll speak
 ‘ as if I were before the honourable rascals. And
 ‘ first

first, for my brave, blunt colonel, who, hating to take the oath, cry'd out, with a brave scorn (such as made thee in love, I hope) hang yourselves, rascals; the time will come, when those that dare be honest, will be rewarded. Don't I act him bravely? Don't I act him bravely?

Arb. O, admirably well! Dear wench, do it once more.

Ruth. Nay, nay, I must do the other now.

Arb. No, no; this once more, dear girl, and I'll act the other for thee.

Ruth. No, forsooth, I'll spare your pains; we are right; no need of cuts; send thee good luck with him I acted; and wish me well with my merry colonel, that shall act his own part.

Arb. And a thousand good lucks attend thee. We have sav'd our blushes admirably well, and reliev'd our hearts from hard duty—But mum, see where the mother comes, and with her, her son, a true exemplification or duplicate of the original Day. Now for a charge.

Enter Mrs. Day, and Abel.

Ruth. Stand fair; the enemy draws up.'

Mrs. D. Well, Mrs. Arbella, I hope you have consider'd enough by this time; you need not use so much consideration for your own good; you may have your estate, and you may have Abel, and you may be worse offer'd—Abel, tell her your mind; ne'er stand, shilly, shally—Ruth, does she incline, or is she wilful?

Ruth. I was just about the point, when your honour interrupted us—One word in your ladyship's ear.

Ab. You see, forsooth, that I am somebody, tho' you make nobody of me; you see I can prevail; therefore, pray, say what I shall trust to; for I must not stand shilly, shally.

Arb. You are hasty, Sir.

Ab. I am called upon by important affairs; and therefore I must be bold, in a fair way, to tell you, that it lies upon my spirit exceedingly.

D 2

Arb.

40 THE COMMITTEE.

Arb. Saffron-posset-drink is very good against the heaviness of the spirit.

Ab. Nay, forsooth, you do not understand my meaning.

Arb. You do, I hope, Sir; and 'tis no matter, Sir, if one of us know it.

Enter Teague.

Tea. Well now, who are all you?

Arb. What's here, an Irish elder, come to examine us all?

Tea. Well, now, what is your names, every one?

Ruth. Arbella, this is a servant to one of the colonels; upon my life, 'tis the Irishman that took the covenant the right way.

Arb. Peace, what shou'd it mean?

Tea. Well, cannot some of you all say nothing, without speaking?

Mrs. D. Why, how now, sauce-box! what wou'd you have? What, have you left your manners without? Go out, and fetch 'em in.

Tea. What should I fetch, now?

Mrs. D. D'you know who you speak to, firrah?

Tea. Yes, I do; and it is little my own mother thought I shou'd speak to the like of you.

Ab. You must not be so saucy unto her honour.

Tea. Well, I will knock you down, if you be saucy, with my hammer.

Ruth. This is miraculous!

Tea. Is there none of you that I must speak to, now?

Arb. Now, wench, if he should be sent to us. [*Aside.*

Tea. Well, I wou'd have one Mrs. Tay speak unto me.

Mrs. D. Well, firrah, I am she; what's your business?

Tea. O, are you there? With yourself, Mrs. Tay—Well, I will look well first, and I will set my face, and tell her my message. [*Aside.*

Ruth. How the fellow begins to mould himself.

Arb. And tempers his chops, like a hound that has lapp'd before his meat was cold enough.

Ruth.

THE COMMITTEE. 41

Ruth. He looks as if he had some gifts to pour forth ; those are Mr. Day's own white eyes, before he begins to say grace. Now for a speech rattling in his kecher, as if his words stumbled in their way.

Tea. ' Well, now I will tell thee, i'faith.' My master, the good colonel Careless, bid me ask thy good ladyship—Upon my soul, now, the laugh will come upon my mouth, in spite of me.

[He laughs always when he says ladyship, or honour.]

Mrs. D. Sirrah, firrah ! What, were you sent to abuse me ?

Ruth. As sure as can be.

[Aside.]

Tea. I do not abuse thy good honour—I cannot help my laugh now. I will try again, now ; I will not think of a kitchen, nor a dripping-pan, nor a mustard-pot—My master would know of your ladyship—

Mrs. D. Did your master send you to abuse me, your ascal ? By my honour, firrah—

Tea. Why do you abuse yourself, now, joy ?

Mrs. D. How, firrah ! Do I mock myself ? This is some Irish traitor.

Tea. I am no traitor, that I am not ; I am an Irish rebel. You are cozen'd now.

Mrs. D. Sirrah, firrah, I will make you know who I am—An impudent Irish rascal !

Ab. He seemeth a dangerous fellow, and of a bold, seditious spirit.

Mrs. D. You are a bloody rascal, I warrant ye.

Tea. You are a foolish, brabble-bribble woman, that you are.

Ab. Sirrah, we, that are at the head of affairs, must punish your faucinefs.

Tea. And we that are at the tail of affairs, will punish your faucinefs.

Mrs. D. Ye rascally varlet, get out of my doors.

Tea. Will not I give you my message, then ?

Mrs. D. Get you out, rascal.

Tea. I pr'ythee let me tell my message.

Mrs. D. Get you out, I say.

Tea. The devil burn your ladyship, and honourship, and kitchenship.

[Exit.]

Ab.

42 THE COMMITTEE.

' *Arb.* Was there ever such a scene? 'Tis impossible to guess any thing.

' *Ruth.* Our colonels have don't, as sure as thou livest, to make themselves sport; being all the revenge that is in their power. Look, look, how her honour trots about, like a beast stung with flies.

Mrs. D. How the villain has distemper'd me! Out upon't too, that I have let the rascal go unpunish'd. And you [*To Ab.*] can stand by, like a sheep; run after him, then, and stop him. I'll have him laid by the heels, and make him confess who sent him to abuse me. Call help, as you go. Make haste, I say.

[*Exit Abel.*]

Ruth. 'Slid, Arbella, run after him, and save the poor fellow for sake's sake; stop Abel, by any means, that he may 'scape.

Arb. Keep his dam off, and let me alone with the puppy. [*Exit.*]

Ruth. Fear not.

Mrs. D. 'Uds my life, the rascal has heated me!—Now I think on't, I'll go myself, and see it done—A saucy villain!

Ruth. But I must needs acquaint your honour with one thing first, concerning Mrs. Arbella.

Mrs. D. As soon as ever I have done. Is't good news, wench?

Ruth. Most excellent! If you go out, you may spoil all. Such a discovery I have made, that you will bless the accident that anger'd you.

Mrs. D. Quickly then, girl.

Ruth. When you sent Abel after the Irishman, Mrs. Arbella's colour came and went in her face; and at last, not able to stay, she flunk away after him, for fear the Irishman shou'd hurt him; she stole away, and blush'd the prettiest.

Mrs. D. I protest he may be hurt, indeed. I'll run myself, too.

Ruth. By no means, forsooth, 'nor is there any need on't; for she resolv'd to stop him, before he could get near the Irishman. She has done it, upon my

' my life ; and if you should go out, you might spoil
' the kindest encounter that the loving Abel is ever
' like to have.

' Mrs. D. Art sure of this ?

Ruth. If you do not find she has slopt him, let me
ever have your hatred. Pray, credit me.

' Mrs. D. I do, I do believe thee. Come, we'll
' go in, where I use to read ; there thou shalt tell
' me all the particulars, and the manner of it. I
' warrant 'twas pretty to observe.

' Ruth. O, 'twas a thousand pities you did not see
' when Abel walk'd away so bravely, and foolishly,
' after this wild Irishman, she stole such kind looks
' from her own eyes ; and having robb'd herself, sent
' them after her own Abel ; and then —

Mrs. D. Come, good wench ; I'll go in, and hear
all at large. It shall be the best tale thou hast told
these two days. Come, come, I long to hear all.
Abel, for his part, needs no help by this time. Come,
good wench. [Exit.

' Ruth. So far I am right. Fortune, take care for
' future things. [Exit.

Enter C. Blunt, as taken by bailiffs.

Bl. At whose suit, rascals ?

1 Bail. You shall know that time enough.

Bl. Time enough, dogs ! Must I wait your leisures ?

1 Bail. O, you are a dangerous man ! 'Tis such
traitors as you that disturb the peace of the nation.

Bl. Take that, rascal. [Kicking him.] If I had any
thing at liberty, besides my foot, I wou'd bestow it
on you.

1 Bail. You shall pay dearly for this kick, before
you are let loose, and give good special bail. Mark
that, my surly companion ; we have you fast.

Bl. 'Tis well, rogues ; you caught me convenient-
ly. Had I been aware, I wou'd have made some of
your scurvy souls my special bail.

' 1 Bail. O, 'tis a bloody-minded man ! I'll war-
' rant ye, this vile cavalier has eat many a child.

' Bl. I cou'd gnaw a piece or two of you, rascals.

Enter

44 THE COMMITTEE.

Enter C. Careless.

Car. How is this ! Blunt in hold ! You catchpole, let go your prey, or — [*Draws, and Blunt, in the scuffle, throws up one of their heels, gets a sword, and helps to drive them off.*]

Bail. Murder, murder !

Bl. Faith, Careless, this was worth thanks. I was fairly going.

Car. What was the matter, man ?

Bl. Why, an action or two for free quarter, now made trover and conversion. Nay, I believe we shall be sued with an action of trespass, for every field we have marched over ; and be indicted for riots, for going at unreasonable hours, above two in a company.

Enter Teague, running.

Car. Well, come, let's away.

Tea. Now, upon my shoul, run as I do ; the men in red coats are running too, and they cry murder, murder ! 'I never heard such a noise in Ireland in all my life.'

Car. 'Slife, we must shift several ways. Farewel. If we 'scape, we meet at night ; I shall take heed now.

Tea. Shall I tell Mrs. Tay's message.

Car. O, good Teague, no time for messages.

[Exeunt several ways.]

A noise within.

Enter bailiffs and soldiers.

A Bail. This way, this way ! Oh, villains ! My neighbour Swash is hurt dangerously. Come, good soldiers, follow, follow.

Enter Careless and Teague again.

Car. I am quite out of breath, and the blood-hounds are in a full cry upon a burning scent : plague on 'em, what a noise the kennels make ! What door's this, that graciously stands a little open ? What an ass am I to ask ? Teague, scout abroad ; if any thing happens extraordinary, observe this door, there you shall find me. Now, by your favour, landlord, as unknown.

[Exeunt severally.]

Enter Mrs. Day, and Obadiah.

Mrs. D. It was well observed, Obadiah, to bring the parties to me, first. 'Tis your master's will that I shou'd,

shou'd, as I may say, prepare matters for him. In truth, in truth, I have too great a burthen upon me; yet, for the public good, I am content to undergo it.

Ob. I shall, with sincere care, present unto your honour, from time to time; such negotiations as I may discreetly presume may be material for your honour's inspection.

Mrs. D. It will become you so to do. You have the present that came last?

Ob. Yes, and please your honour; the gentlewoman, concerning her brother's release, hath also sent in a piece of plate.

Mrs. D. It's very well.

Ob. But the man without, about a bargain of the king's land, is come empty.

Mrs. D. Bid him begone; I'll not speak with him. He does not understand himself.

Ob. I shall intimate so much to him.

[As Obadiah goes out, C. Careless meets him, and tumbles him back.]

Mrs. D. Why, how now? What rude companion's this? What wou'd you have? What's your business? What's the matter? Who sent you? Who d'you belong to? Who——

Car. Hold, hold, if you mean to be answer'd to all these interrogatories. You see I resolve to be your companion. I am a man; there's no great matter; nobody sent me; nor I belong to nobody. I think I have answer'd to the chief heads.

Mrs. D. Thou hast committed murder, for ought I know. How is't, Obadiah?

Car. Ha! what luck have I, to fall into the territories of my old kitchen acquaintance. I'll proceed upon the strength of Teague's message, tho' I had no answer. *[Aside.]*

Ob. Truly he came forceably upon me, and I fear has bruised some intellectuals within my stomach.

Mrs. D. Go in, and take some Irish flat, by way of prevention, and keep yourself warm. *[Ex. Obad.]* Now, Sir, have you any business, that you came

46 THE COMMITTEE.

came in so rudely, as if you did not know who you came to? How came you in, Sir Royster? Was not the porter at the gate?

Car. No, truly; the gate kept itself, and stood gaping, as if it had a mind to speak, and say, I pray, come in.

Mrs. D. Did it so, Sir? And what have you to say?

Car. Ay, there's the point. Either she does not, or will not know me. What shou'd I say? How dull am I? Pox on't, this wit is like a common friend, when one has need of him, he won't come near one. [*Afide.*]

Mrs. D. Sir, are you studying for an invention? For ought I know, you have done some mischief, and 'twere fit to secure you.

Car. So, that's well; 'twas pretty to fall into the head quarters of the enemy. [*Afide.*]

Mrs. D. Nay, 'tis e'en so; I'll fetch those that shall examine you.

Car. Stay, thou mighty states-woman; I did but give you time to see if your memory would but be so honest, as to tell you who I am.

Mrs. D. What do you mean, fauce-box?

Car. There's a word yet of thy former employments; that fauce. You and I have been acquainted.

Mrs. D. I do not use to have acquaintance with cavaliers.

Car. Nor I with committee-men's utensils; 'but in 'diebus illis, you were not honourable, nor I a malignant.' Lord, lord, you are horribly forgetful. 'Pride comes with godliness, and good cloaths.' What, you think I should not know you, because you are disguised with curled hair, and white gloves? Alas! I know you as well as if you were in your sabbath-day's cinnamon waistcoat, 'with a silver edging 'round the skirt.'

Mrs. D. How, firrah?

Car. And with your fair hands bath'd in lather; or with your fragrant breath driving the fleeting amber-grease off from the waving kitchen-stuff.

Mrs. D. Oh, you are an impudent cavalier! I remember you now, indeed; but I'll——

Car.

Car. Nay, but hark you, the now honourable, non-
obstante past conditions; did I not send my footman,
an Irishman, with a civil message to you? Why all
this strangeness, then?

Mrs. D. How, how, how's this! Was't you that
sent that rascal to abuse me, was't so?

Car. How now! What, matters grow worse and
worse!

Mrs. D. I'll teach you to abuse those that are in
authority. Within, there! who's within?

Car. 'Slife, I'll stop your mouth, if you raise an
alarm. [*She cries out, he stops her mouth.*]

Mrs. D. Stop my mouth, firrah! whoo, whoo, ho!

Car. Yes, stop your mouth. What, are you good
at a who-bub, ha?

Enter Ruth.

Ruth. What's the matter, forsooth?

Mrs. D. The matter! Why, here's a rude cavalier
has broke into my house; 'twas he too, that sent the
Irish rascal to abuse me, too, within my own walls.
Call your father, that he may grant order to secure
him. 'Tis a dangerous fellow.

Car. Nay, good, pretty gentlewoman, spare your
motion.—What must become of me? Teague has
made some strange mistake. [*Aside.*]

Ruth. 'Tis he! what shall I do? Now, invention,
be equal to my love. [*Aside.*] Why, your ladyship
will spoil all. I sent for this gentleman, and enjoind
him secrecy, even to you yourself, till I had made
his way. O, fie upon't, I am to blame; but, in truth,
I did not think he would have come these two hours.

Car. I dare swear she did not; I might very pro-
bably not have come at all.

Ruth. How came you to come so soon, Sir? 'Twas
three hours before you appointed.

Car. Hey-day! I shall be made believe I came
hither on purpose, presently. [*Aside.*]

Ruth. 'Twas upon a message of his to me, and please
your honour, to make his desires known to your lady-
ship, that he had consider'd on't, and was resolv'd to
take

40 THE COMMITTEE.

take the covenant, and give you five hundred pounds, to make his peace, and bring his business about again, that he may be admitted in his first condition.

Car. What's this?—D'ye hear, pretty gentlewoman.

Ruth. Well, well, I know your mind; I have done your business.

Mrs. D. Oh, his stomach's come down.

Ruth. Sweeten him again, and leave him to me; I warrant the five hundred pounds, and— [*Whispers.*

Car. Now I have found it; this pretty wench has a mind to be left alone with me, at her peril. [*Aside.*

Mrs. D. I understand thee—Well, Sir, I can pass by rudeness, when I am inform'd there was no intention of it. I leave you and my daughter to beget a right understanding. [*Ex. Mrs. Day.*

Car. We should beget sons and daughters sooner. What does all this mean? [*Aside.*

Ruth. I am sorry, Sir, that your love for me shou'd make you thus rash.

Car. That's more than you know; but you had a mind to be left alone with me; that's certain.

Ruth. 'Tis too plain, Sir; you'd ne'er have run yourself into this danger else.

Car. Nay, now you're out; the danger run after me.

Ruth. You may dissemble.

Car. Why, 'tis the proper business here; but we lose time; you and I are left to beget a right understanding. Come, which way?

Ruth. Whither?

Car. To your chamber or closet.

Ruth. But I am engaged you shall take the covenant.

Car. No, I never swear when I am bid.

Ruth. But you wou'd do as bad.

Car. That's not against my principles.

Ruth. Thank you for your fair opinion, good Signior Principle. There lies your way, Sir. However, I will own so much kindness for you, that I repent not the civility I have done, to free you from the trouble

trouble you were like to fall into ; make me a leg, if you please, and cry, thank you ; and so the gentleman that desired to be left alone with you, desires to be left alone with herself, she being taught a right understanding of you.

Car. No : I am riveted ; nor shall you march off thus with flying colours. My pretty commander in chief, let us parley a little farther, and but lay down ingenuously the true state of our treaty. The business in short is this : we differ seemingly upon two evils, and mine the least ; and therefore to be chosen. You had better take me, than I take the covenant.

Ruth. We'll excuse one another.

Car. You wou'd not have me take the covenant then ?

Ruth. No ; I did but try you. I forgive your idle looseness, for that firm virtue. Be constant to your fair principles, in spite of fortune.

Car. What's this got into petticoats !—‘ But, d'ye hear : I'll not excuse you from my proposition, notwithstanding my release. Come, we are half way to a right understanding——Nay, I do love thee.

‘ *Ruth.* Love virtue : you have but here and there a patch of it ; y'are ragged still.

‘ *Car.* Are you not the committee Day's daughter ?

Ruth. Yes. What then ?

Car. Then am I thankful. I had no defence against thee and matrimony, but thy own father and mother, which are a perfect committee to my own nature.

‘ *Ruth.* Why, are you sure I wou'd have match'd with a malignant, not a compounder neither ?

‘ *Car.* Nay, I have made thee a jointure against my will. Methinks it were but as reasonable, that I shou'd do something for my jointure ; but by the way of matrimony, honestly to encrease your generation, this, to tell you truth, is against my conscience.

‘ *Ruth.* Yet you wou'd beget right understandings.

‘ *Car.* Yes, I wou'd have 'em all bastards.

‘ *Ruth.* And me a whore.

E

‘ *Car.*

50 THE COMMITTEE.

Car. That's a coarse name; but 'tis not fit a committee-man's daughter should be too honest, to the reproach of her father and mother.'

Ruth. When the quarrel of the nation is reconciled, you and I shall agree: 'till when, Sir——

Enter Teague.

Teag. Are you here then? Upon my shoul, the good colonel Blunt is over-taken again now, and carried to the devil, 'that he is, i'faith now.'

Cor. How, taken and carried to the devil!

Teag. He desired to go to the devil, I wonder of my shoul he was not afraid.

Car. I understand it now. What mischief's this?

Ruth. You seem troubled, Sir.

Car. I have but a life to lose, that I am weary of. Come, Teague.

Ruth. Hold, you shan't go before I know the business. What d'ye talk of?

Car. My friend, my dearest friend, is caught up by rascally bailiffs, and carried to the Devil-tavern. Pray let me go.

Ruth. Stay but a minute, if you have any kindness for me.

Car. Yes, I do love you.

Ruth. Perhaps I may serve your friend.

Enter Arbella.

O Arbella, I was going to seek you.

Arb. What's the matter?

Ruth. The colonel which thou lik'st, is taken by bailiffs; there's his friend too, almost distracted. You know the mercy of these times.

Arb. What dost thou tell me? I am ready to sink down!

Ruth. Compose yourself, and help him nobly; you have no way, but to smile upon Abel, and get him to bail him.

Enter Abel and Obadiah.

Arb. Look, where he and Obadiah come; sent hither by Providence——Oh, Mr. Abel, where have

THE COMMITTEE. 51

have you been this long time? Can you find of your heart to keep thus out of my fight?

Abel. Assuredly some important affairs constrained my absence, as Obadiah can testify, bona fide.

Teag. The devil brake your bones a Friday.

Obad. I can do so, verily, myself being a material party.

Car. Pox on 'em, how slow they speak.

Teag. Speak faster.

Arb. Well, well, you shall go no more out of my fight; I'll not be satisfied with your bona fide's. I have some occasions that call me to go a little way; you shall e'en go with me, and good Obadiah too. You shall not deny me any thing.

Abel. It is not meet I should. I am exceedingly exalted. Obadiah, thou shalt have the best bargain of all my tenants.

Obad. I am thankful.

Car. What may this mean? [*Aside.*]

Arb. Ruth, how shall we do to keep thy swift mother from pursuing us?

Ruth. Let me alone: as I go by the parlour, where she sits, big with expectation, I'll give her a whisper, that we are going to fetch the very five hundred pounds.

Arb. How can that be?

Ruth. No question now. Will you march, Sir?

Car. Whither?

Ruth. Lord, how dull these men in love are!—Why, to your friend. No more words.

Car. I will stare upon thee, though.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Colonel Blunt brought in by Bailiffs.

I BAILIFF.

AY, ay, we thought how well you'd get bail.

Bl. Why, you unconscionable rascal, are you angry that I am unlucky, or do you want some fees?

E 2

I'll

52 THE COMMITTEE.

I'll perish in a dungeon, before I'll give you a farthing.

1 *Bail*. Chuse, chuse. Come, along with him.

Bl. I'll not go your pace neither, rascals; I'll go softly, if it be but to hinder you from taking up some other honest gentleman.

1 *Bail*. Very well, surly Sir; we will carry you where you shall not be troubled what pace to walk; you'll find a large bill. Blood is dear.

Bl. Not yours, is it?—a farthing a pint were very dear for the best blood you have.

Enter Arbella, Ruth, Abel, C. Careless, and Obadiah.

1 *Bail*. How now! are these any of your friends?

Bl. Never, if you see women; that's a rule.

Arb. [*To Abel*.] Nay, you need have no scruple, 'tis a near kinsman of mine. You do not think, I hope, that I wou'd let you suffer—You--that must be nearer than a kinsman to me.

Abel. But my mother doth not know it.

Arb. If that be all, leave to me and Ruth, we'll save you harmless: besides, I cannot marry, if my kinsman be in prison; he must convey my estate, as you appoint; for 'tis all in him. We must please him.

Abel. The consideration of that doth convince me, Obadiah, 'tis necessary for us to set at liberty this gentleman, being a trustee for Mrs. Arbella's estate. Tell 'em, therefore, that you and I will bail this gentleman—and—d'ye hear, tell them who I am.

Obad. I shall.—Gentlemen, this is the honourable Mr. Abel Day, the first-born of the honourable Mr. Day, chairman of the committee of sequestrations; and I myself by name Obadiah, and clerk to the said honourable committee.

1 *Bail*. Well, Sir, we know Mr. Day, and Mr. Abel.

Abel. Yes, that's I; and I will bail this gentleman. I believe you dare not except against the bail: nay, you shall have Obadiah's too, one that the state trusts.

1 *Bail*. With all our hearts, Sir.——But there are charges to be paid.

Arb.

Arb. Here, Obadiah, take this purse and discharge them, and give the bailiffs twenty shillings to drink.

Car. This is miraculous!

Bail. A brave lady!—I'faith, mistress, we'll drink your health.

Abel. She's to be my wife, as sure as you are here: what say you to that now?

Bail. [*Aside.*] That's impossible: here's something more in this.—Honourable Mr. Abel, the sheriff's deputy is hard by in another room, if you please to go thither, and give your bail, Sir.

Abel. Well, shew us the way, and let him know who I am. [*Exeunt Abel, Obadiah, and Bailiffs.*]

Car. Hark ye, pretty Mrs. Ruth, if you were not a committee-man's daughter, and so consequently against monarchy, two princes shou'd have you and that gentlewoman.

Ruth. No, no, you'll serve my turn; I am not ambitious.

Car. Do but swear then, that thou art not the issue of Mr. Day; and, though I know 'tis a lie, I'll be content to be cozened, and believe.

Ruth. Fie, fie; you can't abide taking of oaths. Look, look, how your friend and mine take aim at one another. Is he smitten?

Car. Cupid has not such another wounded subject; nay, and is vex'd he is in love too. Troth, 'tis partly my own case.

Ruth. Peace! she begins, as need requires.

Arb. You are free, Sir.

Bl. Not so free as you think.

Arb. What hinders it?

Bl. Nothing, that I'll tell you.

Arb. Why, Sir?

Bl. You'll laugh at me.

Arb. Have you perceived me apt to commit such a rudeness? Pray let me know it.

Bl. Upon two conditions you shall know it.

Arb. Well! make your own laws.

Bl. First, I thank ye, y'have freed me nobly:

54 THE COMMITTEE.

pray believe it; you have this acknowledgment from an honest heart, one that would crack a string for you; that's one thing.

Arb. Well! the other.

Bl. The other is only, that I may stand so ready, that I may be gone just as I have told it you; together with your promise, not to call me back: and upon these terms, I give you leave to laugh when I am gone. Careless, come, stand ready, that, at the sign given, we may vanish together.

Ruth. If you please, Sir, when you are ready to start, I'll cry one, two, three, and away.

Bl. Be pleased to forbear, good smart gentlewoman: you have leave to jeer when I am gone, and I am just going; by your spleen's leave, a little patience.

Arb. Pr'ythee, peace.

Ruth. I shall contain, Sir.

Bl. That's much for a woman to do.

Arb. Now, Sir, perform your promise.

Bl. Careless, have you done with your woman?

Car. Madam——

Bl. Nay, I have thanked her already; pr'ythee no more of that dull way of gratitude. Stand ready, man; yet nearer the door. So, now my misfortune that I promised to discover, is, that I love you above my sense or reason. So farewell, and laugh. Come, Careless.

Car. Ladies, our lives are yours; 'be but so kind 'as to believe it, till you have something to command.' [Exeunt.

Ruth. Was there ever such humour?

Arb. As I live, his confession shews nobly.

Ruth. It shews madly, I am sure. An ill-bred fellow! not indure a woman to laugh at him!

Arb. He's honest, I dare swear.

Ruth. That's more than I dare swear for my colonel.

Arb. Out upon him.

Ruth. Nay, 'tis but want of a good example; I'll make him so.

Arb.

THE COMMITTEE. 55

Arb. But, d'ye hear, Ruth, we were horribly to blame, that we did not enquire where they lodged, under pretence of sending to them about their own business.

Ruth. ' Why, thy whimsical colonel discharged himself off like a gun : there was no time between the flashing in the pan, and the going off, to ask a question. But hark ye,' I have an invention upon the old account of the five hundred pounds, which shall make Abel send Obadiah, to look 'em.

Arb. Excellent ! the trout Abel will bite immediately at that bait. ' The message shall be as from his master Day, senior, to come and speak with him ; they'll think presently, 'tis about their composition, and come certainly. In the mean time, we'll prepare them with counter expectations.

Enter Abel and Obadiah.

Ruth. Peace ! see where Abel and the gentle squire of low degree, Obadiah, approach, having newly entered themselves into bonds.

Arb. Which I'll be sure to tell his mother, if he be ever more troublesome.

Ruth. And that he's turned an arrant cavalier, by bailing one of the brood.

Abel. I have, according to your desires, given freedom to your kinsman and trustee. I suppose he doth perceive that you may have power, in right of me.

Arb. Good, Mr. Abel, I am sincerely beholden to you, and your authority.

Ruth. O, fie upon't, brother, I did forget to acquaint you with a business before the gentlemen went. O me, what a sieve-like memory have I ! 'Twas an important affair too.

Abel. If you discover it to me, I shall render you my opinion upon the whole.

Ruth. The two gentlemen have repented of their obstinacy, and wou'd now present five hundred pounds to your good honourable mother, to stand their friend, that they may be permitted to take the covenant ;

56 THE COMMITTEE.

and we, negligent we, have let them go, before we knew where to send to them.

Abel. That was the want of being us'd to important affairs. It is ill to neglect the accepting of their conversion, together with their money.

Ruth. Well, there is but one way; 'do you send 'Obadiah, in your father's name, to desire them 'both to come to his house about some business that 'will be for their good, but no more; for then they'll 'take it ill; for they enjoined us secrecy; and when 'they come, let us alone:' Obadiah may enquire them out.

Ob. The bailiffs did say they were gone to the Devil.

Abel. Hasten thither, good Obadiah, as if you had met my honourable father, and desire them to come unto his house, about an important affair, that is for their good.

Obad. I shall use expedition. [Exit.

Abel. And we will hasten 'home, lest the gentlemen shou'd be before us, and not know how to address 'their offers; and then we will hasten' our being united in the bonds of matrimony.

Arb. Soft and fair goes far. [Exeunt.

Enter the two Colonels, and Teague, as at the Tavern.

Car. Did ever man get away so craftily from the thing he lik'd? Terrible business! afraid to tell a woman what she desired to hear. 'I pray heartily 'that the boys do not come to the knowledge of thy 'famous retreat; we shall be followed by those small 'birds, as you have seen an owl pursued.

'*Bl.* I shall break some of their wings then.'

Car. To leave a handsome woman; a woman that came to be bound body for body for thee; one that does that which no woman will hardly do again.

Bl. What's that?

Car. Love thee, and thy blunt humour; a meer chance, man. Come, Teague, give us a song.

Teag. I am a cup too low.

Car. Here then. *[Gives him a glass.]*

Teag.

Teag. I should like to wet t'other eye.

Car. Here?

SONG *by* Teague.

Last Patrick-mass night 'bove all days in the year,

I set out for London before I got there:

But when I took leave of my own natural shore,

O, whillil-a-lu, I did screech, bawl, and roar.

I did wake in the morning, while yet it was night,

And cou'd not see one bit of land, but was quite out
fight;

So, with tumbling and tossing, and jolting poor Teague,
My stomach was sea-sick in less than a league.

At Chester, to show my high birth, and great mind,

I took a place in the coach, but walk'd in it behind;

The seas they did roar, and the winds were uncivil,

And, upon my soul, I thought we were all blown-to
the devil.

At Coventry next, where you see peeping Tom,

Who was kill'd for a look at the Duchess's bum;

But when her grace rid on her saddle all bare,

Devil burn me, no wonder that old Snob did stare.

Bl. You practise your wit to no purpose; I am
not to be persuaded to lie still, like a jack-a-lent, to
be cast at; I had rather be a whisp hung up for a
woman to scold at, than a fix'd lover for 'em to
point at. Your squib began to hiss.'

Enter Obadiah.

Car. Peace, man, here's Jupiter's Mercury. Is
his message to us, trow?

Ob. Gentleman, you are opportunely over-taken
and found out.

Bl. How's this?

Ob. I come unto you in the name of the honoura-
ble Mr. Day, who desires to speak with you both
about some important affair, which is conducing for
your good.

Bl. What train is this?

Car. Peace, let us not be rash.——Teague.

Teag.

58 THE COMMITTEE.

Teag. Eh.

Car. Were it not possible that you cou'd entertain this fellow in the next room, till he were pretty drunk? *[Aside.*

Teag. I warrant you, I will make him and myself too drunk, for thy sweet sake.

Car. Be sure, Teague.—Some business, that will take us up a very little time to finish, makes us desire your patience till we dispatch it. In the mean time, Sir, do us the favour as to call for a glass of sack, in the next room; Teague shall wait upon you, and drink your master's health.

Ob. It needeth not; nor do I use to drink healths.

Car. None but your master's, Sir, and that by way of remembrance.

Obad. We that have the affairs of state under our tuition cannot long delay; my presence may be required for carrying on the work.

Car. Nay, Sir, it shall not exceed above a quarter of an hour; perhaps we'll wait upon you to Mr. Day presently. Pray, Sir, drink but one glass or two; we wou'd wait upon you ourselves, but that wou'd hinder us from going with you.

Ob. Upon that consideration I shall attend a little.

Car. Go wait upon him——Now, Teague, or never.

Teag. I will make him so drunk as can be, upon my shoul. *[Exeunt Teague and Obadiah.*

Bl. What a devil shou'd this message mean?

Car. 'Tis too plain; this cream of committee rascals, who has better intelligence than a state-secretary, has heard of his son Abel's being hamper'd in the cause of the wicked, and in revenge wou'd intice us to perdition.

Bl. If Teague could be so fortunate as to make him drunk, we might know all.

Car. If the close-hearted rogue will not be open-mouth'd, we'll leave him pawn'd for all our scores, and stuff his pockets with blank commissions.

Bl.

‘ *Bl.* Only fill up one with his master’s name.

‘ *Car.* And another with his wife’s name for adjutant general, together with a bill of ammunition hid under Day’s house, and make it be digged down, with scandal of delinquency. A rascal, to think to invite us into Newgate!

‘ *Bl.* Well, we must resolve what to do.

‘ *Car.* I have a fancy come into my head, that may produce an admirable scene.

‘ *Bl.* Come, let’s hear.

‘ *Car.* ’Tis upon supposition, that Teague makes him drunk; and, by the way, ’tis a good omen that we have no sober apparition in that wavering posture of frailty; we’ll send him home in a sedan, and cause him to be delivered in that good-natured condition, to the ill-natured rascal his master.

‘ *Bl.* It will be excellent. How I pray for Teague to be victorious!’

Enter Musician.

Mus. Gentlemen, will you have any musick?

Bl. Pr’ythee no, we are out of tune.

Car. Pish, we never will be out of humour.

Enter Teague and Obadiah drunk.

‘ See and rejoice where Teague with laurel comes.’

Bl. And the vanquished Obadiah, with nothing fixed about him but his eyes.

Teag. Well now, upon my shoul, Mr. Obadiah sings as well as the man now. Come then, will you sing an Irish song after me?

Ob. I will sing Irish for the king now.

Teag. I will sing for the king, as well as you. Hark you now! [*He sings an Irish song, and Obadiah tries.*]

S O N G.

Oh, Teady-foley, you are my darling,
You are my looking-glass, both night and morning;
I had rather have you without a farthing,
Than Bryan Gaulichar, with his house and garden.

La, ral, lidy.

O,

60 THE COMMITTEE.

O, Norah, agra, I do not doubt you,
And for that reason I kiss and mouth you;
And if there was ten and twenty about you,
Devil burn me, if I wou'd go without you.

La, ral, lidy.

Ob. That is too hard stuff; I cannot do these and
and these material matters.

Teag. Here now, we will take some snuff for the
king—So, there, lay it upon your hand; put one
of your noses to it now; so, snuff now. Upon my
shoul, Mr. Obad. Commit. will make a brave Irish-
man. Put this in your other nose.

Ob. I will snuff for the king no more. Good Mr.
Teague, give me some more sack, and sing English,
for my money.

Teag. I will tell you that Irish is as good and bet-
ter too. Come, now, we will dance. Can you play
an Irish tune? [*Dance, Obadiah tumbles down.*]

Teag. Obid, Obid! upon my soul I believe he's
dead.

Car. Dead!

Teag. Dead drunk. Poor Obid is sick, and I
will mull him some wine—I will put some spice in't.
[*Puts some snuff into the funnel.*] Now I will howl over
him as they do in Ireland: oh, oh, oh.

Car. Peace, Teague, you'll alarm the enemy.
Here's a shilling, call a chair, and let them carry him
in this condition to his kind master. If you meet the
ladies, say we wou'd speak with them at the lieutenant's.

Teag. Give me the thirteen, and I will give him an
Irish sedan.

Col. How's that?

Teag. This way. [*Takes him by the heels, and draws
him off.*]

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Mr. Day and Mrs. Day.

Mrs. D. Dispatch quickly I say, and say I said it;
many things fall between the lip and the cup.

Mr. D. Nay, duck, let thee alone for counsel.
Ah, if thou hadst been a man!

Mrs. D. Why then you wou'd have wanted a wo-
man, and a helper too.

Mr.

THE COMMITTEE. 61

Mr. D. I profess so I shou'd, and a notable one too, though I say't before thy face, and that's no ill one.

Mrs. D. Come, come, you are wand'ring from the matter; dispatch the marriage, I say, whilst she is thus taken with our Abel. Women are uncertain.

Mr. D. How if she shou'd be coy?

Mrs. D. You are at your *ifs* again; if she be foolish, tell her plainly what she must trust to: no Abel, no land. Plain-dealing's a jewel. Have you the writings drawn, as I advised you, which she must sign?

Mr. D. Ay, I warrant you, duck; here, here they be. Oh, she has a brave estate!

Mrs. D. What news you have!

Mr. D. Look you, wife——

[Day pulls out writings, and lays out his keys.

Mrs. D. Pish, teach your grannum to spin; let me see.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. May it please your honour, your good neighbour Zachariah is departing this troublesome life: he has made your honour his executor, but cannot depart till he has seen your honours.

Mr. D. Alas! alas! a good man will leave us. Come, good duck, let us hasten. Where is Obadiah, to usher you?

Mrs. D. Why, Obadiah!—A varlet, to be out of the way at such a time; truly he moveth my wrath. Come, husband, along; I'll take Abel in his place.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Ruth and Arbella.

Ruth. What's the meaning of this alarm? There's some carrion discover'd; the crows are all gone upon a sudden.

Arbel. The she Day call'd most fiercely for Obadiah. Look here, Ruth, what have they left behind?

Ruth. As I live, it is the Day's bunch of keys, which he always keeps so closely:—well——if thou hast any mettle now's the time.

Arbel. To do what?

Ruth. To fly out of Egypt.

F

Exit

62 THE COMMITTEE.

Enter Abel.

Arbel. Peace, we are betray'd else; as sure as can be, wench, he's come back for the keys.

Ruth. We'll forswear 'em in confident words, and no less confident countenances.

Arbel. An important affair hath call'd my honourable father and mother forth, and in the absence of Obadiah, I am enforced to attend their honours; 'and therefore, I conceiv'd it right and meet to acquaint you with it; lest in my absence you might have apprehended that some mischance had befallen my person: therefore I desire you to receive consolation:' and so I bid you heartily farewell. [*Exit.*]

Arbel. Given from his mouth, this tenth of April.—He put me in a cruel fright.

Ruth. As I live, I'm all over in such a dew as hangs about a still, when 'tis first set a going; but this is better and better: there never was such an opportunity to break prison. I know the very places, the holes in his closet, where the composition of your estate lies, and where the deeds of my own estate lie. I have cast my eye upon them often, when I have gone up to him on errands, and to call him to dinner.—If I miss, hang me.

Arbel. But whither shall we go?

Ruth. To a friend of mine, and of my father's, that lives near the Temple, and will harbour us, fear not; and so set up for ourselves, and get our colonels.

Arbel. Nay, the mischief that I have done, and the condition we are in, makes me as ready as thou art. Come, let's about it.

Ruth. Stay; do you stand sentinel here. That's the closet-window; I'll call for thee, if I need thee; and be sure to give notice of any news of the enemy.

[*Exit.*]

Arbel. I warrant thee.—'May but this departing brother have so much string of life left him, as may tie this expecting Day to his bedside, till we have committed this honest robbery'—Hark! what's that

that——this apprehension can make a noise when there is none.

Ruth. I have 'em, I have 'em; nay the whole convey, and his seal at arms bearing a dog's leg. [*Above.*

Arbel. Come, make haste then.

' *Ruth.* As I live, here's a letter counterfeited from the king, to the rascal his rebellious subject Day; with a remembrance to his discreet wife. Nay, what dost thou think these are? I'll but cast my eye upon these papers, that were schismatical, and lay in separation: what dost think they are?

' *Arbel.* I can't tell. Nay pr'ythee come away.

' *Ruth.* Out upon the precise baboon! they are letters from two wenches; one for an encrease of salary to maintain his unlawful issue; another from a wench that had more conscience than he, and refus'd to take the physic that he prescrib'd to take away a natural tympany.

' *Arbel.* Nay, pr'ythee dispatch.

' *Ruth.* Here be abundance more. Come, run up, and help me carry 'em. We'll take the whole index of his rogueries: we shall be furnish'd with such arms, offensive and defensive, that we shall never need sue to him for a league. Come, make haste.

' *Arbel.* I come.

Enter Teague, with Obadiah on his back.

Tea. Long life to you, Madam; my master is at Lieutenant Story's, and wants to speak to you, and that dear creature too.

Arbel. and Ruth. Conduct us to him.

Tea. Oh, that I will—Come along, and I will follow you.

[*Exeunt all but Obadiah.*

Obad. Some small beer, good Mr. Teague.

Enter as return'd, Mr. Day, Mrs. Day, and Abel.

Mr. D. He made a good end, and departed as unto sleep.

Mrs. D. I'll assure you his wife took on grievously; I do not believe she'll marry this half year.

Mr. D. He died full of exhortation. Ha, duck, thou'dst be sorry to lose me?

64 THE COMMITTEE.

Mrs. D. Lose you ! I warrant you you'll live as long as a better thing—Ah, Lord, what's that ?

[Obadiah sings.
Mr. D. How now ! what's this ? How !—Obadiah—and in a drunken distemper assuredly !

Mrs. D. O fie upon't ! who wou'd have believ'd that we shou'd have liv'd to have seen Obadiah overcome with the creature ?—Where have you been, firrah ?

Obad. D—d—drinking the ki—ki—king's health.

Mr. D. O terrible ! some disgrace put upon us, and shame brought within our walls. I'll go lock up my neighbour's will, and come down and shew him a reproof.—How—how—I cannot feel my keys—nor—[*He feels in his pockets, and leaps up.*] hear 'em gingle. Didst thou see my keys, duck ?

Mrs. D. Duck me no ducks. I see your keys ! see a fool's head of your own ! Had I kept them, I warrant they had been forth coming. You are so flappish, you throw 'em up and down at your tail. Why don't you go look if you have not left them in the door ?

Mr. D. I go, I go, duck. [Exit,

Mrs. D. Here, Abel, take up this fallen creature, who has left his uprightness ; carry him to a bed, and when he is return'd to himself, I will exhort him.

Ab. He is exceedingly overwhelmed.

[*He goes to lift him up.*
Obad. Stand away, I say, and give me some sack, that I may drink a health to the king. [Obadiah sings *Teady Foley.*] Where's Mr. Teague ?

Enter Mr. Day.

Mr. D. Undone, undone ! robb'd, robb'd ! the doors left open, and all my writings and papers stolen ! Undone, undone !—Ruth, Ruth !

Mrs. D. Why Ruth, I say ! Thieves, thieves !

Enter Servant.

Serv. What's the matter, forsooth ? Here has been no thieves : I have not been a minute out of the house.

Mrs.

THE COMMITTEE. 65

Mrs. D. Where's Ruth, and Mrs. Arbella?

Serv. I have not seen them a pretty while.

Mr. D. 'Tis they have robb'd me, and taken away the writings of both their estates. Undone, undone!

Mrs. D. This came with staying for you, [*To Abel.*] coxcomb, we had come back sooner else: you flow drone, we must be undone for your dullness.

Obad. Be not in wrath.

Mrs. D. I'll wrath you, ye rascal you. I'll teach you, you drunken rascal, and you sober dull man.

Obad. Your feet are swift and violent; their motion will make them fume.

Mrs. D. D'ye lie too, ye drunken rascal?

Mr. D. Nay, patience, good duck, and let's lay out for these women; they are the thieves.

Mrs. D. 'Twas you that left your keys upon the table to tempt them: ye need cry, good duck, be patient. Bring in the drunken rascal, ye booby: when he is sober, he may discover something. Come, take him up; I'll have 'em hunted.

[Exeunt Mr. Day and Mrs. Day.]

Ab. I rejoice yet, in the midst of my sufferings, that my mistress saw not my rebukes. Come, Obadiah, I pray raise yourself upon your feet, and walk.

Obad. Have you taken the covenant? That's the question.

Ab. Yea.

Obad. And will you drink a health to the king? That's t'other question.

Ab. Make not thyself a scorn.

Obad. Scorn in my face! Void, young Satan.

Ab. I pray you walk in, I shall be assisting.

Obad. Stand off, and you shall perceive by my steadfast going, that I am not drunk. Look ye now—so, softly, softly; gently, good Obadiah, gently and steadily, for fear it should be said that thou art in drink. So, gently and uprightly, Obadiah.

[He moves his legs, but stands still.]

Ab. You do not move.

Obad. Then do I stand still, as fast as you go.

F 3

Enter

66 THE COMMITTEE.

Enter Mrs. Day.

Mrs. D. What, stay all day ! There's for you, Sir ;
[*To Abel.*] you are a sweet youth to leave in trust.
Along, you drunken rascal ; [*To Obadiah.*] I'll set
you both forward.

Obad. The Philistines are upon us, and Day has
broke loose from darkness ; high keeping has made
her fierce. [*She beats them off.*]

Mrs. D. Out, you drunken rascal : I'll make you
move, you beast. [*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

*Enter Bookseller and Bailiffs, having laid hold on
Teague.*

BOOKSELLER.

COME along, Sir ; I'll teach you to take cove-
nants.

Tea. Will you teach me then ? Did not I take it
then ? Why will you teach me now ?

Book. You shall pay dearly for the blows you
struck me, my wild Irish ; by St. Patrick, you shall.

Tea. What have you now to do with St. Patrick ?
he willicorn your covenant.

Book. I'll put you, Sir, where you shall have
worse liquor than your bonny-clabber.

Tea. Bonny-clabber ! By my gossip's hand now,
you are a rascal if you do not love bonny-clabber ;
and I will break your pate if you will not let me
go to my master.

Book. O, you are an impudent rascal. Come,
away with him.

Enter Colonel Careless.

Car. How now ! hold, my friend ; whither do
you carry my servant ?

Book. I have arrested him, Sir, for striking me,
and taking away my books.

Car. What has he taken away.

Book.

Book. Nay, the value of the thing is not much ;
'twas the covenant, Sir.

Tea. Well, I did take the covenant, and my master took it from me ; and we have taken the covenant then, have we not ?

Car. Here, honest fellow, here's more than thy covenant's worth ; here, bailiffs, here's for you to drink.

Book. Well, Sir, you seem an honest gentleman ; for your sake, and in hopes of your custom, I release him.

Bail. Thank ye, noble Sir.

[*Exeunt Book. and Bail.*]

Car. Farewel, my noble friends——so——d'ye hear, Teague, pray take no more covenants.—Have you paid the money I sent you with ?

Tea. Yes, but I will carry no more, look you there now.

Car. Why, Teague ?

Tea. God so, my shoul now, I shall run away with it.

Car. Pish, thou art too honest.

Tea. That I am too upon my shoul now ; but the devil is not honest, that he is not ; he would not let me alone when I was going ; but he made me go to this little long place ; and t'other little long place ; and upon my shoul was carrying me to Ireland, for he made me go by a dirty place like a lough now ; and therefore I know now it was the way to Ireland. Then I wou'd stand still, and then he wou'd make me go on ; and then I wou'd go to one side, and he wou'd make me go to t'other side ; and then I got a little farther, and did run then ; and upon my shoul the devil cou'd not catch me ; and then I did pay the money : but I will carry no money that I will not.

Car. But thou sha't, Teague, when I have more to send ; thou art proof now against temptation.

Tea. Well then, if you send me with money again, and if I do not come to thee upon the time, the devil will make me begone then with the money. Here's a paper for thee, 'tis a quit way indeed.

Car.

Car. That's well said, Teague—— [Reads.]

Enter Mr. Day, Obadiah, and Soldiers.

Ob. See, Sir, Providence hath directed us; there is one of them that cloathed me with shame, and the most malignant among the wicked.

Mr. D. Soldiers, seize him. I charge him with treason! Here's a warrant to the keeper, as I told you.

1 Sold. Nay, no resistance now.

Car. What's the matter, rascals?

Mr. D. You shall know that, to your cost, hereafter. Away with him.

Car. Teague, tell 'em I shall not come home to-night. I am engag'd.

Tea. I pr'ythee ben't engag'd.

Car. Gentlemen, I am guilty of nothing, that I know of.

Mr. D. That will appear, Sir.—Away with him.

Tea. What will you do with my master, now.

Mr. D. Be quiet, Sir, or you shall go with him.

Tea. That I will, for all you, you old fool.

Car. Teague, come hither.

Tea. Sir?

Car. Here, take this key, open my bureau, and burn all the papers you find there; and here, burn this letter.

Tea. Pray, give me that pretty, clean letter, to send to my mother.

Car. No, no; be sure to do as I tell you.

Mr. D. Away with him. We will be aveng'd on the scorner; and I'll go home, and tell my duck this part of my good fortune. [Exeunt.]

Enter chairmen with sedans, women come out.

Ruth. So far we are right.—Now, honest fellow, step over, and tell the two gentlemen, that we two women desire to speak with them.

Enter C. Blunt, and Lieutenant.

Chair. See, mistress, here's one of them.

Ruth. That's thy colonel, Arbella; catch him quickly, or he'll fly again.

Arb. What shou'd I do?

Ruth.

Ruth. Put forth some good words, 'as they use to
'shake oats, when they go to catch a skittish jade.'
Advance.

Arb. Sir.

Bl. Lady? ——— 'Tis she.

Arb. I wish, Sir, that my friend and I had some
conveniency of speaking to you; we now want the
assistance of some noble friend.

Bl. Then I am happy: Bring me but to do some-
thing for you. I wou'd have my actions talk, not I.
My friend will be here immediately; I dare speak
for him too—Pardon my last confusion; but what I
told you, was as true as if I had said—

Ruth. To make affidavit of it.

Bl. Good, over-charg'd gentlewoman, spare me
but a little.

Arb. Pr'ythee, peace. Can't thou be merry, and
we in this condition?—Sir, I do believe you noble,
truly worthy. If we might withdraw any whither out
of sight, I wou'd acquaint you with the business.

Lieu. My house, ladies, is at that door, where both
the colonels lodge. Pray, command it. Colonel
Careless will immediately be here.

Enter Teague.

Tea. He will not come; that commit rogue Day
has got him with men in red coats, and he is gone to
prison here below this street. He would not let me
go with him, i'faith, but made me come tell thee now.

Ruth. O, my heart!—Tears, by your leave, a while
—[*Wipes her eyes.*] D'ye hear, Arbella, here, take all
the trinkets, only the bait that I'll use, 'accept of
'this gentleman's house, there let me find thee, I'll
'try my skill—Nay, talk not. [*Exit.*]

Bl. Careless in prison! Pardon me, Madam; I must
leave you for a little while; pray be confident; 'this
'honest friend of mine will use you with all respects
'till I return.

Arb. What do you mean to do, Sir?

Bl. I cannot tell; yet I must attempt something.
You shall have a sudden account of all things. You
say

say you dare believe ; pray be as good as your word ; and whatever accident befalls me, know I love you dearly. ‘ Why do you weep ?

‘ *Arb.* Do not run yourself into a needless danger.

‘ *Bl.* How ! d’ye weep for me ? Pray let me see.
 ‘ Never woman did so before, that I know of. I am
 ‘ ravish’d with it. The round gaping earth, ne’er
 ‘ suck’d showers so greedily as my heart drinks these.
 ‘ Pray, if you love me, be but so good and kind as to
 ‘ confess it.

‘ *Arb.* Do not ask what you may tell yourself.

‘ *Bl.* I must go ; honour and friendship call me.
 ‘ Here, dear lieutenant, I never had a jewel but this ;
 ‘ use it as right ones should be used ; do not breathe
 ‘ upon it, but gaze as I do—hold—one word more.
 ‘ The soldier that you often talk’d of to me, is still
 ‘ honest ?

‘ *Lieu.* Most perfectly.

‘ *Bl.* And I may trust him ?

‘ *Lieu.* With your life.

‘ *Bl.* Enough—Pray let me leave my last looks
 ‘ fix’d upon you—So ; I love you, and am honest.
 ‘ Be careful, good lieutenant, of this treasure—she
 ‘ weeps still—I cannot go, and yet I must. [*Exit.*

Lieu. Madam, pray let my house be honour’d with
 you. Be confident of all respect and faith.

‘ *Arb.* What uncertainties pursue my love and for-
 ‘ tune ! [*Exeunt.*

Enter Ruth with a soldier.

Ruth. Come, give me the bundle ; so, now the
 habit. ’Tis well ; there’s for your pains. Be secret,
 and wait where I appointed you.

Sold. If I fail, may I die in a ditch. [*Exit.*

Ruth. Now for my wild colonel. ‘ First, here’s a
 ‘ note, with my Lady Day’s seal to it, for his re-
 ‘ lease ; if that fails, (as he that shoots at these ras-
 ‘ cals must have two strings to his bow) then here’s
 ‘ my red-coat’s skin to disguise him, and a string to
 ‘ draw up a ladder of cords, which I have prepared
 ‘ against it grows dark. One of them will hit sure.
 ‘ I must

THE COMMITTEE. 71

‘ I must have him out ; and I must have him, when he is out. I have no patience to expect.’ Within there—ho !—

Enter Keeper.

Ruth. Have not you a prisoner, Sir, in your custody, one Colonel Careless ?

Keep. Yes, mistress ; and committed by your father, Mr. Day.

‘ *Ruth.* I know it ; but there was a mistake in it. Here’s a warrant for his delivery, under his hand and seal.

‘ *Keep.* I wou’d willingly obey it, Mistress ; but there’s a general order come from above, that all the king’s party shou’d be kept close, and none releas’d, but by the state’s order.

‘ *Ruth.* This goes ill.’—May I speak with him, Sir ?

Keep. Very freely, Mistress ; there’s no order to forbid any to come to him. To say truth, ’tis the most pleasant’t gentleman—I’ll call him forth. [*Exit.*

Ruth. O’my conscience, every thing must be in love with him. Now for my last hopes ; if this fail, I’ll use the ropes myself.

Enter Keeper and Careless.

Car. Mr. Day’s daughter speak with me ?

Keep. Ay, Sir, there she is. [*Exit.*

Ruth. O, Sir, does the name of Mr. Day’s daughter trouble you ? You love the gentlewoman, but hate his daughter.

Car. Yes, I do love the gentlewoman you speak of, most exceedingly.

Ruth. And the gentlewoman loves you. But what luck this is, that Day’s daughter should ever be with her, to spoil all !

Car. Not a whit, one way ; I have a pretty room within, dark, and convenient.

Ruth. For what ?

Car. For you and I to give counter-security for our kindness to one another.

Ruth. But Mr. Day’s daughter will be there, too.

Car. ’Tis dark ; we’ll ne’er see her.

Ruth.

72 THE COMMITTEE.

Ruth. You care not who you are wicked with. *Me-* thinks a prison shou'd tame you.

' *Car.* Why, d'ye think a prison takes away blood and fight? As long as I am so qualified, I am touch-wood; and whenever you bring fire, I shall fall a burning.

' *Ruth.* And you wou'd quench it.

' *Car.* And you shall kindle it again.

' *Ruth.* No, you will be burnt out at last, burnt to a coal, black as dishonest love.

Car. Is this your business? Did you come to disturb my contemplations with a sermon? Is this all?

Ruth. One thing more—I love you, it's true; but I love you honestly. If you know how to love me virtuously, I'll free you from prison, and run all fortunes with you.

Car. Yes, I cou'd love thee all manner of ways; if I cou'd not, freedom were no bait; were it from death, I shou'd despise your offer, to bargain for a lie—But——

Ruth. 'Oh noble!'—But what?

Car. The name of that rascal that got thee. Yet I lie too; he ne'er got a limb of thee. Pox on't, thy mother was as unlucky to bear thee. But how shall we salve that? Take off but these incumbrances, and I'll purchase thee in thy smock; but to have such a flaw in my title——

Ruth. Can I help nature?

Car. Or I honour? Why, hark you now; do but swear me into a pretence; do but betray me with an oath, that thou wert not begot on the body of Gillian, my father's kitchen-maid.

Ruth. Who's that?

Car. Why, the honourable Mrs. Day, that now is.

Ruth. Will you believe me if I swear?

Car. Ay, that I will, though I know all the while 'tis not true.

Ruth. I swear, then, by all that's good, I am not their daughter.

Car. Poor, kind, perjur'd, pretty one, I am beholden to thee. Wou'd'st damn thyself for me?

Ruth.

Ruth. You are mistaken. I have try'd you fully.
 ' You are noble, and I hope you love me. Be ever
 ' firm to virtuous principles.' My name is not so godly
 a one as Ruth, but plain Anne, daughter to Sir Basil
 Thorowgood; ' one, perhaps, that you have heard of,
 ' since in the world he has still had so loud and fair
 ' a character.' 'Tis too long to tell you how this
 Day got me, an infant, and my estate, into his po-
 wer, and made me pass for his own daughter, ' my fa-
 ' ther dying when I was but two years old. This I
 ' knew but lately, by an unexpected meeting of an an-
 ' cient servant of my father's.' But two hour's since,
 Arbella and I found an opportunity of stealing away
 all the writings that belong'd to my estate, and her
 composition. In our flight we met your friend, with
 whom I left her, as soon as I had intelligence of your
 misfortune, to try to get your liberty; which if I can
 do, you have your estate, for I have mine.

Car. Thou more than——

Ruth. No, no, no raptures at this time. Here's
 your disguise, purchas'd from a true-hearted red-
 coat. ' Here's a bundle.' Let this line down when 'tis
 almost dark, and you shall draw up a ladder of ropes.
 ' If the ladder of ropes be done sooner, I'll send it by
 ' a soldier that I dare trust, and you may. Your
 ' window's large enough.' As soon as you receive it,
 come down; ' if not, when 'tis dark, let down your
 ' line,' and at the bottom of the window you shall
 find yours, more than her own, not Ruth, but Anne.

Bar. I'll leap into thy arms——

Ruth. So you may break your neck. If you do,
 I'll jump too. But time steals on our words—Observe
 all I have told you. So, farewell.

Car. Nay, as the good fellows use to say, let us not
 part with dry lips——One kiss.

Ruth. Not a bit of me, 'till I am all yours.

Car. Your hand, then, to shew I am grown rea-
 sonable. A poor compounder.

Ruth. Pish! there's a dirty glove upon't.——

Car. Give me but any naked part, and I'll kiss it

74 THE COMMITTEE.

“ as a snail creeps, and leave sign where my lips slid
“ along——

‘ *Ruth.* Good snail, get out of your hole first;
“ think of your business. So, fare——

Car. Nay, pr’ythee be not ashamed that thou art
loth to leave me. ‘Slid, I am a man; but I’m as ar-
rant a rogue as thy quondam father, Day, if I cou’d
not cry, to leave thee a brace of minutes.

Ruth. Away; we grow foolish—farewel—yet, be
careful——Nay, go in.

Car. Do you go first.

Ruth. Nay, fie, go in.

Car. We’ll fairly, then, divide the victory, and
draw off together.—So—I will have the last look.

[*Exeunt severally, looking at one another.*

Enter C. Blunt, and Soldier.

Blunt. No more words. I do believe, nay, I know
thou art honest. I may live to thank thee better.

Sol. I scorn any encouragement to love my king,
or those that serve him. I took pay under these peo-
ple, with a design to do him service. The lieute-
nant knows it.

Bl. He has told me so. No more words. Thou
art a noble fellow. Thou art sure his window’s large
enough?

Sol. Fear it not.

Bl. Here, then, carry him this ladder of ropes.
So; now, give me the coat. Say not a word to him,
but bid him dispatch, when he sees the coast clear.
He shall be waited for, at the bottom of his window.
Give him thy sword, too, if he desires it.

Sol. I’ll dispatch it instantly; therefore get to your
place. [Exit.

Bl. I warrant ye.

Enter Teague.

Tea. Have you done every thing, then? By my
shoul, now, yonder is the man with the hard name;
that man, now, that I made drunk for thee; Mr.
Tay’s rascal. He is coming along there behind;
now, upon my shoul, that he is.

Bl.

Tca. How should I be a man, then?

Teag. I will carry him upon my back, if he will not go; and if he will not be drunk, I will cut his throat then, that I will, for my sweet master now, that I will.

Teag. I warrant you, I will get drink into his pate, or I will break it for him, that I will, I warrant you. He shall not come after you now. [*Exit.*]

‘ *Bl.* Good luck go with thee ! [*Exit Teague.*] The
‘ fellow’s faithful and stout ; that fear’s over. Now
‘ to my station. [*Exit.*

⁶ C. Carelefs, *as in prison*.

‘ *Car.* The time’s almost come: how flow it flutters. My desires are better winged. How I long to counterfeit a faintness when I come to the bottom, and sink into the arms of this dear witty fair! — Ha, who’s this?

'Enter Soldier.

‘ *Sol.* Here, Sir, here’s a ladder of ropes, fasten it
‘ to your window, and descend: you shall be waited
‘ for.

‘ *Car.* The careful creature has sent it—but d’ye
‘ hear, Sir, cou’d you not spare that implement by
‘ your side? it might serve to keep off small curs.

Sol. You'll have no need on't, but there it is ;
make haste, the coast is clear. [Exit.

Car. O this pretty she captain general over my
G 2 ' soul

76 THE COMMITTEE.

' soul and body ; the thought of her musters every
' faculty I have : she has sent the ropes, and stays for
' me ; no dancer of the ropes ever slid down with that
' swiftness, or desire of haste, that I will make to
' thee. [Exit.

' Enter Blunt in his Soldier's Coat.

' *Bl.* All's quiet, and the coast clear ; so far it
' goes well ; that is the window ; in this nook I'll
' stand, 'till I see him coming down. [Steps in.

' *C.* Careless above, in his soldier's habit, lets down the
' ladder of ropes, and speaks.

' *Car.* I cannot see my north star that I must fail
' by ; 'tis clouded : perhaps she stands close in some
' corner ; I'll not trifle time : all's clear. Fortune,
' forbear thy tricks, but for this small occasion.'

Enter Blunt and Careless.

Bl. What's this ! a soldier in the place of Care-
less ? I am betray'd, but I'll end this rascal's duty.

Car. How, a soldier !—betray'd ! this rascal shan't
laugh at me. [Both draw.

Bl. Dog.

Car. How, Blunt !

Bl. Careless !

Car. You guess shrewdly. Plague, what contri-
vance hath set you and I a tilting at one another ?

Bl. How the devil got you a soldier's habit ?

Car. The same friend, for ought I know, that fur-
nish'd you—This kind gentlewoman is Ruth still. Ha,
here she is ! I was just ready to be suspicious.

Enter Ruth.

Ruth. Who's there ?

Car. Two notable charging red-coats.

Ruth. As I live, my heart is at my mouth.

Car. Pr'ythee, let it come to thy lips, that I may
kiss it. ' What have you in your lap ?'

Ruth. ' The ladder of ropes : ' how in the name of
wonder got you hither ?

Car. Why, I had the ladder of ropes, and came
down by it.

Bl.

Bl. Then the mistake is plainer; 'twas I that sent the soldier with the ropes.

Ruth. What an escape was this! Come, let's lose no time; here's no place to explain matters in.

Car. I will stay to tell thee, I shall never deserve thee.

Ruth. Tell me so when you have had me a little while. Come, follow me; 'put on your plainest garb; not like a dancing master, with your toes out. Come along. [*Ruth pulls their hats over their eyes.*] Hang down your head, as if you wanted pay. —So. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mr. Day, Mrs. Day, and Mrs. Chat.

Mrs. D. Are you sure of this, neighbour Chat?

Mrs. Ch. I'm as sure of it, as I am that I have a nose to my face.

Mrs. D. Is my——

Mr. D. Ay! is my——

Mrs. D. You may give one leave, methinks, to ask out one question. Is my daughter Ruth with her?

Mrs. Ch. She was not, when I saw Mrs. Arbella last. I have not been so often at your honour's house, but that I know Mrs. Arbella, the rich heiress, that Mr. Abel was to have had, good gentleman, if he has his due. They never suspected me; for I used to buy things of my neighbour Story, before she married the lieutenant; and stepping in to see Mrs. Story that now is, my neighbour With-well that was; I saw, as I told you, this very Mrs. Arbella; and I warrant Mrs. Ruth is not far off.

Mrs. D. Let me advise then, husband.

Mr. D. Do, good duck; I'll warrant 'em——

Mrs. D. You'll warrant, when I have done the business.

Mr. D. I mean so, duck.

Mrs. D. Well! pray spare your meaning too. First then we'll go ourselves in person to this Story's house, and in the mean time send Abel for soldiers; and when he has brought the soldiers, let them stay

78 THE COMMITTEE.

at the door, and come up himself; and then, if fair means will not do, foul shall.

Mr. D. Excellent well advised, sweet duck. Ah! let thee alone. Begone, Abel, and observe thy mother's directions. Remember the place. We'll be reveng'd for robbing us, and for all their tricks.

Abel. I shall perform it.

Mrs. D. Come along, neighbour, and shew us the best way; 'and by and by we shall have news from 'Obadiah, who is gone to give the other colonel's 'gaoler a double charge, to keep the wild youth 'close. Come, husband, let's hasten.' Mrs. Chat, the state shall know what good service you have done.

Mrs. Chat. I thank your honour. [Exit.

Enter Arbella and Lieutenant.

Lieu. Pray, Madam, weep no more! spare your tears till you know they have miscarried.

'Arb. 'Tis a woman, Sir, that weeps: we want 'men's reasons, and their courage to practise with.

'Lieu. Look up, Madam, and meet your unexpected joys!

Enter Ruth, C. Careless, and C. Blunt.

Arb. Oh, my dear friend! my dear, dear Ruth!

Car. Pray, none of these phlegmatic hugs. There, take your colonel; my captain and I can hug afresh every minute.

Ruth. When did we hug last, good foldier?

Car. I have done nothing but hug thee in fancy, ever since you Ruth turned Annice.

Arb. You are welcome, Sir: I cannot deny I shar'd in all your danger.

'Lieu. If she had deny'd it, colonel, I would have 'betrayed her.

Bl. I know not what to say, nor how to tell, how dearly, how well—I love you.

'Arb. Now can't I say I love him; yet I have a 'mind to tell him too.

'Ruth. Keep't in and choak yourself, or get the 'rising of the lights.

'Arb. What shall I say?

Ruth.

Ruth. Say something, or he'll vanish.

Bl. D'ye not believe I love you? or can't you love me? Not a word.—Cou'd you—but—

Arb. No more; I'll save you the labour of courtship, which shou'd be too tedious to all plain and honest natures. It is enough; I know you love me.

Bl. Or may I perish, whilst I am swearing it.

Enter Prentice.

Lieu. How now, Jack?

Boy. O master, undone! Here's Mr. Day the committee-man, and his fierce wife, come into the shop. Mrs. Chat brought them in, and they say they will come up; they know that Mrs. Arbella, and their daughter Ruth, are here. Deny 'em if you dare, they say.

Lieu. Go down, boy, and tell 'em I'm coming to 'em. [*Exit boy.*] ' This pure jade, my neighbour Chat, has betray'd us. What shall I do? I warrant the rascal has foldiers at his heels. I think I cou'd help the colonels out at a back door.

Bl. I'd die rather by my Arbella. Now you shall see I love you.

Car. Nor will I Charles forsake you, Annice.

Ruth. Come, be chearful; I'll defend you all against the assaults of captain Day, and major-general Day, his new drawn-up wife. Give me my ammunition, [*To Arbella.*] the papers, woman. So, if I do not rout 'em, fall on; let's all die together, and make no more graves but one.

Bl. 'Slife, I love her now, for all she has jeer'd me so.

Ruth. ' Go fetch 'em in, lieutenant. [*Exit lieutenant.*] Stand you all drawn up as my reserve—so—I for the forlorn hope.

Car. That we had Teague here! to quarrel with the female triumphing Day, whilst I threw the male Day out of the window. Hark, I hear the troop marching; I know the the Day's stamp, among the tramples of a regiment.'

Arb. They come, wench; charge 'em bravely; I'll second thee with a volley.

60 THE COMMITTEE.

Ruth. They'll not stand the first charge, fear not ; now the Day breaks.

Car. Wou'd 'twere his neck were broke.

Enter Mr. Day, and Mrs. Day.

Mrs. D. Ah, ha ! my fine run-aways, have I found you ? What, you think my husband's honour lives without intelligence. Marry, come up.

Mr. D. My duck tells you how 'tis—We—

Mrs. D. Why then let your duck tell 'em how 'tis ; yet as I was saying, you shall perceive we abound in intelligence ; else 'twere not for us to go about to keep the nation quiet ; but if you, *Mrs. Arbella*, will deliver up what you have stolen, and submit, and return with us, and this ungracious *Ruth*.

Ruth. Anne, if you please.

Mrs. D. Who gave you that name, pray ?

Ruth. My godfathers and godmothers ;—on, forsooth, I can answer a leaf farther.

Mr. D. Duck, good duck, a word : I do not like this name *Annice*.

Mrs. D. You are ever in a fright, with a shrivell'd heart of your own.—Well, gentlewoman, you are merry.

Arb. As newly come out of our wardships. I hope *Mr. Abel* is well.

Mrs. D. Yes, he is well ; you shall see him presently ; yes, you shall see him.

Car. That is, with mirmidons. Come, good Anne, no more delay, fall on.

Ruth. Then before the furious *Abel* approaches with his red-coats, who perhaps are now marching under the conduct of that expert captain in weighty matters, know the articles of our treaty are only these : this *Arbella* will keep her estate, and not marry *Abel*, but this gentleman ; and I *Anne*, daughter to *Sir Basil Thorowgood*, and not *Ruth*, as has been thought, have taken my own estate, together with this gentleman, for better for worse. We were modest, though thieves ; only plundered our own.

Mrs. D. Yes, gentlewoman, you took something else,

THE COMMITTEE. 81

else, and that my husband can prove ; it may cost you your necks, if you do not submit.

Ruth. Truth on't is, we did take something else.

Mrs. D. Oh, did you so ?

Ruth. Pray give me leave to speak one word in private with my father Day ?

Mrs. D. Do so, do so ; are you going to compound ? Oh, 'tis father Day, now !

Ruth. D'ye hear, Sir ; how long is't since you have practis'd physic ? *[Takes him aside.*

Mr. D. Physic ! what d'ye mean ?

Ruth. I mean physic. Look ye, here's a small prescription of yours. D'ye know this hand-writing ?

Mr. D. I am undone.

Ruth. Here's another upon the same subject. This young one, I believe, came into this wicked world for want of your preventing dose ; it will not be taken now neither. It seems your wenches are wilful : nay, I do not wonder to see 'em have more conscience than you have.

Mr. D. Peace, good Mrs. Anne ! I am undone, if you betray me.

Enter Abel, goes to his father.

Ab. The soldiers are come.

Mr. D. Go and send 'em away, Abel ; here's no need, no need, now.

Mrs. D. Are the soldiers come, Abel ?

Ab. Yes, but my father biddeth me send them away.

Mr. D. No, not without your opinion, duck ; but since they have but their own, I think, duck, if we were all friends——

Mrs. D. O, are you at your *ifs* again ? D'you think they shall make a fool of me, though they make an ass of you ? Call 'em up, Abel, if they will not submit ; call up the soldiers, Abel.

Ruth. Why, your fierce honour shall know the business that makes the wise Mr. Day inclinable to friendship.

Mr. D. Nay, good sweet-heart, come, I pray let us be friends.

Mrs.

32 THE COMMITTEE.

Mrs. D. How's this ! what, am not I fit to be trusted now ? Have you built your credit and reputation upon my counsel and labours, and am I not fit now to be trusted ?

Mr. D. Nay, good sweet duck, I confess I owe all to thy wisdom. Good gentlemen persuade my duck, that we may be all friends.

Car. Hark you, good Gillian Day, be not so fierce upon the husband of thy bosom ; 'twas but a small start of frailty : say it were a wench, or so ?

Ruth. As I live, he has hit upon't by chance. Now we shall have sport. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. D. How, a wench, a wench ! out upon the hypocrite. A wench ! was not I sufficient ? a wench ! I'll be reveng'd, let him be ashamed if he will : call the soldiers, Abel.

Car. Stay, good Abel ; march not off so hastily.

Arb. Soft, gentle Abel, or I'll discover, you are in bonds ; you shall never be releas'd, if you move a step.

Ruth. D'ye hear, Mrs. Day, be not so furious, hold your peace ; you may divulge your husband's shame, if you are so simple, and cast him out of authority, nay and have him try'd for his life : read this. Remember too, I know of your bribery and cheating, and something else : you guess. Be friends, and forgive one another. Here's a letter counterfeited from the king, to bestow preferment upon Mr. Day, if he would turn honest ; by which means, I suppose, you cozen'd your brother cheats ; in which he was to remember his service to you. I believe 'twas your indicting. You are the committee-man. 'Tis your best way, (nay, never demur) to kiss and be friends. Now, if you can contrive handsomely to cozen those that cozen all the world, and get these gentlemen to come by their estates easily, and without taking the covenant, the old sum of five hundred pounds, that I used to talk of, shall be yours yet.

Mrs. D. We will endeavour.

Ruth. Come, Mrs. Arbella, pray let's all be friends.

Arb.

THE COMMITTEE. 83

Ab. With all my heart.

Ruth. Brother Abel, the bird is flown ; but you shall be released from your bonds.

Ab. I bear my afflictions as I may.

Enter Teague, leading Obadiah in a halter, and a Musician.

Tea. What is this now ? Who are you ? Well, are not you Mrs. Tay ? Well, I will tell her what I should say now ! Shall I then ? I will try if I cannot laugh too, as I did, or think of the mustard pot.

Car. No, good Teague, there's no need of thy message now ; but why dost thou lead Obadiah thus ?

Tea. Well, I will hang him presently, that I will. Look you here, Mrs. Tay, here's your man Obadiah, do you see ? he would not let me make him drunk, so I did take him in this string, and I am going to choak him by the throat.

Bl. Honest Teague, thy master is beholden to thee, in some measure, for his liberty.

Car. Teague, I shall requite thy honesty.

Tea. Well, shall I hang him then ? It is a rogue now, who wou'd not be drunk for the king.

Obad. I do beseech you, gentlemen, let me not be brought unto death.

Tea. You shall be brought to the gallows, you thief o'the world.

Car. No, poor Teague, 'tis enough ; we are all friends. Come, let him go.

Tea. Are you all friends ? Then here, little Obid, take the string, and go and hang yourself.

Car. D'ye hear, my friend, [*To the Musician.*] is any of your companions with you ?

Mus. Yes, Sir.

Car. As I live, we'll all dance ; it shall be the celebration of our wedding. Nay, Mr. Day, as we hope to continue friends, you and your duck shall trip it too.

Tea. Ay, by my shoul will we ; Obadiah shall be my woman too, and you shall dance for the king, that you shall.

Car.

84 THE COMMITTEE.

‘ *Car.* Go, and strike up then : no chiding now,
‘ *Mrs. Day.* Come, you must not be refractory for
‘ once.

‘ *Mrs. D.* Well, husband, since these gentlemen
‘ will have it so, and that they may perceive we are
‘ friends, dance.

‘ *Bl.* Now, Mr. Day, to your business ; get it done
‘ as soon as you will, the five hundred pounds shall be
‘ ready.

Car. ‘ So, friends ;’ thanks, honest Teague ; thou
shalt flourish in a new livery for this. Now, Mrs.
Annice, I hope you and I may agree about kissing,
and compound every way. Now, Mr. Day,

If you will have good luck in every thing,

Turn cavalier, and cry, God bless the king.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

BUT now the greatest thing is left to do,
More just Committee, to compound with you ;
For, till your equal censures shall be known,
The poet’s under sequestration :
He has no title to his small estate
Of wit, unless you please to set the rate.
Accept this half year’s purchase of his wit,
For in the compass of that time ’twas writ :
Not that this is enough ; he’ll pay you more,
If you yourselves believe him not too poor :
For ’tis your judgments give him wealth ; in this,
He’s just as rich as you believe he is.
Wou’d all Committees cou’d have done like you,
Made men more rich, and by their payments too.



British

820.2

19

v.2

RADCLIFFE COLLEGE

**The borrower is responsible for
knowing when this book is due.**

**To avoid fines return books
promptly.**

