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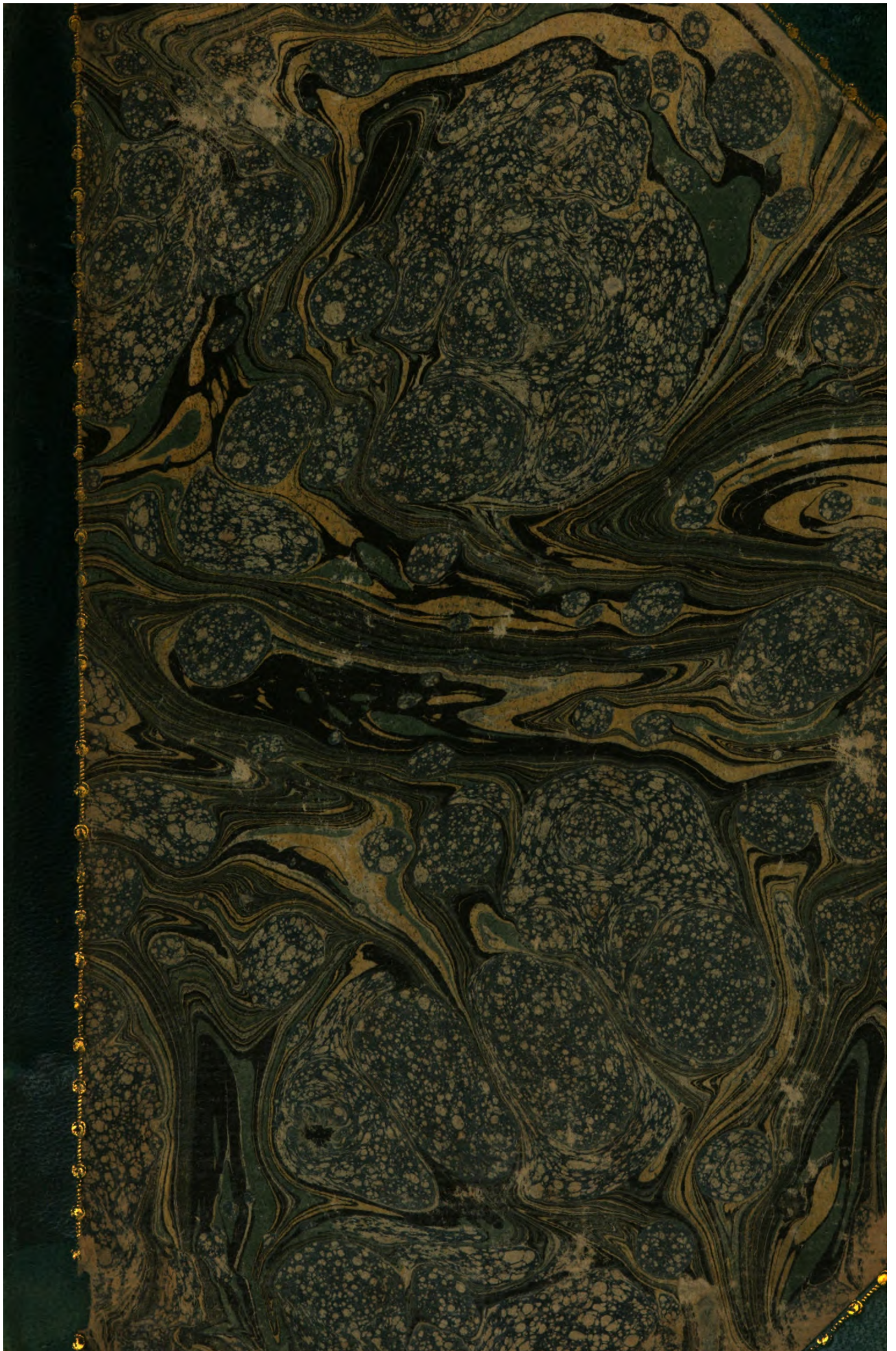
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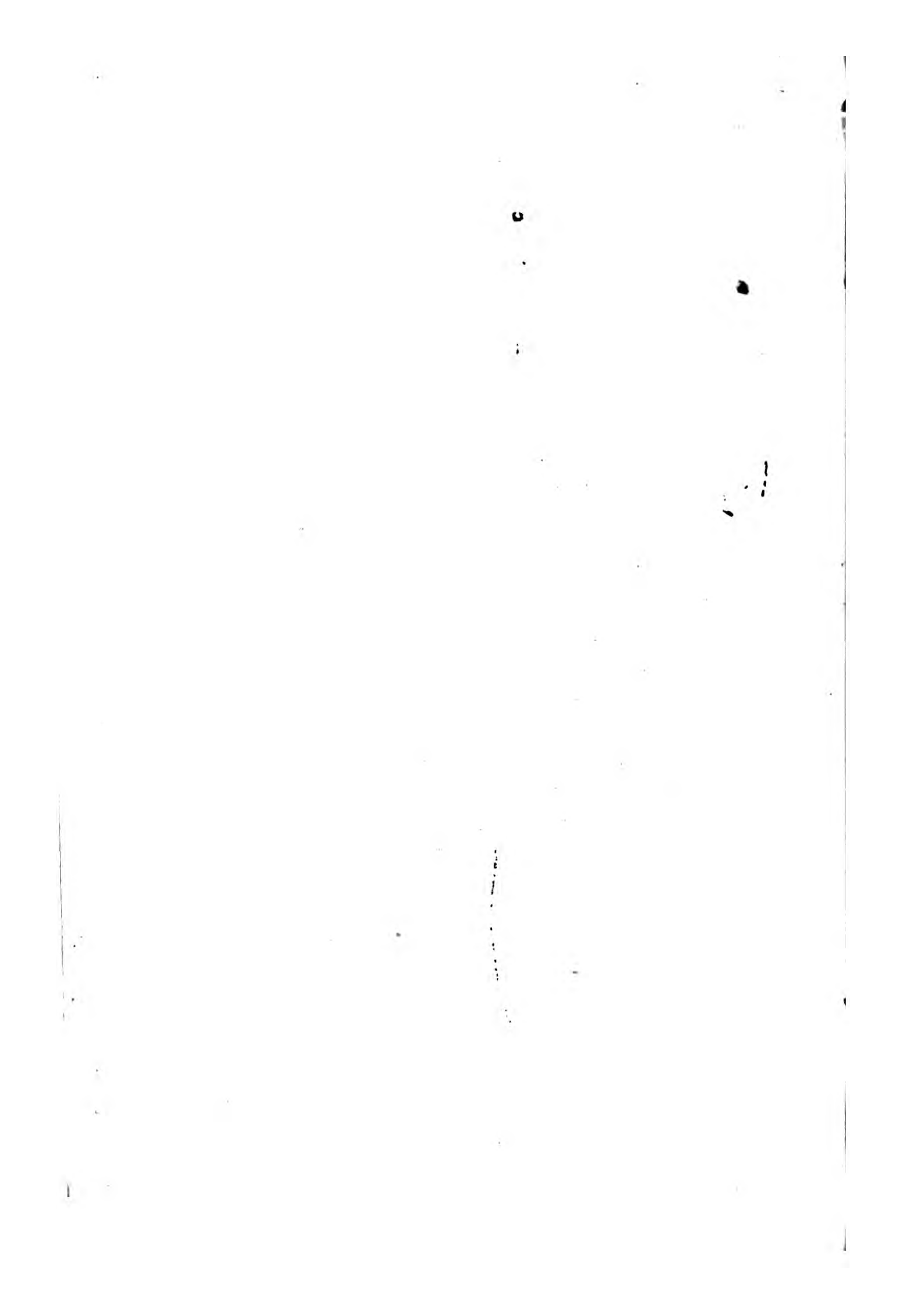
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By Thomas Hull .



THE
ROYAL MERCHANT:

AN
O P E R A.

FOUNDED ON
BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

As it is performed at the

THEATRE ROYAL,
IN
COVENT-GARDEN.



L O N D O N :

Printed for WILLIAM GRIFFIN, in Catharine-
Street, in the Strand.

M.DCC.LXVIII.



ADVERTISEMENT.

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER'S Comedy of the *Royal Merchant*, has ever been esteemed one of their most natural and capital Productions; yet, interesting as the Story is, and excellent as most Parts of the Writing are, it is remarkable, that it seldom or never attracted the Notice it seemed to deserve.

This Consideration induced the present Editor to try whether it might not be rendered more generally agreeable, by the Embellishment of Music; and he was the rather tempted to make this Experiment, from the romantic Turn of the Fable, and Singularity of the Characters in this Play, which appeared to him peculiarly calculated for an Opera. These Reasons, he hopes, will obtain a Pardon for having

ing

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

ing made this Use of our old Authors ; a Freedom, which, with almost every other dramatic Production, he should think unwarrantable.

Such few Lines as are printed in *Italics*, are omitted in the Representation.

E R R A T U M.

Last Song of A C T I.—Stanza 3. Read it thus.

**If Peace from her Hand,
Scatter Blifs thro' the Land,
Or War, &c.**

C H

CHARACTERS.

Harrol,	Mr. Mattocks.
Vandunk,	Mr. Shuter.
Wolfort,	Mr. Gardner.
Hubert,	Mr. Mahoon.
Hempskirke,	Mr. Davis.
Claufe,	Mr. Bensley.
Prig, and frighted Boor,	Mr. Yates.
Higgen,	Mr. Dunftall.
Snap,	Mr. Bennet.
Ferret,	Mr. Quick,
Ginks;	Mr. Bates,
Sailor,	Mr. Cushing,
	Mr. Mozeen.
	Mr. Perry.
Merchants,	Mr. Wignel.
	Mr. R. Smith,
	Mr. Lewes.
	Mr. T. Smith,
	Mr. Barrington.
Boors,	Mr. Stoppelaer,
	Mr. Morgan.
Gertrude,	Mrs. Mattocks,
Jaculin,	Mrs. Pinto.

T H E
R O Y A L M E R C H A N T.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

S C E N E, *a Chamber.*

Enter HUBERT and Guards.

Guard. N O T to disgrace, or hold thee captive,
lord,
Doth he desire thee back—Wolfort is noble,
Thy life, thy honour's safe.

Hub. I pr'ythee, peace!
And let him make the largest use he dare
Of his ill-gotten power. Lost Jaculin!

Enter WOLFORT.

Wolf. What, Hubert stealing from me! fly a friend,
Unwearied in his study to advance you!
What have I e'er possess'd that was not yours?
Yet, after these assurances of love,
These ties and bonds of friendship, to forsake me;
Forsake me like a foe! Hubert, you must
Give me a reason.

Hub. Wolfort, so I will,
If I may do't in private, and you'll hear it.

A

Wol.

2 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Wol. All leave the room— [Exeunt guards.
You have your will. Begin,
And use the liberty of our first friendship.

Hub. Friendship! when you prov'd traitor first, that
vanish'd;
Nor do I owe you any thing but hate.

A I R.

Enrag'd I'll shun each human face,
O'erjoy'd I'll seek the desert race;
With savage bears, and wolves agree,
Ere league with wretch, unjust as thee.

Wol. To me this is strange language.

Hub. To you! why, what are you?

Wol. Your prince and master, the earl of Flanders.

Hub. By a proper title!

Rais'd to't by cunning, circumvention, force,
Blood, and proscriptions; and maintain'd therein,
By frequent murders practis'd on all such,
As serv'd or lov'd old Gerard; which, at length,
Compell'd the good man, with his daughter, Jaculin,
(The chosen, the betroth'd of my affections)
To leave the city. They, by secret ways,
(As you give out, and we would gladly have it)
Escap'd your fury; tho' 'tis too much fear'd
They fell among the rest: but your late cruelties
So far transcend your former bloody acts,
That, if compar'd, they only would appear
Essays of mischief.

Wol. O! repeat 'em not.

Hub. Who was the lord of house, or land, that stood
Within the prospect of your covetous eye?

Wol. You are in this to me a greater tyrant,
Than e'er I was to any.

Hub. Thus I end
The gen'ral grief—now to my private wrongs.

A I R.

A I R.

The pride of every sense,
 My heart's fond joy and boast,
 Your cruel deeds have frightened hence,
 And all my hopes are lost ;
 My restless footsteps long to stray,
 Where sad she takes her lonely way.

Wol. Oh ! Hubert, these your words and reasons,
 have

As well drawn tears of blood from my griev'd heart,
 As these drops from my eyes ; can you think
 Where any of the proscrib'd lords are hid ?
 Where Gerard is, or your lost love, or Florez ?
 Whom in his infancy——

Hub. You stole ; and since
 Have kept conceal'd, the better to maintain
 Your usurpation of his seat.

Wol. By Heaven,
 I stole him not, nor know I where he is,
 Nor if he lives. Soon after my return
 From Brabant, whither I was sent to treat
 About a future match with our prince, Florez,
 And their young heiress, Berrha, (*whose feign'd loss*

since
The crafty Brabander made his pretence
For the ensuing war, thereby to lay
An unjust gripe on Flander's earldom) he,
 Florez, our prince, was missing, and remains
 Unheard of to this hour : if you can find him,
 I will resign the earldom.

Hub. Do not abuse
 My aptness to believe.

Wol. Suspect not you
 A faith, that's built upon so true a sorrow ;
 Make your own terms, ask for them all the ties
 Humanity can give : Hempkirke too shall
 Along with you to this so wish'd discovery,

4 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

And, in my name, confirm all that you promise.
I have of late receiv'd intelligence,
That some of them are in, or about Bruges,
To be found out—which I did then interpret
The cause of that town's standing out against me ;
But now am glad, it may direct your purpose,
Of giving them their safety, me my peace.

Hub. Be constant to this goodness, peace is yours.

Wol. Distrust me not, till you have well built cause,
And may your search be prosp'rous. Farewel, Hubert !

[*Exit.*

Hub. Yes, Bruges, yes, within thy hostile walls,
Fearless I'll venture for so good an end :
Could I but find our much-wrong'd banish'd nobles,
Or trace the lonely haunt where my lost love,
My Jaculin, laments her alter'd fortunes,
What happiness ! what glory !

A I R.

God of love, and youthful play,
Whither does my charmer stray ?
Oh ! direct my devious feet,
Where the wand'rer I may meet !
Spread thy wings, kind deity,
Say her constant swain is nigh ;
Whisper in her trembling ear,
Soft relief and joy is near ;
In her bosom, Oh ! inspire
Fond emotion, chaste desire ;
I'll thy truest vot'ry prove,
And pay thee with a life of love,

[*Exit.*

S C E N E II. BRUGES.

Enter three MERCHANTS.

1st. Mer. 'Tis much that you deliver of this Harrol.

2d. Mer. But short of what I could ; believe me, sir,
He bears himself with such a confidence,

As

As if he were the master of the sea ;
 And not a wind upon the sailor's compass,
 But, from one part or other, were his factor,
 To bring him in the best commodities,
 Merchant e'er ventur'd for.

3d. Mer. This, and his merits,
 Make many venturers with him, in their wishes
 For his prosperity and fame. Yet more—
 Is there a virgin of good fame wants dow'r ?
 He is a father to her—or a soldier,
 Who, in his country's service, from the wars,
 Hath brought home only scars and want ? his house
 Receives him and relieves him. Never doubt,
 He is your man, and ours.

1st. Mer. I only wish
 His too great forwardness t' embrace all bargains,
 Sink him not in the end.

2d. Mer. Have better hopes ;
 For my part, I am confident—he's here.

Enter HARROL and fourth MERCHANT.

Har. At your own rates, I take your wine of Cyprus ;
 But for your candy sugars, they have met
 With such foul weather, and are priz'd so high,
 I cannot fave in them.

4th. Mer. I am unwilling
 To seek another chapman : make me offer
 Of something near the price, that may assure me
 You can deal for them.

Har. I both can, and will,
 But not with too much loss—your bill of lading
 Speaks of two hundred chests, valu'd by you
 At thirty thousand guilders—I will have them
 At twenty-eight ; so in the payment of
 Three thousand sterling, you fall only in
 Two hundred pounds.

4th. Mer. You know they are so cheap—

Har.

6 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Har. Why, look you, I'll deal fairly; there is in
prison,
And at your suit, a pirate, but unable
To make you satisfaction, and past hope
To live a week, if you should prosecute
What you can prove against him: set him free,
And you shall have your money to a stiver,
And present payment.

4th. Mer. This is above wonder,
A merchant of your rank, who have at sea
So many bottoms in the danger of
These water-thieves, should be a means to save 'em,
And stay the course of justice!

Har. You mistake me,
If you think I would cherish, in this captain,
The wrong he did to you, or any man:
But I was lately with him (being assur'd
A braver fellow never put from shore)
And read his letters of mart from this state granted,
For the recovery of such losses, as
He had sustain'd in Spain; 'twas that he aim'd at,
Not at three tons of wine, bisket, or beef,
Which his necessity made him take from you:
If he had pillag'd you, or sunk your ship,
Or thrown the men o'erboard, he then deserv'd
The law's extremest rigour: doing this,
Set your own price; save him, the goods are mine:
If not, seek elsewhere; I'll not deal for them.

4th. Mer. Well, sir, for your love, I will once be
led

To change my purpose.

Har. For your profit rather. [*Exit 4th.*

2d. Mer. What do you think of this? [*Merch.*

1st. Mer. As of a deed of noble pity, guided
By a strong judgment.

2d. Mer. Save you, master Harrol!

Harrol. Good day to all!

2d. Mer. We bring you the refusal
Of more commodities.

Har.

A COMIC OPERA.

7

Har. Are you the owners
O' th' ship, that last night put into the harbour?

1st. Mer. Both of the ship and lading.

Har. What's the freight?

1st. Mer. Fine linens, cochineal, choïce china stuffs.

Har. Rich lading.

For which I were your chapman, but I am
Already out of cash.

1st. Mer. I'll give you time
For the moiety of all.

Har. How long?

1st. Mer. Six months.

Har. 'Tis a fair offer, which, if we agree
About the prices, I with thanks accept,
And will make present payment of the rest.
Some two hours hence, I'll come aboard.

1st. Mer. The gunner shall speak you welcome.

[*Exeunt Merchants.*]

Har. Heaven grant my ships a safe return, before
The day of this great payment! as they are
Expected three months sooner, and my credit
Stands good with all the world.

Enter CLAUSE.

Clause. Bless my good master!
The prayers of your poor beadsman ever shall
Be sent up for you.

Har. God a' mercy, Clause!
There's something to put thee in mind hereafter
To think of me.

Clause. May he, that gave it you,
Reward you for it with increase, good master!
These seven years I have fed upon your bounties,
And by the fire of your blest charity warm'd me;
And yet, good master, pardon me, that must,
Tho' I have now receiv'd your alms, presume
To make one suit more to you.

Har. What is't Clause?

1

Clause.

8 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Clause. 'Tis not for money,
Nor cloaths, good master; but your good word for me.

Har. That thou shalt have, *Clause*, for I think thee
honest.

Clause. Some half hour hence then, master, take
the trouble

Of walking unto Beggar's Bush; and there,
As you will see me among others, brethren
In my affliction, when you are demanded
Which you like best among us, point out me;
And then pass on, and notice me no farther.

Har. But what will that advantage thee?

Clause. Oh! much sir,
'Twill give me a pre-eminence of the rest,
Make me a king among 'em; and protect me
From all abuse, such as are stronger, might
Offer my age.

Har. Troth, thou mak'st me wonder:
Have you a king and commonwealth among ye?

Clause. We have—and there are states are govern'd
worse.

Har. Ambition among beggars!

Clause. Many great ones
Would part with half their fortunes for the place,
And credit, to beg in the first file, master.
But shall I be so far bound for your furtherance
In my petition?

Har. That thou shalt not miss of,
Nor any worldly care make me forget it.
I will be quickly there.

Clause. Heaven bless my master! [*Exit.*]

Har. This old man's prayers are daily blessings to
me;
Would but the elements obey his breath,
My wishes were compleat.

A COMIC OPERA.

9

A I R.

Hope! to me thine aid extend,
Sweet companion, welcome friend!
Whether thro' the dungeon's gloom,
 Darting kind thy piercing ray;
Or, glitt'ring proudly on the warrior's plume,
 Thou point'ft to glorious victory the way;
Or, all within the lonely grove,
Cheer'ft the wild complaint of love;
Bright sun of life, before thee fly
The clouds of doubt and misery,
And pleasure dawns when thou art nigh.
To me, to me, thine aid extend,
Sweet companion, welcome friend!

}
[Exit.

S C E N E III.

The Wood and Bush.

Enter CLAUSE, PRIG, HIGGEN, FERRET, SNAP,
GINKS, JACULIN, and other Beggars.

Hig. Come, princes of the ragged regiment,
You of the blood, Prig, my most upright lord,
And these, what name or title e'er they bear,
Behave with order, and due loyalty,
On this important day, when Beggar's Bush,
Our ancient kingly seat, must be supply'd.

Prig. Ere we begin our customary forms,
Let a centinel be set out.

Snap. The word.

Prig. A cove comes, and fumbumbis. [Exit Snap.

Fer. Well, pray, my masters all, Ferret be chosen;
You're like to have a kind mild prince of me.

Prig. A very tyrant, I, an errant tyrant,
If e'er I come to reign; therefore look to't.

B

A I R.

A I R.

Except you provide me with capons enough,
Green geese, tender ducklings, and such kind of
stuff;

Except on my table fat chickens appear,
With pheasant and partridge the best of the year;
Close I'll watch when night does fall,
Wherever ye lig,
Ye'll be found by prince Prig,
And in your own straw will I smother ye all.

Except of good booze too, full jugs ye afford,
And fruits of each season, in plenty ye hoard,
Your eyes, and false tongues, legs and bellies I'll
seize,
Take all your trim doxies, and kifs which I please,
Close I'll watch, &c.

Enter SNAP.

Snap. A cove comes—fumbumbis!

Enter HUBERT and HEMSKIRKE.

Prig. To your postures—arm.

Hub. Yonder's the town, I see it.

Hig. Bless your good worships!

Fer. One small piece of money!

Prig. Among us all poor wretches!

Claufe. Blind and lame!

Prig. Deaf and dumb!

Hub. There's among ye all.

Fer, &c. Heaven reward you!

Hub. Do I see right, or does my fancy cheat me?
Sure 'tis her face—come hither, pretty maid.

Jac. What, have you
Bells for my squirrel? I ha' given Bun meat—
You do not love me, do you? Catch me that butterfly,
And I'll love you. Oh, can you keep a secret?
You look as if you could, I'll tell you—hush.—

A COMIC OPERA. II

A I R.

The live-long day forlorn I go,
My heart is compass'd round with woe,
 With woe—ah! well-a-day!
The cause you hear in ev'ry sigh,
You see it wrote within mine eye,
 'Tis love—ah! well-a-day!

Hub. For whom, dear maid?—her every feature!—
 tell me.

Jac. No, 'tis no matter; I can smile it off.

A I R.

Behold the sweetly-wanton spring?
 In ev'ry bush I spy it peering,
Hark! the feather'd warblers sing!
 With carrols wild my spirit cheering!
The lark swells high his raptur'd throat;
The linnet pours his melting note;
None, none so weak, but may impart
Soft pleasure to a simple heart. [Retires.]

Hub. Her voice too says the same; but, for my life,
I would not that her manners were so chang'd:
Hear me, thou honest fellow, what's this maiden,
Who lives among ye here?

Prig. Ao—ao—ao.

Hub. How! nothing but signs?

Prig. Ao—ao—ao.

Hub. This is strange;

I would fain have it her, but not her thus.

Hig. He's de-de-deaf, and du du-dumb, sir.

Hub. 'Slife, they all spoke plain enough, methought
 e'en now.

Dost know this maid?

12 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Hig. She was born at the ba-ba-barn yonder,
By Be-Be-Beggar's Bu-Bu-Bush; her name is
Ma-Ma-Madge; so was her mo-mother's too.

Hub. I understand no word he says—how long
Has she been here?

Hig. Lo-long enough to have got a hu-hu-husband,
And she had go-go-good lu-lu-luck. [*Beggars retire.*]

Hub. I must be better inform'd, than by these means:
Here was another face too, that I mark'd,
That of the old man; but they are vanish'd all
Most suddenly—I will come here again. [*Aside.*]
Protect us our disguise now! Pr'ythee, Hempkirke,
If we be taken, how dost thou imagine
This town will deal with us, which hath so long
Stood out 'gainst Wolfort?

Hem. E'en to hang us forth
Upon their walls, a' sunning, to make crow's meat.
If I were not assur'd o' th' burgo-master,
And had a fair excuse to see a niece there,
I should scarce venture.

Hub. Come, 'tis now too late
To look back at the ports; good luck, and enter.
[*Exeunt.*]

Beggars advance.

Prig. A peery dog, I'll warrant him.

Fer. What could his questions mean?

Claufe. I know not—yet 'twas time to fly—he grew
Too close in his inquiries.

Prig. And disturb'd
Our noble ceremonies—shall we renew 'em?

Hig. Unquestionably, brother.—Snap—

Snap. I'm gone. [*Exit Snap.*]

Hig. All now stand fair, and put yourselves in rank,
That the first single comer, at first view,
May make his choice, who shall inherit this,
Our vacant throne.

Prig. 'Tis done, Lord Higgen.

Hig. Thanks! and here a judge comes—cry a judge.

All. A judge, a judge!

Enter HARROL.

Har. What ail ye, firs, what means this outcry?

Hig. Master,

A sort of poor souls met, Heaven's fools, good fir;
Have had some little variance 'mong ourselves
Which may be honestest of us, and who lives
Uprightest in his calling:—now, as we thought
We ne'er should 'gree on't 'mong ourselves, (for truly,
'Tis hard to say) we all resolv'd to put it
To him, that should come next, and that's your master-
ship.

Which does your worship think is he? Good fir,
Look o'er us all, and tell us.

Har. I should judge this the man, with the grave
beard—

Clause. Bless you, good master, bless you!

Har. If he be not,
I would he were! There's something too among ye,
To keep ye honest. [Exit.

All. Now good reward you!

Hig. What is it? see; Snap has got it.

Snap. A good crown, marry.

Prig. A crown of gold—

Fer. For our new king, good luck!

Ginks. To the common treasury with it; if it be
gold,

Thither it must.

Hig. Spoke like a patriot, Ginks.

King Clause, I bid Heaven save thee first, king Clause.
When last in conference at the bouzing ken,
The other day, we fate about our dead king,
Of famous memory, (rest go with his rags!)
And that I saw thee at the table's end
Rise swol'n with rage, and, leaning on one crutch,
Lift t'other, like a sceptre, at my head,
I then presag'd thou shortly would'st be king,
And now thou art so; but what need presage

To

14 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

To us, who might have read it in thy beard,
As well as he that chose thee? by that beard
Thou wert found out, and mark'd for sov'reignty.

A I R.

O happy beard of happier king!
In whose behalf our shouts shall ring
Around the throne of Beggar's Bush.
That beard, O! may it still be fair,
As full of wisdom, as of hair,
That all who dwell beneath its shade,
May every year more bless'd be made,
And praise the king of Beggar's Bush!

That comely beard, O! may it grow,
While meads look green, or rivers flow,
The pride and grace of Beggar's Bush!
Thus bound by love to good king Clause,
We'll guard his state, obey his laws;
Nor once repine, or care a souse,
For rich array, or stately house,
While happy here at Beggar's Bush.

Prig. And if the beard be such, what is the prince
That owns the beard? the father? no: the grandfather?
Nay, the great-grandfather of you his people.
He will not take away your hens, or bacon,
When you've ventur'd hard for't; nor force from you
The fattest of your puddings.

Hig. A song to crown him, Prig, th' accustom'd song.
His majesty is seated.

A I R

A I R *and* C H O R U S.

Prig. At the crowning our king,
We all revel and sing,
For with pleasure our duty we pay ;
We give him three cheers,
Till we rattle his ears,
'Tis huzza ! and huzza ! and huzza !

His sceptre's a crutch,
Which with rev'ence we touch,
And we swear to be true to his throne ;
In recompense, he
Takes an oath to be free,
And our liberties guards as his own.

If peace with her smile,
Scatters blifs thro' the isle,
Or war fills the nation with riot ;
Our kingdom is safe,
Still we drink and we laugh,
And lye down with our doxies in quiet,

If houses are 'sest,
Land with taxes opprest,
Unto us no such troubles belong ;
With a bush we're content,
And we pay our quit-rent,
Like the birds of the air, with a song.
At the crowning, &c.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

SCENE

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

VANDUNK's House.

VANDUNK, HUBERT, HEMPSKIRKE, and MARGARET.

Van. Captain, you're welcome: so is this your friend,
Most safely welcome; tho' our town stand out
Against your master, you shall find good quarter;
Truth is, we love him not. Margaret, some wine.
[Exit Margaret.]

Let's talk a little treason, if we can
Talk treason 'gainst the traitors—by your leaves,
We, here in Bruges, think he does usurp,
And therefore I'm bold with him.

Hub. Sir, your boldness
Haply becomes your mouth, but not our ears,
While we're his servants; and, as we came here,
Not to ask questions, as spies upon your strength,
So let's intreat we may receive from you
Nothing, in passage, or discourse, but what
We may with gladness, and our honesties, hear,
And that shall seal our welcome.

Van. Good—let's drink then.
You see I keep my old pearl still, captain.

Hemp. Old jewels commend their keeper, sir,

Van. Here's to you with a heart, my captain's friend,
With a good heart; and, if this make us speak
Bold words anon, 'tis all under the rose,
Forgotten—drown all memory when we drink.

A I R.

A I R.

If a word, or a joke,
Too freely be spoke,
While the bosom is open and gay,
Let it ne'er give offence,
To the ear, or the sense,
Take a bumper, and wash it away.

Let no jealous sneer,
Mean scruple, or fear,
The bold face of pleasure dismay;
Why, why should we bear
A moment of care,
When a bumper can wash it away?

Hub. 'Tis freely spoken, noble burgomaster,
I'll do you right.

Hemp. Nay, sir, Mynheer Vandunk
Is a true statesman.

Van. Fill my captain's cup there; O! that your
master
Had been an honest man!

Hub. Sir!

Van. Under the rose.

Hemp. And how does my niece?
Almost a woman, I guess— This friend of mine
I drew along with me, thro' so much hazard,
Only to see her—she was my errand here.

Van. Ay, a kind uncle you are, (fill him his glass)
That in so many years could not find leisure—

Hemp. So many, sir! what mean you?

Van. Seventeen.

Hemp. No, not so much.

Van. I'll bate you ne'er an ace on't;
'Twas ere the Brabander began his war
For moonshine in the water, there, his daughter,
Who ne'er was lost—yet you could not find time
To see a kinswoman; but she is worth seeing, sir,

C

Now

18 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Now you are come. You ask if she's a woman—
She is a woman, fir—Fetch her forth, Margaret—

[Exit. Margaret.]

And a fine woman, and has suitors—

Hemp.

How!

What suitors are they?

Van.

Batchelors, young burghers;
And one, a gallant; the young prince of merchants
We call him here in Bruges.

Hemp.

How! a merchant!
I thought, Vandunk, you'd understood me better,
And my niece too, so trusted to you by me,
Than to admit of such in name of suitors.

Van. Such! he is such a such, as, were she mine,
I'd give him thirty thousand crowns with her.

Hemp. But the same things, fir, fit not you and me.

[Exit.]

Van. Why give's some wine then; that will fit us all.

A I R.

What can our wisest heads provide
For the child we doat on nearly,
But a merry soul, and an honest heart,
In a lad who loves her dearly?
Who with kisses and chat, and all, all that,
Will sooth her late and early?
If the truth she'll tell, when she knows him well,
She'll swear she loves him dearly.

With the wretch estrang'd to social joys
Old time may loiter queerly,
Unable woman's worth to prize,
He ne'er can love her dearly:
But, what is't makes the flight he takes
By us felt most severely,
And life too short for play and sport?—
The girl we doat on dearly.

Here's

Here's to you again, my captain's worthy friend,
And still, would Wolfort were an honest man!
Under the rose I speak it—this I'm sure of,
Your master is a traitor, and usurps
The earldom from a better man.

Hub. Ay, marry,
Where is that man?

Van. Nay, soft, an I could tell you,
'Tis ten to one, I would not—here's my hand—
I love not Wolfort; fit you still with that.—
Here comes my captain again, and his fine niece;
And there's my merchant—view him well; that's he.

Enter HEMPSKIRKE, GERTRUDE, and HARROL.

Hemp. You must not only know me for your uncle
Now, but obey me; you go cast yourself
Away upon a dunghill here! a merchant!
A petty fellow! one, who makes his trade
With oaths and perjuries!

Har. What's that you say, fir?
If it be me you speak of, as your eye
Seems to direct, I wish you would speak to me.

Hemp. Sir, I do say, she is no merchandize;
Her rates, be sure, are more than you are worth.

Har. You do not know, fir, what a gentleman's
worth,
Nor can you value him.

Hemp. A gentleman!
What, of the woolpack, or the sugar-chest,
Or lists of velvet? which is't, pound, or yard,
You vend your gentry by?

Hub. Oh! Hempkirke, fye!

Har. Alas, how much I pity
So poor an argument! Do not you, the lord
Of land, if you be one, sell the grass,
The corn, the straw, the milk, the cheese——

Van. And butter;——
Remember butter, do not leave out butter.

20 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Hemp. You now grow faucy.

Har. Sir, I have been ever
Bred with my honest freedom, and must use it.

Hem. Do you hear?—no more.

Har. This little, fir, I pray you,
Y' appear the uncle, fir, to her, I love
More than my eyes; and I have heard your scorns
With so much indignation, and contempt,
As each strives which is greater; but, believe me,
I sucked not in this patience with my milk.
A good man bears a contumely worse,
Than he wou'd bear an injury—Proceed not
To my offence. I wou'd approach your niece
With all respect due to herself and you.

Hem. Away, companion! handling her! Take that,

Har. Nay, I do love no blows, fir—there's the
exchange. [fight.]

Ger. Oh! help my Harrol!

Van. No, my life for him!
[Harrol disarms Hemp,

Har. Not hand her! yes fir,—
And clasp her, and embrace her; and, wou'd she
Go with me now, bear her thro' all her race,
Tho' they stood a wall of cannon;—kiss me, my
Gertrude;
Nay do not tremble.

Van. Kiss him, girl, I bid you;
My Merchant Royal! fear no uncles—hang 'em—
Hang up all uncles—are we not in Bruges?
Under the rose here?

Har. Thus encircled, love,
Thou art as safe, as in a tower of brass.
Let such as do wrong, fear it.

Van. Ay, that's good—
Let Wolfort look to that!

Har. Sir, here she stands,
Your niece, and my belov'd; one of these titles
She must apply to; if unto the last,
Not all the anger, can be sent unto her
In frown, or voice, or other act, shall force her,
Tho'

Tho' Hercules had a hand in't. Come, my joy,
Say that thou lov'st me.

Van. Do, and I'll drink to it.

Har. Pr'ythee, speak,
Say thou art mine love, and defy false shame.

Ger. Do not you play the tyrant sweet!—why
need you?

A I R.

The blush, that glows upon my cheeks,
The conscious eye, that truly speaks,
The sigh, that vainly wou'd conceal
What grateful impulse bids me feel,
Do they not all conspire to tell
What faithful Harrol knows too well?

The tongue, by thousand various ways,
May wind thro' art's delusive maze,
The lover's honest joys deceive,
When swelling hopes his bosom heave;
But blushes, sighs, and looks impart
The genuine meaning of the heart,

Hem. I thank you, niece.

Har. Sir, thank her for your life,
And fetch your sword within. [*Exeunt Har. and Ger.*]

Hub. A brave clear spirit!
Hempskirke, you were to blame; what meant you,
pr'ythee,

To scorn him so?

Hemp. 'Tis done; now, ask no farther. [*Exit.*]

Hub. Well, I must to the woods, for nothing here
Shall I trace out; there I may chance to learn
Somewhat to satisfy my keen enquiries.

How now, brave burgomaster? how is't with thee?

Van. I love no Wolforts, and my name's Vandunke,

Hub. Vandrunke, 'tis rather—come, go sleep within.

Van.

22 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Van. Earl Florez is right heir, and yon foul Wolf-
fort—

Under the rose I speak it—

Hub. Very hardly.

Van. Usurps, and is a rank traitor, as e'er breath'd.
Shall he rule honest fellows, such as we?

D U E T.

Van. No pain, or disaster, shall make me say master
To Wolfort—

Hub. Peace, peace man!

Van. It goes against the grain;
And, sooner than do't—

Hub. Till sober be mute—

Van. I'll never more utter a syllable plain.

But while I can speak, or another glass take,
I'll drink to the downfall of his usurpation,
And pledge the dear man, that seconds my plan,
Till we've not left a drop of good wine in the
nation.

Hub. Pry'thee tumble to bed, let sleep cool thy head,
There quench, for to night, the remem-
brance of sorrow;
My hand on't, my boy, that I wake thee to joy,
To an ocean of transport, and liquor, to-
morrow.

Van. No, I'll not go to bed, nor in sleep lay my head;
In liquor, and mirth, will I bury my sorrow;
To night, silly boy, will I trust for my joy,
For none but a blockhead depends on to-
morrow. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

S C E N E II.

*An Alehouse.**Several BOORS discovered.*

1st. Boor. Come, English beer, hostess! English
beer
By the barrel! hostess.

Enter PRIG and HIGGEN disguised.

Prig. Will you see any feats of activity? some
Slight of hand? legerdemain? hey! pass!
Presto, begone there!

2d. Boor. Sit down, juggler.

Prig. Look you, my honest friends, you see my
Hands—plain dealing is no devil—lend
Me some money—twelve pence a piece will serve.

All. There, there.

Prig. I thank ye, thank ye heartily: when shall I
pay you?

Boors. Ha, ha, ha! by the mass, this was a fine
trick.

Hig. This was a rare trick.

1st. Boor. But 'twould be a far rarer to restore our
Money.

Prig. That's easily done. I know a trick worth
Two of that.

2d. Boor. Ay! let us see it.

Prig. You shall.

You see this cup; 'tis full; now what
Will you say, if I bring this liquor
Under my hat?

1st. Boor. That would be a trick.

Prig.

24 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Prig. I'll do't. [*Drinks the beer, then puts his hat on*

1st. Boor. But where's the beer? [*his head:*

Prig. Under my hat.

All Boors. By this light, so it is, ha, ha, ha!

Enter CLAUSE and a BOY, with Brandy.

Boy. Buy any brandy? any brandy?

1st. Boor. Come, fill, fill, fill—let's see—what's this?

Boy. A penny.

1st. Boor. Fill, fill till it be sixpence.

Prig. Well done, my masters, drink away.

Will you have a song?

1st. Boor. Ay, good juggler.

A I R.

Prig. All neighbours, I pray, to my ditty attend,
On words and fair looks who are apt to depend;
To yourselves you must trust fortune's favour to
keep,
For the promise of friends is a game at bo-peep.

When dangling whole days for a sight of his grace,
To challenge a debt, or solicit a place;
Every morning you're told the reward you shall
reap,
While his honour (Lord love him!) is playing
bo-peep.

The maiden of fifty, at church you may spy,
How she screws up her muscles, and casts down
her eye;
Tho' her thoughts on devotion seem ever so deep,
'Tween the sticks of her fan she is playing bo-peep.

The rake prone to promise, to swear, and to lie;
 The prude, who at he-things is ready to die;
 The coquette, who no humour a moment will
 keep,
 Tho' diff'ring in manner, all play at bo-peep.

Then blame not my arts, nor accuse me of wrong,
 Tho' instead of your money I give you a song;
 For at least from my rhymes this instruction you
 reap,
 That the business of life is a game at bo-peep.

All Boors. Ha, ha, ha! huzza!

Enter HEMPSKIRKE.

Hemp. Good even, my honest fellows!
 You're merry here, I see.
 What hast thou, brandy?

Boy. Yes, sir.

Hemp. Fill out then, and give these honest fellows,

Boors. We thank you.

Hemp. May I speak a word in private to ye?
 I have a business for ye, honest friends,
 If ye dare lend your help, shall get ye crowns.

1st. Boor. What is't, sir?

If it be any thing to purchase money,
 Command us.

Hemp. You know the young spruce merchant here in
 Bruges.

2d. Who? master Harrol?

Clause. Ha! lead me a little nearer, boy. [*Aside.*]

Hemp. Ay, he owes me money,
 And in the town there is no stirring him.

Clause. How's this? [*Aside.*]

Hemp. Even at this hour, upon a sure appointment,
 He meets me, west o' th' town, by the chace-side,
 Under the row of oaks—you know it?

D

Boors.

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Boors. Yes, fir.

Hemp. There, if ye dare but venture,
When I shall give the word, to seize upon him,
Here's twenty pounds.

Boors. We'll do it, fir, depend on't.

Hemp. If he resist, down with him, have no mercy.

Clause. Say ye so? [*Aside.*

Hemp. To acquit you,
I have a warrant here about me.

3d. Boor. Here's our warrant—this carries fire i' th'
tail.

Hemp. Away with me then, for the time draws on.
[*Exit with boors.*

Clause. I'm blest'd to have heard this!
But I shall mar your plotting—follow, boy. [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E III.

The Chace.

Enter HARROL.

Har. This is the place his challenge call'd me to,
Nor let it at this time be deem'd unhappy—
For let me fall before my foe i' th' field,
Not at the bar before my creditors.
Those hungry wretches soon will have their wish:
No wind blows fair yet—no return of monies,
To-morrow, with the sun-set, sets my credit.
My virtuous love is lost too—all I have been,
No more hereafter to be seen than shadow,
And yet be firm, my heart.

A F R.

A I R.

Tho' round my treasur'd hopes engage,
 In madd'ning tumult, sea, and wind,
 Yet coward doubt, or dark presage,
 In vain assault my constant mind.
 Oh! aid me, Virtue, to pursue
 Thy guidance, and preserve my breast;
 To thee, to love, to glory true,
 I'll dauntless leave to fate the rest.

Enter HEMPSKIRKE.

H'as kept his word. Now, sir, your sword's tongue
 only,

Loud as you dare—all other language—

Hemp. Well, sir,

You shall not long be troubled, draw.

Har. 'Tis done, and now—

Hemp. Now!

[*Enter boors, and seize Harrol; then enter beggars, who release him, and take captive the boors, and Hemp-skirke.*]

Har. What these men are, I know not; nor for
 what cause

They thus should thrust themselves into my danger,

Can I imagine; but, kind Heaven, I thank thee;

I hope thou hast reserv'd me for an end

Fit for thy creature, worthy of thy honour.

Enter CLAUSE.

Clause. Blessings upon you, master!

Har. Thank you, leave me;

For, by my troth, I've nothing now to give thee.

Clause. Indeed, I don't ask, sir; only it grieves me

To see you look so sad—now goodness keep you

From troubles in your mind! why look you so?

D 2

Har.

28 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Har. Faith, thou must lose thy master.

Clause. I'd rather lose my life, fir : would I knew—

Har. What would the knowledge profit thee? so
miserable

Thou canst not help thyself?

Clause. You do not know, fir,
What I can do; cures for our cares sometimes
Flow whence we least expect 'em.

Har. I know thy good will;
But, farewell, Clause, and pray for thy poor master.

Clause. I cannot leave you.

Har. How!

Clause. I dare not leave you, fir; I must not leave
you;

And, till you beat me dead, I will not leave you.
By all you hold most precious, good fir, tell me
The cause of this your grief; my mind suggests,
That something's in my power may ease you of it.

Har. In thy power, honest Clause! Yet I will tell
thee:

A hundred thousand crowns, upon my credit,
Ta'en up of merchants to supply my trafficks;
The winds and weather envying my fortune,
And no return to help me off appearing—
What will betide me, think'st thou?

A I R.

How wilt thou support the fight,
When to-morrow,
Sunk in sorrow,
Robb'd of all his prospects bright,
Thou thy master shalt behold,
In a prison dark and cold?

Clause. I cannot blame your grief, fir.

Har. Now, what say'st thou?

Clause.

Clause. I say you should not shrink ; for he who gave
you

Can give you more ; his power can bring you off :
When friends and all forsake you, still he sees you.

Har. There's all my hope.

Clause. Hope still, fir—are you ty'd
Within the compass of a day, good master,
To pay this mass of money ?

Har. Even to-morrow.

Clause. Will no less serve ?

Har. What if it would ?

Clause. Your patience !

I do not ask to mock you ; 'tis a great sum ;
A sum for mighty men to start and pause at,
But not for honest—have you no friends left,
None, who have felt your bounty, worth this duty ?

Har. Duty ! they know it not.

Clause. It is a duty,
And as a duty from those men you've succour'd,
Should be return'd again. I have gain'd by you
A daily alms, these seven years shower'd upon me.
Will half supply your want ?

Har. Oh ! that I had it ! yet why dost thou fool me ?
Canst thou work miracles ?

Clause. To save my master,
I can work this. Pull up your spirit, fir,
Your good, your honest, and your noble spirit ;
For if the fortunes of ten thousand people
Can save you, rest assured : you have forgot
The good you did me in the power you gave me ;
Now shall you know the king of beggar's treasure ;
And let the winds blow as they list, the seas roar,
Within an hour, here shall you find your harbour.
The joy of giving, my thrice gracious master,
In all its nicest sense you've oft explor'd :
But say, what think you, is his joy, whose power
And will unite to raise his benefactor,
Should rude misfortune sink him ?

Har. The supreme
Of earthly happiness.

Clause.

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Clause. Enough.
Ere night descend, that happiness shall be mine ;
So pass in peace, my best, my worthiest master.
[*Exit Clause.*]

Har. Honest creature !
Such virtuous transport is the goodly charter,
The native and peculiar heritage
Of human race, born, fashion'd to receive,
And to repay by feelings so refin'd ;
'Tis more, far more, than language can express,
Yet all creation speaks it.

A I R.

Go traverse the field and the grove,
Examine the grain and the flower,
How nourish'd and cheer'd by the dew !
How beautiful after a shower !

To the power who gave them to shine,
Ah ! tell me, what seem they to say ?
We flourish in duty to you,
That you may approve us are gay.

We teem with increase and delight,
To honour the source of our birth ;
For this are we rich in the gale,
For this are we proud on the earth,

Of their treasure, so free, so diffuse,
Sweet emblems ! how well they impart
The fullness of pleasure and pride,
When gratitude springs in the heart ! [*Exit.*]

SCENE

S C E N E IV.

The Wood and Bush.

Enter HUBERT, in a HUNTSMAN'S Dress.

Hub. Thus have I stol'n away diguis'd from
 Hempkirke,
 To found these people, for my heart yet tells me
 Some of these beggars are the men I look for.
 Thus sure they cannot know me or suspect me;
 This is the wood they live in, where, till Fortune
 Crown me with that I seek, I'll dwell among them.—
 They come—I'll couch awhile, and mark my time.
 [Retires.]

Enter BEGGARS and BOORS.

Prig. Come bring 'em out—That ye are rogues
 I take it is confes'd.

Boors. We are rogues, fir.

Prig. And why did ye this upon the proper person
 Of our good master? Were ye drunk, when ye
 Did it?

Boors. Yes indeed were we.

Prig. Ye shall be beaten sober.

Hig. Has not the gentleman (pray mark this point
 Brother Prig) that noble gentleman reliev'd ye
 Often, found ye means to live by, employing
 Some at sea, some here, some there, according
 To your callings?

Boors. 'Tis most true, fir.

Hig. And as ye are true rascals, tell me but
 This—Have ye not been drunk often at
 His charge?

Boors.

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Boors. Often, often.

Hig. There's the point: then, they have cast themselves

Brother Prig.

Prig. A shrewd point, brother! Can ye do these things, ye most abominable rascals, ye turnip-eating knaves?

Boors. We are truly sorry.

Prig. Knock at your hard hearts, rogues, and presently give us a sign you feel compunction. Now hear your sentence.

A I R.

In revenge of this deed
This award is decreed,
That each villain shall punish his brother;
With a smack and a thwack
Upon sides, head, and back,
Fall aboard, fall aboard one another.
[*Boors beat off each other.*]

During it, enter Clause.

Clause. So, so, I see the punishment you've laid
Upon your prisoner-rogues—'twas well conducted.
What of the gentleman, the rascal gentleman,
Who set 'em on?

Prig. We have him close confin'd, sir; and in this
Paper, which we found upon him, you may,
So please you, sound the bottom of their knavery.

Clause. But soft—who have we here?

Enter HUBERT.

Hub. Good even, my honest friends!

Clause. Good even, good fellow!

Hub. May a poor huntsman, with a merry heart,
Get leave to live among ye? true as steel, boys,
That

That knows all chaces, and can watch all hours;
 And with my quarter-staff, if the devil say, stand,
 Deal such an alms, shall make him roar again.
 Rouze you the lofty stag, and, with my bell-horn,
 Ring him a knell, that all the woods shall mourn him.

A I R.

I rouze the game with hound and horn,
 With chearful cries I wake the morn,
 That rising with her rosy face,
 Enjoys the glory of the chace.
 See! the swift stag flies o'er the ground,
 And hills, and dales, and woods resound;
 While health and joy lead on the train,
 Provoke the chace, and scour the plain,
 And join the jovial huntsman's cries,
 Till the stout prey, o'ertaken, dies.

Clause. A goodly fellow; if we take thee to us,
 Into our clan, dar'st thou be true to us?

Prig. Ay, and obedient too?

Hub. As you had bred me.

Clause. Answer me this.

As earnest of thy faith and resolution,
 Wilt thou undertake to keep a rascal prisoner?
 One who basely contriv'd to undermine
 A noble life, dear to the state and us?

Hub. I can, and will, fir.

Prig. What learn you of him, fir?

Clause. This paper says his name is Hempkirke,
 A follower of earl Wolfort's—

Hub. Hempkirke—a villain! *[Aside.*

Clause. Sent a spy-knave, to find out certain gentlemen;

Whom, should he find, if failing by persuasion
 To bring 'em back, by poison to dispatch 'em.

E

Hub.

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Hub. Indeed ! [*Aside.*

Clause. One Hubert too is join'd in the design ;
But for an honest end, so it appears,
Whom, when he has done his service, Hempkirke here
Is charg'd to kill, for he is set down dangerous.
Would I might see that Hubert ! [*Aside.*

Hub. Treacherous rascal ! [*Aside.*
Sir, let me have him, venture, sir, to trust me ;
For I have kept wild dogs, and beasts for wonder,
And made 'em tame too—give into my custody
This crafty villain, I shall hamper him—
O ! he smells rank o' th' rascal !

Clause. You shall have him.
But if he 'scape——

Hub. Hang me, sir, in his stead !

Clause. 'Tis well ; we take you to our favour : first,
According to your antient forms, enlist him
Into your brotherhood—and then proceed we
Unanimous to business.

A I R. T R I O.

Prig. Yet ere you're admitted to live as we,
Answer us bold twice questions three.

Hub. Expound to me speedily what they are,
Then hear me my answer with truth declare.

Prig. First, can you steal well ?

Hub. Featly, featly !

Hig. Ven'son, and dress it ?

Hub. Neatly, neatly !

Prig. Eat it when done so ?

Hub. Sweetly, sweetly !

Hig. } The answer is honest, bold and fair,
Prig. } So bow to the king, for his subject you are.

Hig.

Hig. Next, can you drink well?
Hub. Guggly, guggly!
Prig. Treat a fair wench well?
Hub. Smugly, smugly!
Hig. Kifs her on straw too?
Hub. Snugly, snugly!

Prig. } The answer is honest, bold, and fair,
Hig. } So bow to the king, for his subject you are.

All Beg. Your answers are honest, bold, and fair,
 So frolick with us, for our brother you are.
 [Exeunt.]

S C E N E V.

Changes to the Town.

Enter HARROL and four MERCHANTS.

Har. Why, firs, 'tis but a week more I intreat,
 But seven short days—I am not running from ye,
 Nor, if ye give me patience, is it possible
 All my adventures fail; you have ships abroad
 Endure the beating both of wind and weather.
 I'm sure 'twould vex your hearts to be protested,
 Y'are all fair merchants—

1st. Mer. Yes, and must have fair play,
 There is no living here else—one hour's failing,
 Fails us of all our friends.

Har. No mercy in you!
2d. Mer. 'Tis foolish to depend on other's mercy—
 You have liv'd here in lord-like prodigality,
 And now you find what 'tis: the liberal spending
 The summer of your youth, which you should glean in,
 Hath brought this bitter stormy winter on you,
 And now you cry, Alas!

E 2

3d. Mer.

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3d. Mer. Before your poverty,
We were no men, of no esteem, no credit;
You stood alone; took up all trade; all business—
Lord, how the world's chang'd with you! now I hope
We shall have sea-room.

Har. Is my misery
Become my scorn too? have ye no humanity?
No part of men left? and are all my bounties
To you and to the town, turn'd to reproaches?

4th. Mer. Well, get your monies ready—you've but
few hours;
We shall protest you else, and suddenly.

Har. But two days!

1st. Mer. Not an hour—you know the hazard.

[*Exeunt Merchants.*]

Har. Why then if I must fall—yet can it be?
Will even the elements conspire against me,
To the destruction of my promis'd fortunes,
My ev'ry hope at once?

A I R.

Oh! could'st thou know, inconstant wind,
What I to thee confide,
That wealth, and love, and life combin'd,
All on thy pinions ride;
Thou surely would'st auspicious prove,
Auspicious to my truth and love.

Ye seas, I trust your wide-stretch'd arms,
And ransack India's mine,
For her alone, whose polish'd charms
Can give those gems to shine:
Gently then, ah! gently move,
And waft me wealth, and life, and love.

Enter

Enter CLAUSE.

Clause. Good fortune, master!

Har. Thou mistak'st me, Clause—
I am not worth thy blessing.

Clause. Still a sad man!
No belief, gentle master! bring it in then,
And now believe your beadsman.

Enter two Porters with bags.

Har. Is this certain?
Or dost thou work upon my troubled sense?

Clau. 'Tis gold, fir—gold, good master,
Take it, and try it.

Har. Can there be yet this blessing?

Clau. Cease your wonder,
There's your full sum, an hundred thousand crowns;
So, good sweet master, now be merry; pay 'em,
Pay the poor pelting knaves, that know not goodness,
And cheer your heart up.

Har. Tell me tho', good Clause,
How cam'st thou by this mighty sum? if naughtily,
I must not take it of thee—'twill undo me.

Clau. Fear not—you have it by as honest means
As tho' your father gave it. Sir, you know not
To what a mass the little we get daily
Mounts in seven years—We beg it for Heaven's
charity,
And to the same good we are bound to render it.

Har. What great security?

Clau. Away with that fir!
Were you not more than all the men in Bruges?
And all the money, in my thoughts—

I

Har.

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Har. But, good Clause,
I may die presently.

Clau. Then this dies with you.
Pay when you list, good master, I'll no parchment;
Only this charity I shall intreat,
Leave me this ring.

Har. Alas, it is too poor, Clause.

Clau. This, and one simple boon is all I ask—
That when I shall return the ring, you then
Will grant whate'er I ask.

Har. Thus I confirm it.
And may my faith forsake me when I break it!

Clau. Away, your time draws on; take up the
money,
And follow this young gentleman.

Har. Oh Clause!—

Clau. Heaven bless, and long preserve you, my good
master!
[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E VI.

Changes to the Wood.

Enter JACULIN.

Jac. I think I cannot err, what borrow'd drefs
Can hide my Hubert from me? How I wish
Yet fear to be resolv'd—He went this way—
Shall I adventure? Oh this dread suspense,
How does it load my heart! While to the woods,
The streams, and senseless air I sigh my sorrows,
And vainly seek relief.

A I R.

The softest breeze, the water's gentlest flow,
Re-murmur sigh for sigh, and echo woe for woe.

[*Jaculin retires.*]

Enter

Enter HUBERT.

Hub. I have lock'd up Hempkirke close enough from
gadding
In an old oak, and set watch over him.
My schemes are almost ripe; dearly shall he,
And treacherous Wolfort, rue their double falshood,
If smiling fortune favours my design.
Now for my love—this wench is surely she;
If thro' her means I can but make discovery—

JACULIN advances.

She follows me—Come hither, pretty maid.

Jac. No, no, you'll kifs.

Hub. So I will.

Jac. 'Deed! la!

How will you kifs me, pray you?

Hub. Thus—soft as my love's lips.

Jac. Oh!

Hub. What's your father's name?

Jac. He's gone to Heaven.

Hub. Is it not Gerrard, sweet?

Jac. I'll stay no longer;

My mother's an old woman, and my brother
Was drown'd at sea with catching cockles.

Hub. Stay!

Jac. How my heart melts within me at his voice!
Shou'd I disclose myself? wer't best? O love! [*Aside.*]

Hub. 'Tis surely she. Pray let me touch your hand,
sweet.

Jac. No, no, you'll bite it.

Hub. Sure I should know that ring. [*Aside.*]

Jac. I had forgot my ring.

Oh Hubert! Hubert! [*Aside.*]

Hub. Methought she named me. [*Aside.*]

Do you know me, chick?

Jac.

46 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Jac. No sure, I never saw you——
 Oh! what a joy he brings me!—— [*Aside.*]
 I must be married to-morrow to a capper.
Hub. Must you, my sweet? and does the capper
 love you?
Jac. Yes, yes, he'll give me pye, and look in my
 eyes thus.
 'Tis he, 'tis my dear love—Oh happy fortune! [*Aside.*]
Hub. How fain she would conceal herself, yet cannot.
 I'll try to humour her in this her wildness. [*Aside.*]
 To make my hopes more perfect, will you love me,
 And leave that man? I'll wait you thro' the vale,
 And make you dainty nosegays.
Jac. And where will you put 'em?
Hub. Here in thy bosom, sweet, and make a crown
 Of lillies for thy head.
Jac. And will you love me? 'Deed! la!
Hub. With all my heart.
Jac. Call me to-morrow then,
 We'll have brave cheer, and go to church together.

A I R.

The Words from Shakespear's Poems.

Jac. Come live with me, and be my love,
 And we will all the pleasures prove
 That hill and valley, dale and field,
 And all the craggy mountains yield.

Hub. A belt of straw, and ivy buds,
 With coral clasps, and amber studs,
 And ev'ry flower that scents the grove
 Shall yield its sweets to deck my love.

Jac. At noontide blaze our seat shall be
 Over some river in a tree,
 Where silver sands and pebbles sing
 Eternal ditties to the spring.

Hub.

Hub. In bowers of laurel trimly dight
Will we outwear the silent night,
While Flora busy is to spread
Her richest treasure o'er our bed.

Jac. If these delights thy mind can move,
Then live with me, and be my love.

Hub. Yes, these delights my mind will move
I'll live with thee and be thy love.

Jac. Give you good even, sir,

Hub. One word more, fairest ;
Did you e'er know a maid call'd Jaculin ?

Jac. Oh, I'm discover'd ! [*Aside.*

Hub. 'Tis she—now I'm certain [*Aside.*
They are all here—Turn, turn thee, lovely maid,
Thy Hubert speaks to thee.

Jac. Alas, I fear—
Why thus disguis'd ?

Hub. For justice and for love ;
Thou must assist the means—
As we pass on, I'll tell thee all my purpose.

Jac. And may I trust thee ?

Hub. As thine own soul.

Jac. Still true ?

Hub. And will remain so,
Heaven scorn me else !

A I R and D U E T.

Jac. Long in sorrow's shade I sat,
Drooping like the chill-nipt flower,
Let not then the worm deceit,
This my new-blown hope devour.

Hub. Fear no more the wintry blast,
Bleak affliction's storm is past ;
Joy his cheering warmth displays,
Haste, and greet the welcome rays.

F

Jac.

42 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Jac. Once again in thee appears
The promise of my brighter years.

Hub. As I true and constant prove,
So may I be rich in love !

D U E T.

Jac. True and constant ever prove
So shall I be rich in love.

Hub. As I true and constant prove,
So may I be rich in love !

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

The T O W N.

Enter Harrol and Vandunk, followed by four Merchants.

1st. Mer. NAY, if 'twou'd do you courtesy—
Van. Oh, courteous gentlemen!

Har. What was't you said?

1st. Mer. If it would do you courtesy—

Har. None at all, fir;

Take it, 'tis your's, there's your ten thousand for you.
Give in my bills.

Van. You're paid I hope.

Har. Your sixteen—

3d. Mer. Nay be pleas'd, fir, to make a farther use—

Har. No.

Van. No.

3d. Mer. What I have, fir, you may command.
Pray let me be your servant.

Van. Your sycophant!—

Put on your hats.

2d. Mer. I have a freight of pepper—

Van. Rot your pepper!

Har. Away—I care not for your courtesies,
They're most untimely done, and no truth in 'em;
Shall I trust you again? There's your seven thousand.

4th. Mer. Or if you want fine sugars, 'tis but
sending—

Har. No, I can send to Barbary—those people,
Who never yet knew faith, have nobler hearts,
[Cannons go off.]

Why are those pieces?

44 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Enter a Sailor.

Sail. Health to the noble merchant !
The Sufan is return'd.

Van. Huzza !

Har. Well, failor ?

Sail. Well, and rich, fir,
And now put in.

Har. Heaven thou hast heard my prayers !

Sail. The brave Rebekah, too, bound from the
Streights,

With the next wind, is ready to put after.

Van. Mark that.

Har. What news o'th' fly boat ?

Sail. If this wind hold till midnight,
She will be here and wealthy—she's scap'd fairly.

Van. And that, ye knaves.

Har. How 'scap'd she failor ?

Sail. Thus, fir.—She had a fight,
Seven hours together, with six Turkish gallies,
And she fought bravely, but at length was boarded
And overlaid with strength ; when presently
Comes boring up the wind, captain Vannoke,
That valiant gentleman you redeemed from prison.
He knew the boat, set in, and fought it bravely,
Beat all the gallies off, sunk three, redeem'd her,
And, as a duty to you, sent her home.

Har. An honest, noble captain, and a grateful.

Van. And this is he you wou'd have hang'd,
But that it did not suit your interest.

[To the 4th merchant.]

Har. There's for thy good news, honest failor !

Van. And there---go drink the captain's health---
Drink till thou drown thyself.

Sail. I thank your bounty,
And I'll do't to a doit, fir.

[Exit Sailor.]

1st. Merch. What miracles are pour'd upon this man !

Van.

A COMIC OPERA. 45

Van. Why ay---this year, I hope, he will 'scape-
prison,
For all your cares to catch him.

2d. Mer. You may please, fir,
To think of your poor servants in displeasure,
Whose all, cash, merchandize, are at your service.

Van. Lord! how your notes are chang'd! Answer
me, knaves,
Have ye not often profited by this man, revell'd at his
expence?

1st. Mer. Sir, we confes—

Van. Do, that ye are all sad wretches.

A I R.

Now coaxing, careffing,
Now vexing, distreffing,
As Fortune delights to exalt or confound,
Her smile or her frown,
Sets you up, knocks you down,
Turning, turning, turning as her wheel goes round.

We see by this sample,
On those you would trample,
Whom fortune, hard fortune, has thrown to the
ground,
To those rais'd on high,
We fawn, flatter, and lie,
Turning, turning, turning, as her wheel goes
round. [*Exeunt Merchants.*]

Now, fir, go home with me,
For yonder's one has wept, and wail'd too long.

Har. How does she, fir?

Van. She will be better soon, I hope.

Har. Soon! When?

Van. Why when you have her in your arms, my boy;
This night she is your wife.

46 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Har. With all my soul, I take her.

Van. Thou hast been wrong'd, and no more shall my service

Wait on the knave, her uncle ; I have heard
All his baits for my boy, but thou shalt have her.
Hast thou dispatch'd thy business ?

Har. *Moff.*

Van. By the mass,

Thou tumblest now in wealth, and I joy in it.
Thou'rt the best boy that ever Bruges nurs'd :
Thou hast been sad ; I'll cheer thee up with sack,
And when thou'rt lusty, fling thee to thy mistress.
I have prepared—our friends will all be with us—
Within, my house shall smook to see our revels ;
My gardens shall, with artificial lustre,
Rival the blaze of day—and true-love garlands
Shall cluster every tree throughout the groves.

A I R.

The wanton rogue Cupid invites thee, my boy ;
He calls thee to share in his frolick and joy ;
A fly pack of archers are join'd in his play,
And they dance to the notes of his roundelay.
Of his merry, merry, &c.

Hark ! hark ! how glad echoes the carrols repeat,
How answers the turf to the bound of their feet !
Their eyes how they twinkle so roguishly gay,
And their dimples keep time to his roundelay.
To his merry, merry, &c.

O'er each mount, thro' each path, ev'ry nook of
the grove,
How they caper and scamper, conducted by love !
Thy hand, my dear boy, and I'll shew thee the
way,
For the musick of life is love's roundelay.
Love's merry, merry, &c. [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E II.

*The Wood.**Enter* CLAUSE, *meeting* HUBERT.

Hub. Old fir, you are well encountered thus alone.
Gerrard! nay, do not start nor fear me;
I know you, and he knows you that best loves you.
Hubert speaks to you, and you must be Gerrard,
The time invites you to it.

Clause. Challeng'd thus, I throw aside reserve, and
trust your honour.

I'm glad to see you, fir, and I am Gerrard;
How stand our hopes?

Hub. Fair, if you now pursue 'em—
Hempskirke I have let go—

Clause. Releas'd him!

Hub. Ay, fir,
Gull'd him and sent him home as a decoy,
To draw lord Wolfort hither, with his guards,
To seize (so he'll expect) all the old lords,
Who stood between him and a safe possession
Of Flanders' earldom—an hour hence he meets me,
West of the plain, by the broad oak; what use
I make of these proceedings for our ends,
This paper shews—a counterpart whereof
I've lodg'd in Vandunk's hands, our sworn ally.
Your comrades come—I'll fall into my duty,
And wait your answer—the secret is not yet
Ripe for their knowledge. [Retires.]

Enter

48 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Enter PRIG, HIGGEN, GINKS, SNAP, and FERRET.

Clause. Now, what's the news in town?

Ginks. No news but joy, fir.

Every man wooing of the noble merchant,
Who sends his hearty commendations to you.

Fer. Yes, this is news, this night he's to be married.

Prig. By the mass, that's true, he marries Vandunk's
daughter,

The dainty black-ey'd Dell.

Clause. Married to Vandunk's daughter!

Ginks. 'Tis very true, fir.

Hig. Oh the pies! the piping hot mince pies!

Prig. The fine fat poultry!

Hig. For one leg of a goose now, would I venture
A limb, boys! I love a fat goose as I love
Allegiance; but, hark ye, brother Prig, shall we
Do nothing in the 'foresaid wedding? there's money
To be got, and meat too, I take it.

What think you of a morris?

Clause. To Vandunk's daughter! no, he must not
marry.

Prig. A morris!—No, by no means, that goes no
farther than the street,

There leaves us; now we must think of something
That may draw us into the bowels of it, into the
Buttery, the kitchen, and the cellar—something
Which that old jolly burgomaster loves—what
Think you of a wassail?

Hig. I think worthily.

Then will I make a speech, and a brave one,
In praise of merchants.

Prig. And I'll so roar

Catches of glee, and wedding songs, the notes
Shall make the glasses totter 'gainst each other,
And gingle into chorus.

Clause. I do rejoice in it—'tis passing well. [*To Hub.*

Hub.

Hub. An hour hence—

Clause. I'll be ready.

Hub. These our comrades
I have especial need of.

Clause. They are yours.

I shall give order—hear me, all ; keep in,
Till this your huntsman call ye forth, then do
His bidding faithfully—till he appear,
No man stir hence, I charge ye.

Prig. Not to the wedding, sir ?

Clause. Not any where.

Hig. The wedding must be seen, sir ; we want meat,
We're horribly out of meat.

Clause. Not a word more—obey.

[*Exeunt Clause and Hub.*]

Prig. Nay, an there be a wedding, and we shut
out---

A I R.

O ! farewell the season'd duck,
The well-stuff'd lev'ret's smell,

Hig. The pheasant high with bacon stuck,
Plump partridge, Oh ! farewell.

Prig. Oh ! farewell the proud sirloin,
Where floods of gravy dwell ;

Hig. The turkey fair, the fav'ry chine,
I bid ye all farewell !

S C E N E III.

The Street.

Enter two young MERCHANTS.

1st. Mer. Well met, fir ! you are for this noble wedding.

2d. Mer. I am, fir ; so are you, I take it.

1st. Mer. Yes ;

And much it glads me, that to do him service,
Who is the pride and honour of our trade,
We meet thus happily.

2d. Mer. He's a noble fellow !
And well deserves a bride of so much beauty.

1st. Mer. She's passing fair indeed ; long may their
loves

Continue like themselves in spring of sweetness !
All the young merchants will be here, no doubt,
For he who comes not to attend this wedding,
The curse of a most blind one fall upon him,
A loud wife and a lazy ! Here comes Clause.

Enter CLAUSE.

2d. Mer. How now Clause ! you are come to see
your master
In all his joy—'tis honestly done of you—
And here he comes.

Enter HARROL.

Har. Stand at the door, my friends !
I pray walk in—there's a young lady, who
Will bid ye welcome.

1st. Mer.

A COMIC OPERA.

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1st. Mer. We enjoy your happiness. [*Ex. Merchants.*]

Har. Clause, nobly welcome!

My honest, my best friend! I have been careful
To see thy monies duly plac'd in——

Clause. Sir,

No doubt you have; that brought me not—D' you know
This ring again?

Har. 'Tis that thou had'st of me.

Clause. And do you recollect the boon you promis'd,
On the return of this?

Har. Yes, and I grant it,

Be't what it may, within my power.

Clause. You are not married yet?

Har. No.

Clause. Faith, I shall ask you that which will disturb
you,

But I must put you to your promise.

Har. Do—

And if I faint, or flinch in't——

Clause. Well said, master;

And yet it grieves me too—and yet it must be—

Har. Pr'ythee, distrust me not.

Clause. You must not marry—

That's part o' th' power you gave me;—to compleat it,
You must depart forthwith, and follow me.

Har. Not marry, Clause!

Clause. Not, if you keep your promise.

Har. Pr'ythee, think better—dost thou fear her ho-
nesty?

Clause. Chaste, chaste as ice, I doubt not.

Clause. That allow'd,

Give me thy reason.

Clause. I may not now discover.

Har. Must not marry!

Shall I break now, when the poor heart is pawn'd?

When all my preparation—

Clause. Now or never.

Har. Can't be so cruel?

52 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Clause. You may break your word, fir,
But never more in my thought appear honest.

Har. Didst thou e'er see her?

Clause. No, fir.

Har. Oh! *Clause*, she's such a wonder—

A I R.

Her air is all elegant grace,
All delicate sweetness her mien,
In each feature, each turn of her face,
What millions of beauties are seen!
Her eye beams the lustre of truth,
Her smile is the witch'ry of love;
And her words—Oh! as kindly and sooth,
As zephyrs enriching the grove.

Clause. You make me sad, fir.

Hub. Pr'ythee, then, good *Clause*,
Take a friend's heart, and feel what misery
Awaits me, if I lose her.

Clause. My dear master,
Take you a noble heart, and keep your promise:
I forsook all I had, to make you happy.
She comes; now bear the trial like yourself,
A good and constant man; in the dark walk
Of aged elms, that opens to the plain,
I wait you with impatience—you must follow. [*Exit.*

Har. Hard heart, I will! for hast thou not re-
deem'd me
From deepest woe? and shall I dare deny?
Yet my dear *Gertrude*—

Enter

Enter Gertrude.

Ger. Harrol!---in affliction!
Lord of my heart and hopes, look up! Explain
What envious cloud has darken'd o'er the hour,
Thou hadst set down the brightest of thy life?
Nay, answer me in words---Those silent sighs
Import a grief most mighty.

Har. We must part,
Gertude, we must---this hour---

Ger. What voice enjoins,
What power commands us? Have not our chaste loves
Been such as angels might approve? Say then
What earthly bidding---

Har. But we meet again---
I trust we shall---for surely honest Clause

Ger. Clause!
Is he the ruler of Harrol's destiny?

Har. Some wond'rous secret
Is lab'ring in his breast; with earnest look,
Yet melting while it aw'd, even now he bade me
In the dark row of elms attend his councils.
By oath, by duty, gratitude and honour
Solemnly bound, what can thy Harrol do?

Ger. For ever must we part?

Har. That power, who smiles
On constant love, will yet, I hope, preserve us,
Preserve us for each other! My best life,
My soul, adieu! While Harrol lives, his heart
Is thine alone---once more!---And must I leave
Such worth and sweetness? Tyrant, tyrant honour!

A I R.

A I R.

Thus, the wish'd-for port in view,
 Thunders burst---and tempests rise;
 Toss'd by billows---torn by winds,
 Far away the vessel flies!
 Vain the wretched seaman's prayer!
 All is darkness, all despair!

Ger. Then am I lost! It is no trivial woe,
 That shakes his steady mind---What can it be?
 Wrought from me by a beggar! at a time
 That most shou'd fetter him! But why attempt
 Vainly to reason! No---to the walk of elms
 I'll trace his steps---darkness and night are things
 For vicious minds to dread. But mine to shew
 How much a virtuous passion can inspire,

A I R.

If thy too cruel bow be bent
 Stern Fate, to wound my Harrol's heart,
 Oh! change for once thy dire intent,
 And in my bosom plunge the dart.
 The happy means so may I prove
 To save my lord, my life, my love. [Exit.

SCENE

S C E N E IV.

Changes to the BUSH.

Enter Hubert, with a Letter; and the Beggars, one with a Torch.

Hub. Tread soft, and watchful.

Hig. But what's the action we are for now? ha!
Robbing a Ripper of his fish?

Prig. Or taking a poulterer prisoner without ransom?

Hig. Or cutting off a convoy of butter?
Or surprising a boor's ken for grunting cheats?

Prig. Or cackling cheats? Oh I could drive a regiment

Of geese before me such a night as this, ten leagues,
With my hat and staff, and not a hiss heard, nor
A wing of all my troops disorder'd.

Hub. So far my hopes are fair!

Hig. Let me alone with the farmer's dog, if you
have a mind to the cheese-loft---'tis but thus---and he's
a silenc'd mastiff, during pleasure.

Hub. Wou'd it might please you to be silent!

Hig. Mum!

Hub. Now, boys, for your allegiance! Be careful;
It shall make fortunes for ye!

Prig. Doubt us not, boy.

Hub. You heed not a few scratches?

Prig. No, nor bruises in the service of our master.

Hub. 'Tis bravely said---Lead on to the dark hovel,
That stands hard by under the blasted fir!
There will I follow straight--and give ye all
Your full instructions.

Prig. 'Tis enough---we're gone. [*Exeunt.*]

Hub. My burgomaster answers as I wish---
Now for the test.

A I R.

Glorious omens of success
 In my breast arise;
 Scorn of danger, fear, and death,
 Virtuous hope supplies.

All that panting for the fight,
 Noble bosoms feel,
 When justice glows upon the crest,
 And glitters in the steel.

[Exit.]

S C E N E V.

*Another Part of the Wood.**Enter GERTRUDE and a BOOR.*

Ger. Lead, if thou think'st we're right; why dost
 thou make
 These frequent stands? Thou saidst thou knew'st the
 way.

Boor. Yes, mistress; but sure it grows somewhat
 pretty dark.

Ger. What then?

Boor. Nay, nothing---don't think I'm afraid, altho'
 perhaps you are.

Ger. I am not--Forward!

Boor. Sure but you are---give me your hand---fear
 nothing. Don't pull me backward---What a sweat one
 of us is in! Is it you or I?

Ger. What ails the fellow?

Boor. Hark, I beseech you---do you hear nothing?

Ger.

Ger. No.

Boor. Lift! a wild hog! he grunts—now 'tis a bear,
This wood is full of 'em—and now a wolf, mistress;
It is the howling of a wolf.

Ger. Of the wind, coward!

Boor. See, there's a serpent; it has eyes as broad
as platters;

It spits fire—now it creeps towards us—help me
To say my prayers.

Ger. Why, thou strange timorous sot, canst thou
Perceive any thing but a poor glow-worm?

Boor. It may be, 'tis but a poor glow-worm now,
But 'twill grow to a fire-drake presently.

Ger. I have a precious guide in you—pr'ythee be
Resolute, and on. [Hallowing within.]

Boor. It thunders—you hear that now.

Ger. I hear one halloo.

Boor. No, it's thunder—and see, a flash of light'ning.
Are not you struck, mistress?

Ger. What strange wonders
Fear creates in a coward! Canst thou not move?

Boor. No; the earth opens.

Ger. Pr'ythee, hold thy peace.

Boor. What, will you venture then?

Ger. What should I fear? for sooner than return,
Forward I will alone—my love and constancy
Have made me bold—where my fate leads, I follow.

A I R.

Wrapp'd close from harm in night's deep-folding
gloom,

A pilot's friendly care, Oh! sacred Love, assume;
When the bright morning ray first lights the
op'ning skies,

Let me my dawning joy behold in Harrol's eyes.

[Exit.]

Boor. Fortune direct you! I dare not.

H

A I R.

A I R.

O! night of dread! Oh! night of woe!
 How can I stay—how can I go?
 Turn here—turn there—turn every where—
 I shiver—faint—I die with fear.
 Why did I leave my peaceful home,
 Mid brakes, and fens, and thorns to roam?
 Oh! night of dread! Oh! night of woe!
 How shall I stay—how shall I go?

*Enter WOLFORT, HEMPSKIRKE, and Attendants,
 with Torches.*

Hemp. It was the fellow, sure, he that should guide us,
 The huntsman, that did halloo us.

Wol. Best make a stand, and listen to his next—ha!

Hemp. Who goes there?

Boor. Mistress, I'm taken.

Hemp. Mistress!—look forth, soldiers. [*Ex. soldiers.*]

Wol. What are you, firrah?

Boor. Truly, all that's left of a poor Boor by day;
 By night, nobody. You might have spar'd your
 Drums and guns, for I am none that will
 Stand out—you may take me with a walking-stick,
 And hold me with a packthread.

Hemp. What woman was't you call'd to?

Boor. Woman! none fir.

Wol. None! did not you name mistress?

Boor. Yes, but she's no woman yet—she was to have
 Been married to-night, but in came Clause,
 The old lame beggar, and whips up the bridegroom,

Master

Master Harrol, under his arm, as a kite
Or an old fox would sweep away a gosling.

Hemp. Sure it should be she!

Soldiers return with GERTRUDE.

Niece!

Ger. I'm miserably lost, thus fall'n
From all my hopes, into my uncle's hands.

Hemp. 'Tis she, indeed, fir.

This was a noble entrance to your fortune,
That being on the point thus to be married,
You should surprize and take her.

Wol. I begin, Hempkirke, to believe my fate
Works to my ends.

Hemp. Yes, fir; and this adds trust
Unto the fellow, our guide, who told me Florez
Liv'd in some merchant's shape, as Gerrard did
In the old beggar's; and that he would use
Him for a train, to call the others forth;
All which, we find, is done. [*Halloo within.*] That's he
again.

Wol. Good! we sent out to meet him!

Hemp. And here's the oak
Where he appointed us.—All's right.

Wol. Who's there?

Enter HUBERT and BEGGARS, as BOORS.

Hub. A friend, the huntsman.

Hemp.

Ay, 'tis he.

Hub. I have kept touch, fir—which is the earl
now?

Will he know a poor man?

Hemp. This, my lord, is the friend
Hath underta'en to do us this great service.

Hub. It shall be worth his lordship's thanks anon.
I know to pitch my toils, drive in my game,

60 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

And I have don't—both Florez and his father,
Old Gerrard; with lord Arnold, of Benthuison,
Cofin, and Jaculin, young Florez' sister—
I have 'em all.

Wol. Thou speak'st too much, too happy,
To carry faith with it.

Hub. Why, I can bring you,
Where you shall see, and take 'em.

Wol. We will double
Whatever Hempkirke then hath promis'd thee.

Hub. And I'll deserve it treble: what horse have you?

Wol. An hundred.

Hub. That's well—divide
Your force into five squadrons, for there are
So many out-lets thro' the wood.
I and four boors will be your guides herein;
And that they may be more secure, I'll use
My wonted whoops and halloos—as I were
Hunting for 'em.

Wol. 'Tis order'd well, and relisheth the soldier:
Make the division, Hempkirke—you are my charge.
Fair-one, I'll look to you.

Ger. Lost! lost! undone for ever!

[*Exeunt Wol. Hemp, Ger. and Guards.*]

Boor. Nobody need take care of me, I'll take care of
myself now. [*Exit.*]

Hub. Now, lads, to the work!
Mind your instructions close—and when you hear me
Wind my horn loud and quick, be that your signal
For the great master-stroke.

Hig. Enough, boy. Conclude it done! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

S C E N E V.

*A dark Wood.**Enter CLAUSE and HARROL.*

Clau. By this time, fir, I hope you want no reason
Why I break off your marriage ; for tho' I
Should, as a subject, hold you for my prince
In general things, it will not yet too far
Discredit you t'acknowledge me your father,
And hearken to my necessary councils.

Har. Acknowledge you my father ! Sir I do—
And may all peace and comfort leave my heart
When I forget to pay you a son's duty !

Clau. I pray you rise---
And may those powers, who see, and love this in you,
Reward you for it ! Taught by your example,
Having received the rights due to a father,
I tender you th' allegiance of a subject,
Which, as my prince, accept of.

Har. Kneel to me !
I am your son, fir, and am prouder far
To be the son of such distinguish'd worth,
(Which Heaven be pleas'd I may inherit from you)
Than I e'er could be of those splendid titles
Left by my mother, which assert my claim
To Flanders' earldom.

Clau. I do believe it.

Har. Oh ! my lov'd father !
Before I knew you were so, nature taught me
Instinctively, to look upon your wants
Not as a stranger's---And, I know not how,
What you call'd charity, I thought the payment
Of some religious debt nature stood bound for.

Clau.

62 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Clau. Cease, cease, my Florez, At your mother's death

Your tender age, and the troubles of the times
 Making your stay in Flanders dangerous,
 (*My power alas! was small. Possessing none
 But what your gracious mother's favour gave me
 Receiving to her state a private gentleman*)
 I sent you into England, and there placed you
 With a brave Flanders merchant, call'd rich Harrol,
 Who some years after settling here in Bruges,
 And dying here, left you his name and fortune,
 As his reputed son, and still received so;
 But now as Florez, and a prince, remember
 Your country's and your subject's general good
 Must challenge the first part in your affection.
 That fair maid, whom you chose to be your wife,
 Being so far beneath you, even your love
 Must own the match ill-suited.

Har. In descent,
 Or borrow'd glories from dead ancestors,
 I must acknowledge it—but in her virtues,
 A monarch might esteem himself o'erpaid,
 Were she his kingdom's price. In this alone
 Be an indulgent father, in all else
 Use your authority.

Enter HUBERT, WOLFORT, HEMPSKIRKE, and
 GERTRUDE.

Hub. Sir, here are two of them,
 The father, and the son—the rest you shall have,
 As fast as I can rouse 'em. [Exit.

Clau. Who's this? Wolfort?

Wol. Ay, impostor,
 Your coarse disguise no longer can conceal you;
 No further art, for I must here find Gerrard,
 And in this merchant's habit, one call'd Florez,
 Who fain would be an earl.

Har. And is, wert thou a subject.

Ger.

Ger. My Harrol turn'd a prince !
O ! I am poorer by this start of greatness,
Than all my fears and sorrows ever made me.

Har. My Gertrude ! whence ? why do I see you
here ?

O ! think what—

Wal. Stay, fir,---you were to day too near her ;
You must no more aim at these close endearments,
Nor long survive such bold presumption ! Hempkirke,
Summon the officers of blood.

A I R.

Ger. kneeling. Oh ! spare my Harrol ! spare my love !
Let these streaming sorrows move ;
Restrain the breath
That dooms his death---
Does no good angel see my pain,
And is it thus we meet again ?
My Harrol speak,
My heart will break---
On me, on me your torments wreak ;---
But spare my Harrol ! spare my love !
Let these streaming sorrows move.

Har. No---death, my Gertrude, can't be half so
painful,
As to behold thee kneel, and waste thy tears
On such a fiend---Strike the decisive blow,
And end our shames and miseries together.

Wal. This is no Gertrude ; no no, nor Hemp-
skirke's niece,
Nor Vandunk's daughter. This is Bertha ! Bertha,
The heir of Brabant, she that caus'd the war ;
Whom I did steal, during my treaty there
While you were yet a child, to raise myself ;
Foreseeing that theft wou'd cause a war ; that war

Call

64 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

*Call for my arm to guide it : and the victory
(Which happily I achiev'd) render my power
Such as might grasp the earldom---This obtain'd,
I meant her for my wife ; thereby to fix
My empire sure ; which had been done ere this,
She come of years, but that the expectation
First of her father's death, retarded it,
And since, the standing out of Bruges, where
Hempskirke he hid her, till she was near lost,
But she is here recover'd.---She is mine, fir,
Your merchantship may break now, I believe,
For this was one of your best ventures.*

Clau. Insolent devil !

Wol. Hempskirke, who are these ?

Hem. More, more, fir.

Enter HUBERT, with GINKS, FERRET and JACULIN.

Hub. Lord Arnold of Benthuesen---this lord Coffin,
This Jaculin, the sister unto Florez.

Wol. All found ? Why here's brave game, this is
sport royal !

This spot, where they are taken, will I make
Their place of death.—Dispatch this moment.

Hub. Or suppose, my lord,
They shou'd be broken up upon a scaffold,
Will't not shew better ?

Fer. Wretch ! art thou not content thou hast be-
tray'd,

But thou must mock us too ?

Gink. False Hubert ! murderer !

Wol. Hubert !

Hemp. Who, this ?

Ginks. Yes, this is Hubert, Wolfort.

I hope he has help'd himself to a tree.

Wol. The first,

The first of all ; I'm glad again to catch you,
I let you go before but as a spy,

Now, as a spy I'll treat you.

Hub. Nay, then I'll ring my own death's knell.

Hubert *sounds his Horn loud and quick; Drum answers within.* Vandunk, Prig, Higgen, Soldiers, and all the Beggars rush on, seize and disarm Wolfort, Hempkirke, and their Party.

Wol. Betray'd!

Hub. No, but well caught, and I the huntsman!
Now shall I wind your fall? and Hempkirke's there?

Hig. We have led your squadrons, fir, where
They have torn their legs and faces soundly.

Prig. Yes, and run their heads against trees.

Hig. We have filled a pit with your people;
Some with legs, some with arms broken.

Prig. And a few necks, I think, are out.

Hig. 'Tis captain Prig, fir.

Prig. And colonel Higgen.---

Van. How do you, Wolfort? Rascal! tyrant Wolfort!

I speak it now above the rose—and Hempkirke,
Rogue-Hempkirke! you that have no niece! this lady
Was stolen by you, and hid by you; but now
Resign'd by me to the right owner here—
Take her, my prince.

Har. Are then these blessings real?

Ger. And shall we part no more?

Van. I have given her to you twice—now keep her
better,

And thank lord Hubert, who contriv'd our plot,
And in good Gerrard's name, sent for Vandunk,
General Vandunk——

Hub. Conqueror Vandunk.

Van. Ay—thanks to my brave boys here.

A I R.

Great Cæsar once renown'd in fame,
 For a mighty arm, and a laurell'd brow ;
 With his Veni, Vidi, Vici, came,
 And conquer'd the world with his row-dow-
 dow.

So I a modern Cæsar come,
 To make oppressive tyrants bow ;
 In freedom's cause I beat my drum,
 And the wood resounds with my row-dow-dow.

Usurping Wolfort strait I spy,
 Above the rose I speak it now ;
 His coward troops I've forc'd to fly,
 And the tyrant yields to my row-dow-dow.

Van. Give me my bottle, and set down the drum ;
 I'll sit as judge upon 'em—you stole the lady.

Clause. 'Twas like yourself, honest and noble Hu-
 bert !

Canst thou behold these mirrors, all together,
 Of thy long, false, and bloody usurpation,
 And not behold thyself, and so fall down,
 O'erwhelm'd with sorrow, shame, and penitence ?

Wol. Who, I repent ?

And say I'm sorry ! No—'tis the fool's language,
 But not for Wolfort.

Van. Wolfort, thou art a devil, and speak'st his lan-
 guage.

Oh ! that I had my longing for thy sake !
 Under this row of trees, the spot your lordship
 Meant for these worthy ones, I'd hang thee instantly.

Har. No, let him live, until he can repent,
 But banish'd from our state—that be his doom.

Van. Then hang his worthy captain here, this Hemp-
 kirke,

For sake of the example.

Har. No, let him
 Enjoy his shame too, with his conscious life.

Van. A noble prince! and yet I'd fain have somebody hang'd.

Clause. Sir, you must help to join
A pair of hands, as they have done of hearts,
And to their loves with happiness.

Har. As to my own!
My dearest sister! truly worthiest brother!

A I R.

Jac. Such scenes of strange delight arise,
And croud upon my view,
I gaze around with wild surprize,
And scarce believe them true.
A father! brother! lover! friend!
Of joy a larger store,
Nor Hope could ask, nor Fortune send---
My cup of blis runs o'er.

Van. I'll lead ye home, and have the bonfires made,
My fireworks and flap-dragons—and an ocean
Of generous liquor, to soak down,
To the honour of this day.

Hig. 'Slight! here be changes! the bells have not so many.

Prig. Our company's grown horrible thin by it.
What think you, Higgen?

Hig. Marry, I think that we might all be lords now,
If we'd stand for't.

Clause. Sir, you must thank this honest burgomaster;
Here be more friends, ask to be look'd on too,
And thank'd; who, though their trade and course of life
Be not so perfect, but it may be better'd,
Have yet us'd me with courtesy, and been
True subjects to me while I was their king.
Your grace command them follow you to Bruges,
Where I will take the care on me, to find
Some manly and more profitable course,
To fit them as a part of the republic.

Har. Do ye hear, sirs? do so.

Hig. Thanks to your good grace!

Prig. 3 To your good lordship!

68 THE ROYAL MERCHANT.

Har. Now to compleat our blifs ! Be it our care
To merit it, by using well the power,
And wealth entrusted to our charge, to lighten
The woes of others---to enrich our country,
And bid our wishes and endeavours reach
Even to the meanest subject in our state !

Van. To all the world, say I !

A I R and C H O R U S.

Har. May each fair merchant's ventur'd store
With rich advance come freighted o'er ;
On all his aims may fortune smile,
And peace and wealth repay his toil !

Ger. May ev'ry maid whose artless breast
A worthy passion has possess'd,
Thro' all events her truth who proves,
Obtain the honest heart she loves !

Hub. May every champion of the fair,
The rich returns of beauty share ;
He well deserves, who well can guard,
And love is valour's best reward.

Fac. May all who sigh in sorrow's shade,
The dreary cloud bear undismay'd :
Till joy's enlight'ning rays succeed,
For joy is patient virtue's meed.

Van. May every honest heart atchieve
Such blifs as mine, to crown his eve ;
Then, spite of age, its cares and pain,
We'll live o'er love and youth again.

Prig. For one respect yet left unpaid,
We still must use our begging trade,
Your generous favour we implore,
And that obtain'd, we ask no more.

T H E E N D.



