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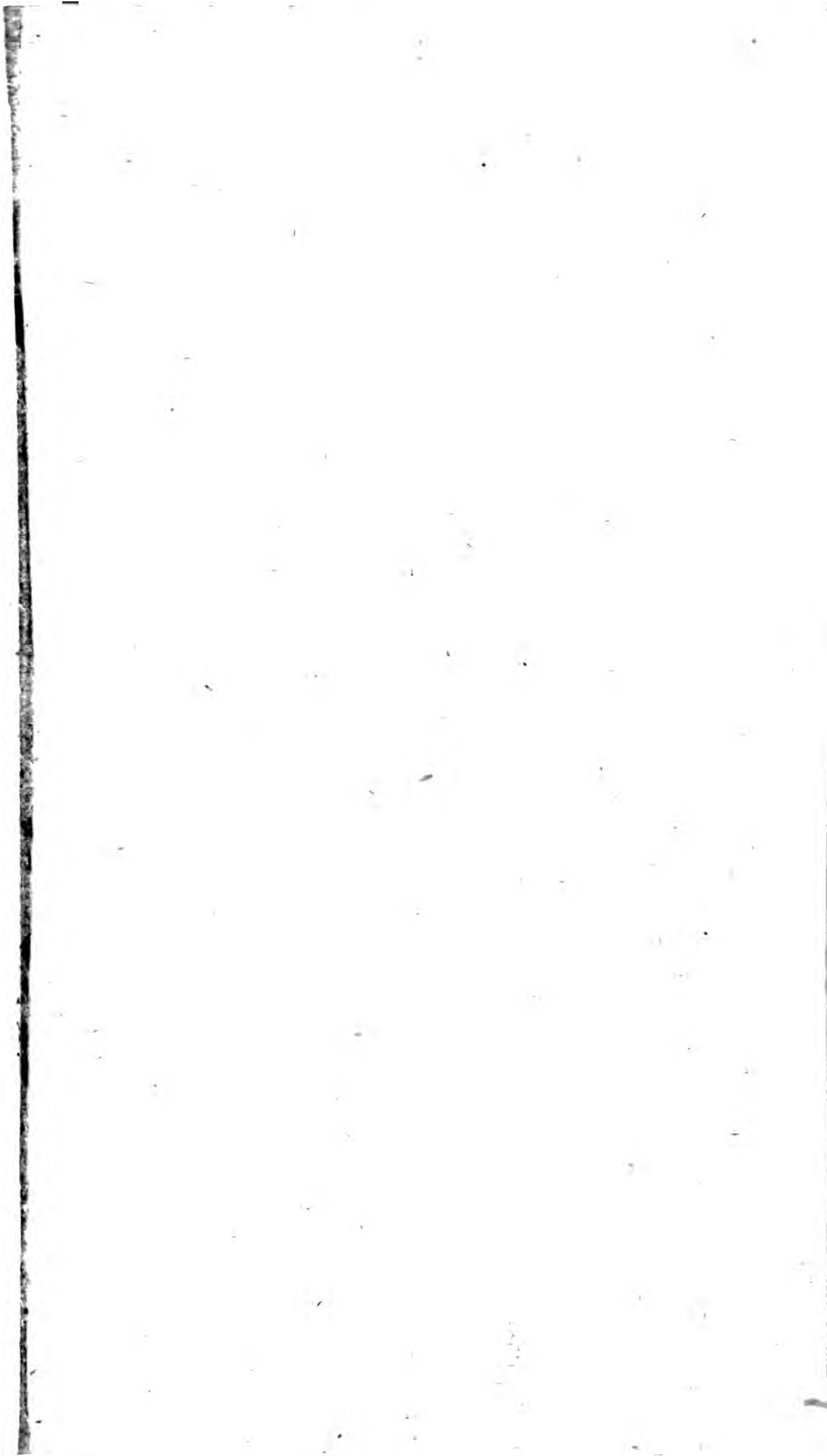


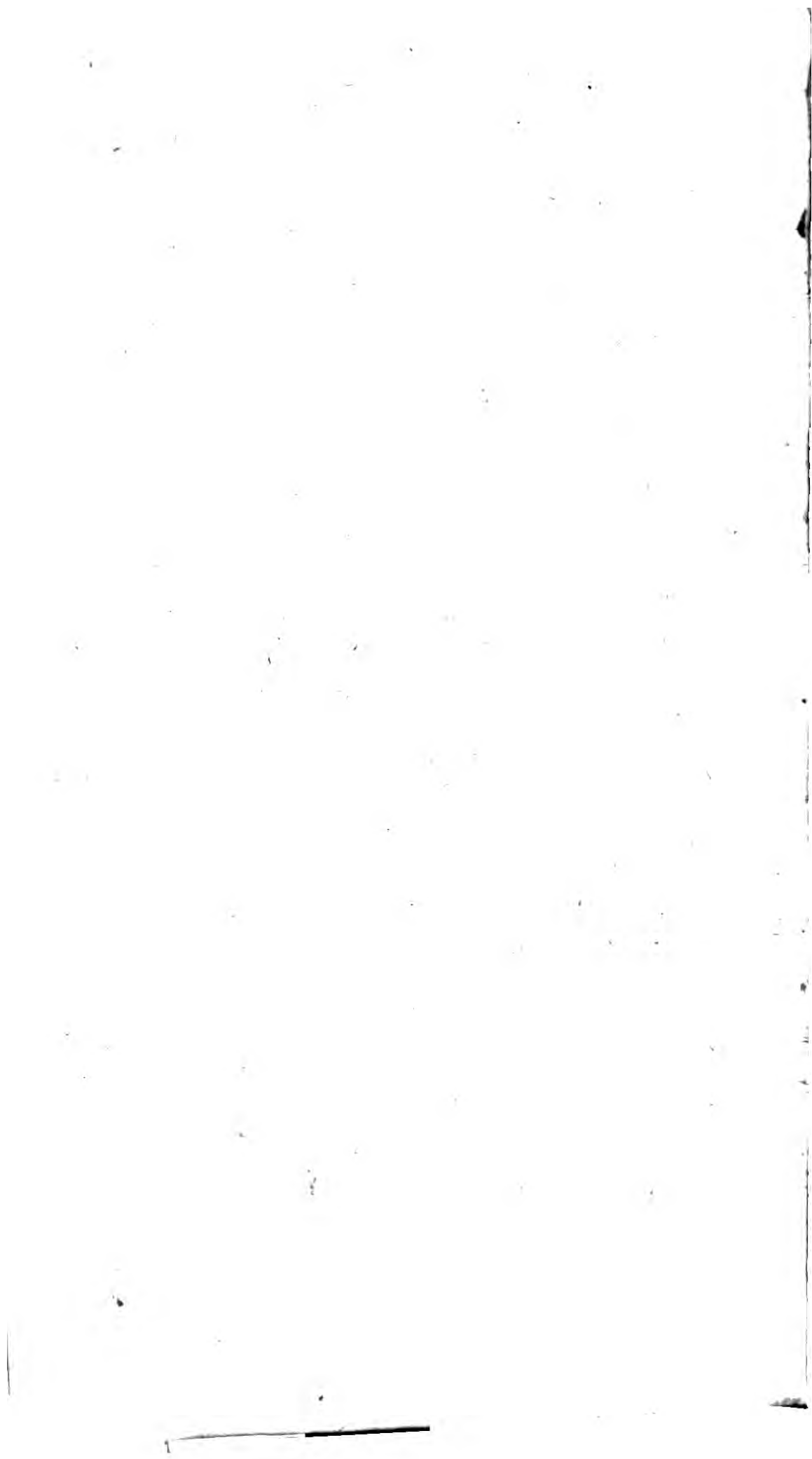


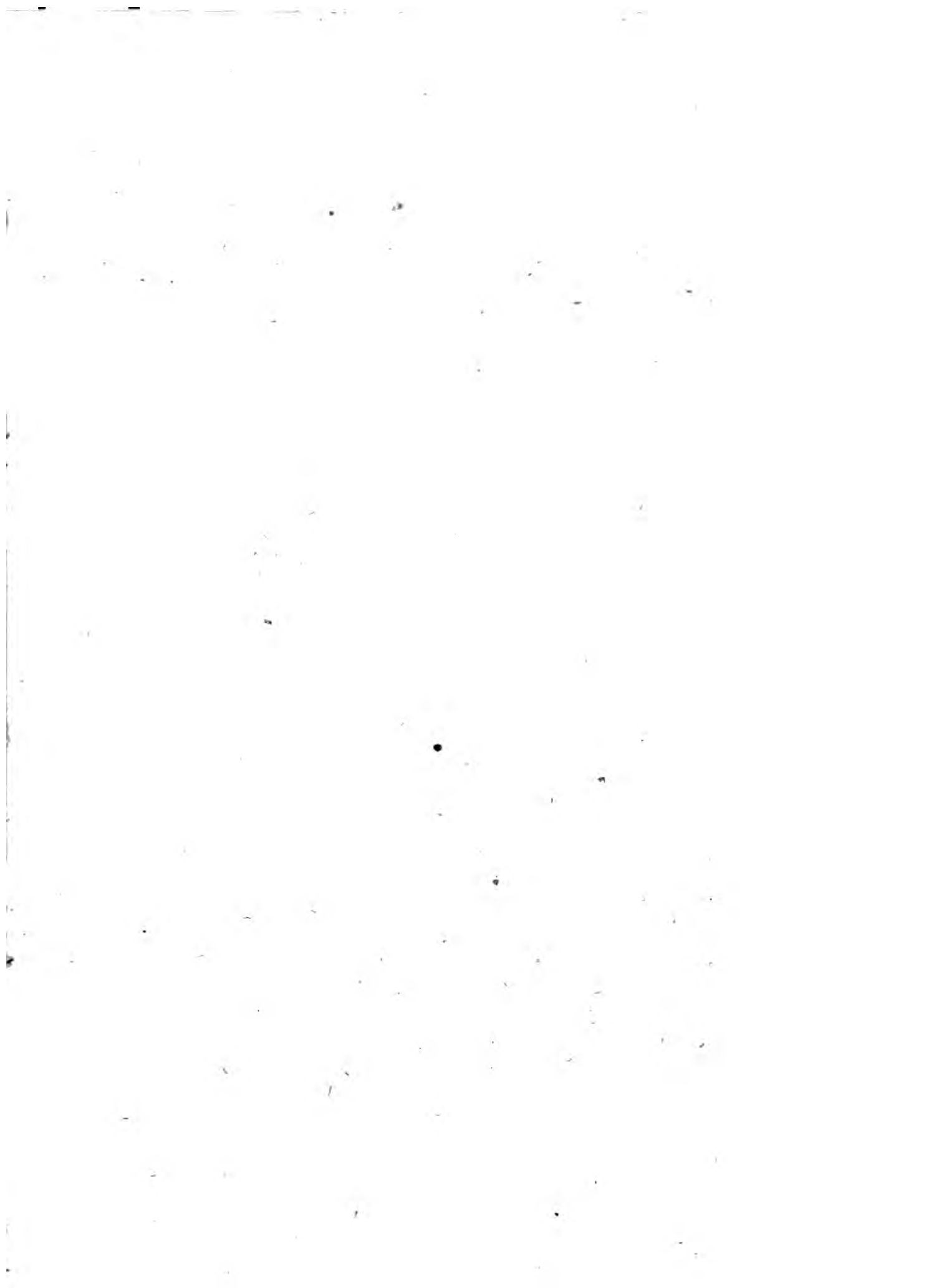
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THE DRAMATIC
W O R K S
O F
COLLEY CIBBER, Esq.
In FIVE VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE FIFTH

CONTAINING

CÆSAR IN EGYPT.

FLORA; OR, HOB IN THE WELL,
SCHOOL BOY.

XERXES.

VENUS AND ADONIS.

PAPAL TYRANNY.

DAMON AND PHILLIDA.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. RIVINGTON and Sons, C. BATHURST,
T. LONGMAN, T. LOWNDES, T. CASLON, W. NI-
COLL, and S. BLADON.

M.DCC.LXXVII.

M. D. C. C. LXXVII

THE
OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE
NAVY
WASHINGTON, D. C.
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVY DEPARTMENT
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C Æ S A R

I N

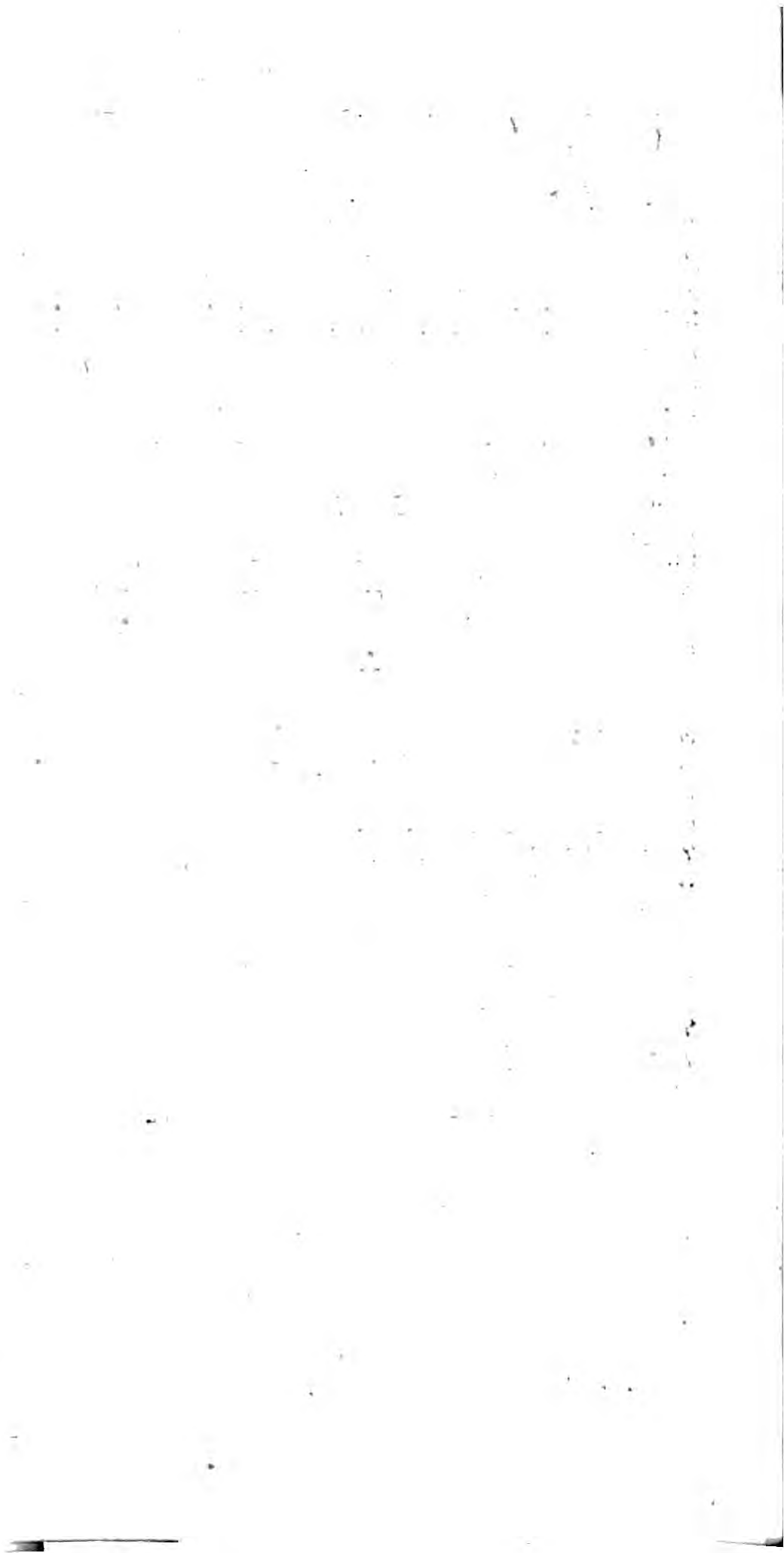
E G Y P T.

A

T R A G E D Y.

*Aufer ab aspectu nostro funesta, satelles,
Regis dona tui: pejus de Cæsare vestrum
Quam de Pompeio meruit scelus. Unica belli
Præmia civilis, victis donare salutem,
Perdidimus. ——— LUCAN. lib. 9.*





P R O L O G U E.

*WHEN Roman arms their hostile terrors hurl'd,
And march'd in triumph o'er the conquer'd world;
When plunder'd provinces in ruins mourn'd,
And captive kings the victor's car adorn'd:
When proud Patricians gave whole realms away,
And crown'd their vassals with imperial sway:
No wonder, then, the same ambitious lords,
For want of foes, drew on themselves their swords.*

*Pompey and Cæsar rul'd that world they won,
'Till each determin'd to be lord alone:
Hence flam'd that fire, whose civil rage destroy'd
The glorious liberty their fires enjoy'd:
Pharsalia's field at length decides the day,
And gave mankind, to Cæsar's arms, a prey.*

*Thus stood their state, when vanquish'd Pompey fled
From Cæsar's sword, to ask Ægyptian aid.*

*—There starts our play, and into action draws
What fate befel the pity'd Pompey's cause:*

*A charge well worthy of an abler muse;
But none, a poet, for being too good, refuse!
Warm'd by the subject, and by Roman fire,
Our bard gives all that Lucan cou'd inspire!
Yet what avails his boasted care and pains,
While Gothic taste prefers, to labour'd scenes,
The mute exploits of motley Harlequins?
Others, perhaps, in the politer throng,
Might better have been pleas'd, had Cæsar sung.*

*Far be't from us to question your delight!
To be, at pleasure wrong, is English right!
In vain for boasted freedom you declare,
Unless you keep the liberty—to err!*

*—Since then rank farce is grown a taste so new,
No wonder we exhibit nonsense too!
And tho' we're but beginners there, we'll drudge,
And entertain as low as crouds can judge!
While plain October can secure their votes,
Why should we spill Champaign on vulgar throats?
Howe'er, to-night (by such gross scenes betray'd)
We call the Roman Julius to our aid:
On You it lies to save the cause of verse,
And give the palm to Tragedy or Farce.*

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

<i>Julius Cæsar.</i>		<i>Mr. Booth.</i>
<i>Antony,</i>	} <i>Cæsar's Lieutenants.</i>	<i>Mr. Wilks.</i>
<i>Decius,</i>		<i>Mr. Williams.</i>
<i>Ptolomey,</i>	<i>King of Ægypt.</i>	<i>Mr. Cibber, Jun.</i>
<i>Photinus,</i>	} <i>His Counsellors.</i>	<i>Mr. Mills.</i>
<i>Achillas,</i>		<i>Mr. Mills, Jun.</i>
<i>Septimius,</i>		<i>Mr. Bridgwater.</i>
<i>Achareus,</i>		<i>Mr. Cibber, Sen.</i>
<i>First</i>	} <i>Centurion.</i>	<i>Mr. Roberts.</i>
<i>Second</i>		<i>Mr. Thurmond.</i>

W O M E N.

<i>Cornelia.</i>	<i>The relict of Pompey.</i>	<i>Mrs. Porter.</i>
<i>Cleopatra.</i>	<i>Sister to Ptolomey.</i>	<i>Mrs. Oldfield.</i>
<i>Charmion.</i>	<i>Her attendant.</i>	<i>Mrs. Williams.</i>

Centurions, Mutineers, Guards and Attendants.

The S C E N E, Alexandria, in Egypt.

C Æ S A R

I N

E G Y P T.

Nulla fides unquam miseris elegit amicos. Luc. lib. 8.

A C T I.

PHOTINUS, ACHILLAS.

PHOTINUS.

OUR fertile *Egypt*, now, no more shall groan,
Beneath the ravage of intestine war ;
Nor, from the contests of divided sway,
Rebellion have th' excuse of anarchy.
Our plenteous *Nile* now flows for *Ptolomey* !
While *Cleopatra*, by his arms reduc'd,
Perceives her empire bounded, by this palace ;
There, like a criminal of state, confin'd,
She stoops for favours, where she once bestow'd them.
Achil. And yet so equal, so unchang'd her spirit,
She seems not to desire, or not t' have lost
A throne : The same majestic gracious smile
Plays in her eye, insensible of foes,
Or seeming not to know them.

Pbo. All dissembled !
Train'd up in courts, she knows to mask her malice :
But were she loose again to power, this head,
That honestly projected her confinement,
Wou'd be the earliest victim of her vengeance.

Achil. 'Tis true, my lord; and that one point consider'd,
 Why is her verge of liberty so large?
 Why is she suffer'd still to train along
 This lofty palace, with her crouds attending?
 To revel in the bow'ry shades, to range
 The sportive forest, and command its pleasures?
 To spread her filken toils beneath the stream?
 With tow'ring falcons to distress the dove?
 Or like *Diana*, with her wood-nymphs grac'd,
 To mount the breathing hills, and sweep the vale,
 Chasing with cheerful horn, the stag, the boar?

Pbo. Thou know'st, *Achillas*, she's the people's idol;
 Over whose hearts her eyes usurp an empire!
 Conscious of beauty, she delights to please;
 And when in public view she moves,
 Her radiant charms attract their adoration!
 Then from her speech such melting music flows,
 Nor more her words than tuneful voice persuade.
 Therefore too close restraint were dangerous:
 This shew of freedom will amuse the commons,
 Who pierce not to th' abridgment of her sway;
 But were they utterly refus'd her sight,
 Or but her lovely person hardly treated;
 The force of *Egypt* wou'd not curb their rage,
 Nor *Ptolomey* were safe upon his throne.

Achil. 'Tis not the murm'ring multitude I fear,
 But powerful *Rome*'s resentment wakes my thought;
 How may the jealous senate bear this change?
 Whose awful voices have decreed, that both
 Sister and brother, as the late king's will
 Bequeath'd, should equal hold the reigns of empire?
 Nor will, I fear, great *Pompey* brook her treatment,
 Who stands alike the guardian of them both.

Pbo. *Pompey* and *Rome* have weightier cares at home.
 The storm of civil war, now rais'd by *Cæsar*,
 Withdraws their insolence from foreign realms,
 To waste their valour on their proper subjects!
 Their distant care of us is but their pride,
 And wantonness of power; intestine jars
 May humble them to justice, and reduce
 Their empire to its old *Italian* bounds.

Or say, that on *Pharsalia's* dreadful plain,
 (Where now these rival lions hourly watch
 Each other as their prey) conquest shou'd give
 The *Roman* world to *Pompey*, or to *Cæsar*;
 'Twill then be time enough, when we are sure
 Whose nod we must obey, to change our measures.
Achil. Behold the king! and in his youthful eye
 Some joy unusual sparkles into triumph.

*Enter Ptolomey, with an open letter. Septimius,
 Achoreus following.*

Ptol. O *Photinus!* *Ofris* now has heard
 Our vows! at length this mistress of the earth,
 Imperious *Rome*, has lost her liberty!
 This haughty dame that gave her laws to monarchs,
 Whose private citizens durst proudly vaunt
 Their scorn of crowns, and boast of scepter'd vassals;
 This wanton *Rome*, impregnated with power,
 By civil discord, teems her own destruction:
Pharsalia's field has given the world to *Cæsar*:
 And *Pompey* is a fugitive in *Egypt*.
 All his late triumphs, laurels, and renown,
 Are now the spoils, and grace the brows of *Cæsar*.
Cæsar, who warm with injuries, and conquest,
 Will well avenge the cause of slighted kings,
 And bend the neck of *Rome* to one victorious lord.

Pbo. When our oppressors feel the fetters they impos'd,
 Our chains are lightned by the loads they bear.

Ptol. We who are doom'd to wear precarious crowns,
 With less regret shall pay our homage to
 A king, than an inferior proud republic!

Pbo. But you were speaking, Sir, of *Pompey's* flight,
 And, as I think, of his arrival here?

Ptol. The remnant of his fleet, three shatter'd barks,
 Now anchor in our port; where with his fair,
 His sad *Cornelia*, and some few dependants,
 Who share the hopeless fortunes of *Pharsalia*,
 He waits upon our will; having first sent
 On shore a friend, with this address to ask
 Protection, and if possible our aid to check
 The course of *Cæsar*, and inforce the war.

There, more at large you'll read, how unsecure

[Gives them the letter.

Is all the tow'ring strength of human glory.

Acbo. He tells us here, that *Parthia's* warlike king
(Whose conquest over *Crassus* is so fam'd,)
Had offer'd to receive him; but himself
Assur'd his fortunes more relief in *Egypt*,
Where his late service to your royal father,
He knows, will be remember'd in his welcome.

Ptol. 'Tis true, when bold rebellion press'd my father,
Pompey procur'd the senate's timely aid,
Which crush'd the tumult, and confirm'd his throne;
And benefits conferr'd on dignity distress,
Entail their obligation on its heirs.

But *Pompey*, in that utmost exigence,
Tho' generous, was not more a friend than *Cæsar*;
Whose thousand talents from his private store,
Advanc'd, gave life, and sinews to our cause!
Thus stands my doubtful gratitude divided:
Pompey's misfortunes plead for our relief;
But *Cæsar's* greatness warns us to abjure him:
To make a foe of *Cæsar* now—were frantic virtue;
And to desert a friend's distress—ignoble.

Hard-fated choice! must I, to save my crown,
Yield up this hunted *Pompey's* head to *Cæsar*?
Or (saving *Pompey*) make my crown his prey?
What then can guard me, but your riper wisdom?
Your counsel, lords, is now my last resource,
To shield your prince from ruin, or dishonour.

Acbo. To guard your crown, Sir, is our eldest duty:
But what are crowns that are not worn with honour?
We grant, the obligations of your state
To *Pompey*, and to *Cæsar's* friendship, equal;
Yet, as one only begs immediate payment,
Pompey's distress seems here to turn the scale,
And weighs up conscious honour to relieve him.
Cæsar makes no demand upon your crown;
His prosperous arms not ask, but give support:
At worst, his thousand talents might be paid!
Then are you unconfin'd, in gratitude;
Then, Sir, what's due to *Pompey*, bears no question.

If 'tis objected, *Cæsar* may resent
 Your favours to his mortal foe; 'tis true,
 If so——my counsel were most hazardous:
 But who, what enemy can say of *Cæsar*,
 That he provok'd him, by an act of honour?
 How is he fam'd for mercy to his foes?
 Then will he not forgive a friendly error,
 Whose motive has th' excuse of gratitude?
 But shou'd you offer violence to *Pompey*,
 How may great *Cæsar* take advantage of
 Your crime, and build his fame upon your ruin?
 Therefore my thoughts advise you, Sir, be grateful,
 Supply the wants of *Pompey*, and protect him:
 Appeal to *Cæsar's* honour, and you gain him;
 But *Pompey's* injur'd life were such an act,
 As neither gods would bear, nor *Cæsar* pardon.

Ptol. Achoreus has our thanks——your thoughts,
Achillas.

Achil. Achoreus, Sir, has spoke, as well becomes
 His holy function, and a faithful subject:
 But yet how far the laws of policy
 May warrant what his wisdom has advanc'd,
 I own, with me, as yet, is undetermin'd.
Cæsar has virtue, but he wants not art:
 And tho' no doubt he wishes *Pompey* dead,
 Nay, in his heart, wou'd bless the hand that smote him;
 Yet these are thoughts his glory must conceal.
 Therefore who knows, but *Pompey's* death reveng'd,
 Might be the mask his joy wou'd choose to wear?
 If so, the death of *Pompey* might undo us:
 But when again we weigh it, as the end,
 The summit, and the crown of *Cæsar's* conquests:
 When we reflect, that they who give repose,
 And full security to *Cæsar's* power,
 Can never be themselves unsafe——then, Sir,
 The death of *Pompey* is the life of *Egypt*.

Ptol. Your sentiments, *Septimius*?

Sept. Sir, my sword
 Speaks me, I am unfit for grave debates;
 A *Roman* born, my science has been war:
 My services, by *Pompey's* scorn o'erlook'd,

Have chang'd my thankless native soil for *Egypt*,
 Whose interests now my heart's last blood shall serve.
 If *Egypt* then is lost, *Septimius* is an exile ;
 And what can *Egypt* save, but *Cæsar's* friendship ?
 What gain that friendship, but your hate to *Pompey* ?
 What prove that hatred real, but his head ?
 Which trembling on a spear, to *Cæsar's* view,
 Crowns all his toils, for, then, unrivall'd empire.
Cæsar knows men, and bears no lukewarm friend ;
 With him, who stands suspected, is condemn'd ;
 Be cautious, Sir, he is not serv'd by halves !
 As then sincerity must gain his heart ;
 So must we strike our daggers home to *Pompey's*.
 If your *Egyptian* resolution faints,
 I have a *Roman* arm, that wants employment ;
 The blame or merit of the deed be mine ;
 And while 'tis mine alone, fame shall confess,
Pompey, like *Rome* herself, cou'd only fall
 By *Romans*.

Acho. *Isis* and *Osiris* guard us !

Ptol. Your voice, *Photinus*, now concludes our measures !

Shall *Egypt* league with *Pompey*, or with *Cæsar* ?

Pho. I grant your kingdom, Sir, to each indebted :

Pompey begs for payment : *Cæsar* expects it.

If you fail *Pompey*, *Pompey* may reproach you.

If you slight *Cæsar*, *Cæsar* can revenge it.

Pompey's relief demands your certain ruin !

Cæsar's ambition will expect his head.

To talk of obligations, gratitude,

And honour balanc'd with a nation's safety,

Better befits the dreaming sanctity

Of anchorets, than vigilance of monarchs !

When empires are at stake, nothing is just,

Or great, but what implicitly maintains 'em.

Pompey is routed—and in compliment

Invites us to partake his ruin. Gods !

Because he sav'd us once, does he conclude

He therefore has a right to our destruction ?

For now to aid him, 'gainst the arms of *Cæsar*,

Were to renew the giants' war with heaven.

What laws of nations, justice, or of honour,
 What contracts, leagues, or treaties bind us down,
 To prop this falling *Pompey* with our bones,
 To be by *Cæsar* crush'd, and trampled into ashes?
 No, Sir, the ruin *Pompey* brings, repel
 Upon his head! join you the cause, the gods
 Have own'd, and turn your sword on *Cæsar*'s foes!
 One blow secures his friendship, and your crown!
 If not for *Egypt*, strike for *Ptolomey*.

Consider your divided title, Sir,
 Your royal sister's claim, her provocations!
 Her arts! her female spleen, and beauty!
 Dressing her wrongs in tears, and *Cæsar* amorous,
 Her soft complainings blowing him to flames!
 Will he refuse to right so fair a suitress?
 At least, Sir, give him not pretence t' inforce
 Your father's will, or what were worse,
 T' invest her solely with the sov'reign pow'r,
 And veil his veng'ance in an act of justice.

Ptol. No more! that thought embitters all remorse.
 Were *Pompey* dearer to my heart than life;
 Rather than serve my sister's haughty pride,
 My rage, like thunder, in the port shou'd sink him!
Achillas, and *Septimius*, you obey
 The orders of *Photinus*——hark, your ear!

[*Whispering apart.*]

Acho. Nay, then the horrid resolution's fix'd!
 My farther counsel will be usefess here!
 Hence then, to royal *Cleopatra* haste,
 With *Pompey*'s fate alarm her nobler soul,
 And try what terrors may be form'd, to save him.

[*Aside.*] *Exit.*

Pbo. Delay may give him doubts of his reception;
 He may retreat and hoist his sails for *Asia*.
 The present hour's too precious to be lost;
 In execution of distressful measures,
 'Tis expedition gives them life and lustre.

Ptol. You then, *Achillas* and *Septimius*, haste,
 Take to your aid the parties you have nam'd;
 Rush on the instant, to a deathless fame,
 And give repose to *Egypt*.

Sept. And to *Pompey*. [Exit *Achil.* and *Sept.*

Ptol. The resolution fix'd recalls my spirit!

I am again myself! set free! I reign!

Conclude we then that *Pompey* is no more,
And that his death buries my sister's claim:

For howe'er on *Cæsar* she relies,

Her right had stronger hope from *Pompey's* aid,

Whose friendship to my father was so firm,

He undertook, as warden of his will,

To place my sister on the throne, my equal!

But now——

Pbo. Those glories with her champion perish!

Whose head secures you in the heart of *Cæsar*.

Ptol. But see, my sister; in her look, surprise,

And wild emotion eager to be heard.

Enter *Cleopatra*.

Cleo. Sir, I'm inform'd, great *Pompey* is arriv'd,
And that your counsel pauses to receive him.

Ptol. Your voice and gesture, Madam, speak reproach;
Which neither fits your state to give, or mine
To bear; kings are accountable to none.

Cleo. To more than subjects, by the laws of honour:
Their lustre stands on eminences fixt,

That the inferior world may gaze, and censure!

How vain is glory, when it gives not wonder!

How mean is majesty, that dares be thankless!

Ptol. Your cares for *Pompey* are at my expence.

Your bounty's great, for want of pow'r to give:

Were *Egypt* yours, your virtue wou'd have bounds.

Cleo. Were not your virtue limited, my pow'r
And right in *Egypt* wou'd to yours be equal.

I send, at least, to *Pompey's* aid, my wishes,

And that's a merit which your greatness wants.

Why go you not in person to receive him?

Ptol. I know myself, and know the state of *Pompey*.
Septimius and *Achillas* have their orders.

Cleo. Are those fit agents for your gratitude?

Owe you not your crown to *Pompey's* favour?

Ptol. Be due, what may, to him: now *Cæsar* claims it.

Cleo. Can you forget such godlike benefits?

Ptol. Was *Cæsar's* gold out-weigh'd by *Pompey's* speeches?

Has *Cæsar* less demands on gratitude,
Because he can confirm the crown he sav'd?

Cleo. But hapless *Pompey*, not reliev'd, must perish!

Ptol. And if reliev'd, you'll make my peace with *Cæsar*!

Fair sister, you may spare your intercessions,
They're lost on one, that knows their motive!
You live in hope, that *Pompey's* fortunes may
Retrieve your own; you think him bound t' enforce
My father's will, and therefore wish him pow'r;
This is the thin disguise your virtue wears!
Hence flows this torrent of benevolence!

But, Madam, know, the wiles of your ambition,
With *Pompey's* hopes, may perish in the port!

Cleo. Immortal gods! and dare you own the treason?

Ptol. I glory in the deed, that guards my crown,
And levels your presumption to obedience.

Cleo. Obedience to superiors must be due;
And who, in *Egypt*, is the queen's superior?
The force, and fortune of injurious arms,
'Tis true, have robb'd me of my regal power:
But my soul's empire is in me alone.

That soars above the reach of violence,
And from its heighth, with scorn regards your triumph.

Ptol. Be, then, that mighty monarch of your mind;
Rage on, and shew how ill you govern there,
While I content myself with ruling *Egypt*.

Cleo. First, Sir, redeem yourself from slavery!
From the pernicious counsellors that sway you!
That, thro' the heart of *Pompey* strike at me:
That with false politicks mislead your youth,
To brand our *Egypt* with eternal infamy!

Pbo. *Photinus*, Madam, dares avow the counsel.

Cleo. I spoke, Sir, to the king; when I descend
To you, then take with me that liberty.

Ptol. Pass it, my friend; the insult is to me.

Pbo. Therefore a subject less might bear it, Sir.

Ptol. I grant, her earlier birth shou'd give example;
But female imperfections must be borne.

She finds her hopes of empire lost with *Pompey*.

Cleo. I scorn the thought. If interest were my view,
I shou'd not plead for *Pompey*, but for *Cæsar*!

Ptol. Your secret views are to yourself best known.
To me they seem perplext, and intricate.

Cleo. Since you provoke me then, receive a secret,
That will, at once, confound your barb'rous counsels,
And make your merit in lost *Pompey's* blood
Hateful to *Cæsar*, as to gods, and me.

Ptol. Discharge this thunder then; I stand prepar'd;
And ready for the bolt.

Cleo. Attend and tremble.

When rude rebellion seiz'd on royal pow'r,
And drove our exil'd father from his throne;
To *Rome*, as to his only hope, (as now
Pompey to *Egypt* flies) he fled for succour;
And to incite the senate's nobler pity,
Myself and you attended his distresses.
Your age was unsusceptible of care,
But mine (or flattery deceiv'd me well)
Bloom'd in full beauty, and attracted hearts:
Yet of my conquests I shall boast but one:
Cæsar pretended love: I urg'd him to a proof:
He gave the noblest: he restor'd our *Egypt*.
Pompey was then his friend; him *Cæsar* wrought
At my desire, t' engage the senate's aid;
The eloquence of *Pompey* had success:
This gen'rous deed! (O dreadful piteous thought!)
Was the last product of their fading friendship.
But *Cæsar* stopt not there! the senate's aid
Was but a public act; his opening heart
Pour'd out his private treasure with his love,
And from the bounty of that secret flame,
We reap'd the profit of suppress'd rebellion.
My conscious father, on this truth reflecting,
Thought half, at least, was due to her that sav'd
The whole, and therefore at his death bequeath'd
Me equal sway, co-heirefs of his throne:
While you, unknowing of his noble motive,
Reproach his memory with partial care,
And make my right, by force of arms, your spoil.

Ptol. How plausible soe'er this tale may seem,
Yet, Madam, in my sense it ill agrees
With *Cæsar's* love, and your concern for *Pompey*.

Clco. Of that, be *Cæsar* judge. To you at least
It proves, that I prefer my fame to empire.

But since your tutors, Sir, have humbler views,
Pursue the ruin I have warn'd you of.

Send your assassins forth on *Cæsar's* foes,
And buy his friendship with an act of horror!

While for the pity I avow for *Pompey*,

On me fall all the bolts of *Cæsar's* rage!

Boast you your merit, and of me complain,
Then see, from what great *Cæsar* shall ordain,
Which most deserves, the king or queen to reign. }

[*Exit.*

Ptol. Was ever form'd so fierce, untam'd a spirit?

Pbo. Confusion and amazement seize my sense!

It must be fiction all! is she not woman?

Her spleen has forg'd this secret: for if true,

How cou'd her sex's pride so long conceal it?

Ptol. And yet—what profit cou'd the fiction yield?

Pbo. That answers all! it has foundation!

'Tis well we've time to arm against her power.

Ptol. Suppose the fate of *Pompey* were deferr'd?

Pbo. If that were merit, it will now be her's!

Nor cou'd your crown be sure from her reward!

Ambition is the only power that combats love.

And since, howe'er we're dazzled with his virtue,

Pompey's sure death is *Cæsar's* warmer wish:

With *Pompey's* head, we must supplant her beauty.

Ptol. It must—necessity will have it so!

Or *Pompey*, now, or *Egypt* is no more:

My kingdom, like a bark distress'd at sea,

Must, in the common danger, know no right,

Value, or property, in cumbrous treasure.

But when the freight destroy'd a people saves,

We undistinguish'd plunge it in the waves.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

CÆSAR *in* EGYPT.

Victoribus ipsis
Dedecus, & nunquam superum caritura pudore
Fabula. LUCAN. lib. 8.

A C T II.

Cleopatra, Charmion, and Photinus meeting them.

CLEOPATRA.

SINCE when, was this enlargement of your power?
To seize a slave, you knew employ'd by me?
Have you your master's order for this treatment?

Pho. I need no special order for my duty:
What I have done, I'll answer to the king:
In times of danger, safety is our law:
Were treasons only to be crush'd in form,
Traitors wou'd soon defy their punishment.

Cleo. Traitors!

Pho. Madam, I call that slave a traitor,
That durst betray the counsels of his prince!
I knew you restless, in the cause of *Pompey*,
And therefore had my eye upon your conduct.
I knew, if *Pompey* had advice to fly,
You only durst attempt to give it him:
This letter intercepted, proves my fears
Were justly grounded: *Cæsar* and the king
Will judge, by this, how much you serve their int'rests.

Cleo. I tell thee, slave, if thou art judg'd by *Cæsar*,
Thy head stands forfeit to thy insolence—

Pho. *Cæsar* admits no female counsellors.

Cleo. Dares then thy scurril tongue—avoid my presence.
[Exit *Pho.*

Char. Excuse a heart concern'd for your repose.
But since depriv'd of pow'r t' avenge your wrongs,
Why shou'd your vain resentment urge your foes
To offer more? This scorn you shew *Photinus*,
Who, at his pleasure sways the ductile king,
Will but incense him to abuse that influence,
And add by fresher insults to his triumph.

Cleo. I mock the short-liv'd power that dares insult
me!

For know, my *Charmion*, *Cæsar's* on our coasts!
Spite of their spies, and vigilance of state,
From his own hand, this morn have I receiv'd
Advice, he brings his legions into *Egypt*!
That his indulgent stars, by *Pompey's* flight,
Now lead him, where his first ambition calls,
To crown his conquests, by a wreath from me.
I weigh not, whether true, or feign'd his flame;
Me it suffices, 'tis the style of love.
Make him, ye gods! but capable of passion,
And leave the forming of his heart to me!

Char. Still more amazing! can you ever hope
That *Cæsar* will be won, by your defiance?
Your open and avow'd concern for *Pompey*!
Which now this letter will, produc'd, confirm.
Will *Cæsar* make a mistress of his foe?
Of one that wou'd arm *Egypt* to oppose him,
And, by the aid of *Pompey*, blast his laurels?

Cleo. Alas, my *Charmion*, thou'rt unskill'd in heroes!
Love there is born, but from superior virtue!
Think'st thou, a *Cæsar's* soul can e'er be mov'd,
But by a heart, ambitious as his own?
As jealous, as tenacious of its glory?
Shou'd I, to serve his interests, injure *Pompey*;
His sword might spare, but honour wou'd despise me.
No! to deserve him, he shall find me grateful.
My just concern for *Pompey*, though his foe,
Demands his admiration, not resentment.
Soon is the lover lost, we fear to lose;
But while, for *Pompey's* sake, I brave that danger,
Cæsar will envy, what a lower mind
Wou'd hate. But see, the holy priest returns;
I sent him to enquire of *Pompey's* doom.

Enter Achoreus.

O speak, *Achoreus*, what thy looks presage!
How have the gods dispos'd of hapless *Pompey*!

Acho. O! that my age had never seen this day!
Or that *Pharfalia's* field had left no blood
In *Cæsar's* foes, to stain the shores of *Egypt*!

Cleo. Give me the whole, and blend my tears with
thine.

Acho. Hear then the fate of *Pompey*, and deplore!
When, from his ships, he saw the spacious beach
Cover'd with gazing crouds, and at their front,
Our shining troops, in stately order rang'd;
The martial music sounding from our gallies,
With gaudy streamers making from the port;
His quickning eye confess'd a new-born joy!
Concluding that our grateful king design'd,
In person, and with honours, to receive him.
But when, at length, he found but one poor boat
Sent forth, fill'd only with a chosen guard;
And those without the king, to grace his welcome;
His fate he saw, yet wou'd not seem to see;
Silent he stood, with eyes resign'd, and dauntless;
Or anxious only for *Cornelia's* fears;
Turning to whom, in care-concealing smiles,
"Compose thy heart, he cry'd! myself alone
"Will tempt the doubtful gratitude of *Egypt*;
"Where, if I fall, thy flight may yet revenge me:
"In *Afric*, still, our firm allies make head,
"Thy father, and my sons, enforc'd by *Juba*;
"There will thy fortune find a kinder welcome
"Or if the gods refuse their arms success,
"Cato will own our cause, tho' gods forsake it."

Cleo. O! thou hast giv'n *Cornelia's* pangs to me!

Acho. During this conflict of their mighty hearts,
The skiff, that bore the bloody crew, drew near;
From whence, *Septimius*, to disguise their purpose,
I' th' *Roman* language hail'd him emperor.
"Descend, great Sir, he cry'd; this shallow bark
"Avoids the sands, that bar our larger vessels;

“ This, Sir, secure will waft you to the king,
 “ Who waits impatient on the beach t’ embrace you.”

The destin’d hero of this vile abuse
 Tho’ conscious, saw, ’twas now no time to parley.
 When taking, from his friends, and mournful wife,
 A short farewell; with that majestic air,
 Went forward to his fate, as when the car
 Triumphant bore him through the streets of *Rome*.

Cleo. Were there no friends attended him to shore?

Acho. But one—the bark too narrow for his train,
 His freed-man *Philip* follow’d him.

Of what I speak, by him was I inform’d,
 The faithful witness of his fate.—At length,
 The crew, secure of their deluded prey,
 Now change their looks, and sullen ply their oars,
 As if some criminal condemn’d they bore;
 Nor on the way vouchsafe his cares a word.
 Observing this, he drew his tablets forth,
 Perusing there some notes of an oration,
 Which for his royal audience he had form’d:
 Anon, o’ercharg’d with sighs, he turn’d his eyes,
 Throwing a last long look to sad *Cornelia*,
 Then to himself, or but to *Philip*’s ear,
 From *Sophocles*, this fragment he repeated:

“ The great and free, when fugitives, are slaves;
 “ And where they seek protection, find their graves.”
 O spare the rest.

Cleo. Proceed! my eyes are full.

Acho. The shore now gain’d, they warn him to dis-
 bark.

And while, to raise him, *Philip* reach’d his arm,
Achillas, from behind, the bloody signal gave;
 At which *Septimius*, with his ruffian *Romans*,
 Bury’d at once their daggers in his breast!
 At their repeated blows, one deep groan he gave,
 When covering with his robe his closing eyes,
 At his assassins feet, the great—the murder’d *Pompey* fell.

Cleo. Ye gods! who give up nations to the sword,
 When this flagitious deed your bolts shall punish,
 Charge not the place, but persons with the crime!
 The blood of *Pompey* was by *Romans* shed!

Let o'er *Egyptian* roofs your vengeance pass,
And hurl your thunder on the tow'rs of *Rome*.

Acho. Nor ends, in death, th' un hospitable deed :
Living, and dead, is *Pompey* still mis-us'd !
His head, by fierce *Septimius*, from the neck
Divided, on *Achillas'* spear is borne,
In triumph thro' the croud, to *Ptolomey* ;
As if some captive pirate they had slain,
Or, as their braver swords had conquer'd *Pompey* !
His mangled corps committed to the waves,
Like a wreck'd vessel bulges on the sands,
And stains, with crimson infamy, our shores ;
While, at the dreadful fight, *Cornelia's* cries
E'en to the beach are heard, and pierce the heav'ns in
vain.

Cleo. Heart-breaking woe ! what virtue can support it !

Acho. What fate attends her, to the gods is known.
For on the instant we perceiv'd her sails
Unfurl'd, and making to the seas for flight,
On which *Septimius*, to complete his crime,
With six large vessels labours her pursuit.

Cleo. Arise, ye sudden shades of night ! black storms,
Or kinder tempests, shield her from his power.

Acho. And now our troops retreating to the palace,
In solemn march precede the trunkless head,
On which the shudd'ring croud with horror gaze :
Some hear it thunder ! these an earthquake feel !
Dreading the wreck of nature for the crime !
The faithful *Philip*, tho' o'erwhelm'd with grief,
Bears, from the waves, his master's sad remains,
And tho' a mean, a pious funeral pile,
And for his ashes, a poor urn prepares.

Cleo. Which conqu'ring *Cæsar* might behold with
tears.

Acho. Confirm the omen, *Isis*, for he comes !
These winds that blow, shall waft him to our shores.

Cleo. What means thy transport ? ought of *Cæsar* ? say,
And dissipate the sadness thou hast rais'd.

Acho. While pensive on *Cornelia's* flight we gaze,
From ear to ear a joyous murmur flies,
Bursting anon to shouts : Lo ! *Cæsar* comes !

At this all eyes are turn'd to seize the fight !
 When from behind the swelling ocean's hill,
 Behold, a naval city climbing to the view ;
 Their sails, all gilded by the glaring sun,
 Confound the curious, that would count the numbers.

Cleo. It is ! it must ! it can be only he !
 Tremble, ye tyrants, for your impious power !
 The gods are just, and send their *Cæsar's* arms,
 T' avenge the injur'd, on the guilty head !

Acho. Behold the king ! incens'd he seems ! perhaps
 The fight of me offends ! for since my voice
 Declar'd for *Pompey*, I have lost his smiles :
 Permit me, gracious Madam, to retire. [Exit.

Enter Ptolomey.

Ptol. *Achillas!* yet a moment stay the guard !
 First will I prove, if she avow the treason.
 Madam, my converse with you now is short !
 Examine well this character.

Cleo. 'Tis mine.

Ptol. 'Tis well—now say that you were *Ptolomey*,
 And I, your captive, had betray'd your counsels,
 What treatment had this treason merited ?

Cleo. Had I been king, that treason had been counsel,
 And to the blood of *Pompey*, *Cæsar's* hate
 Preferr'd.

Ptol. Your own confession has condemn'd you,
 And *Cæsar* shall himself approve my justice.

Cleo. Must that then prove me criminal to *Cæsar* ?

Ptol. The proof is fair, as is the fact notorious !
 Was not th' attempt to save the foe of *Cæsar* ?
 And keep his title to the world disputed ?

Cleo. You speak, as if my crimes, like yours, were writ
 In blood. Once more, I warn you of your fate ;
 Provoke not *Cæsar*, by new wrongs to me.

Ptol. Fear not, your conduct shall have all its merit !
Cæsar shall know the charms you use t' engage him,
 Shall fairly see his friends, from enemies.

Achillas, ho!

Enter Achilles with Guards.

Obeys your orders ! Madam,
Your own apartment bounds your liberty.

Cleo. Me to restrain, there needed not your guards ;
Tho' *Cæsar's* at our gates, I shou'd not, Sir,
Have flown to meet him : no, my sex's pride
Had been a bar sufficient, for your fears :
Yet for your own sake, name not my confinement,
No ! rather, let him think my absence, choice.

Tho' of my crown depriv'd, the world shall see
I guard its honour, in captivity.

While you, to *Cæsar's* feet, your sceptre bear,
He'll know the queen expects his homage, here.
And while his frown your proffer'd crown disdains,
A smile—shall lead this master of the world in chains.
[*Exit with Guards.*

Enter Photinus.

Pho. Some officers, express, from *Cæsar's* fleet,
(His fam'd lieutenants, *Antony* and *Decius*)
Intreat immediate audience.

Ptol. Give them entrance.

Enter Antony, Decius, and Guards.

Dec. From the great *Julius*, health to *Ptolomey*.

Ptol. Permit me, *Romans*, to embrace the heroes,
That grace our *Egypt*, with commands from *Cæsar*.

Ant. My separate duty, Sir, attends the queen
In private audience—yet I see her not !

The fair co-regent ! your colleague in power !

Ptol. Let me, with grief, impeach a sister's virtue !
But, Sir, her actions ill deserve that title :

Her claim to empire, as a foe to *Cæsar*,
Stands forfeit to his mercy, and the state.

And therefore are these palace walls her prison.

Ant. I come not, Sir, to hear her crimes recounted ;
Of those our general himself will judge !

To him your accusation must appeal.

My plain commission asks a personal audience ;

Which *Cæsar's* will, by me, once more demands.

Ptol. The will of *Cæsar* be obey'd—*Photinus*,
Let *Antony* have audience of the queen.

[*Exe. Ant. and Pho.*

Now, Sir, *Cæsar's* commands to *Ptolomey*?

Dec. Short is my message, and from *Cæsar*, thus.
To know if royal *Ptolomey* is leagu'd
In arms with *Pompey*, or adheres to *Cæsar*!
If *Cæsar* is oppos'd, he knows his course;
'Tis forward, thro' your walls, with wasteful war:
But, if your due submission owns his power,
His veterans, like jocund hinds from labour,
Shall pour, this instant, on your shores,
To greet as friends, and give your crown protection.
Thus says the *Roman Emperor*—Now, Sir,
Our signal to his fleet attends your answer.

Ptol. Thus then, to mighty *Cæsar*, *Ptolomey*:
Tho' *Egypt* long has been to *Rome* a province,
Yet since *Pharsalia* gives to *Rome* a master,
Who but that master can demand our homage?
Pass then the arms of *Cæsar* thro' our gates.
And, Sir, to ratify our firm adherence,
To bury ev'n suspicion of resistance,
'This instant shall our private troops retire,
And southward from the city form their camp,
'Till *Cæsar's* service, or his will, recal them.

Dec. *Cæsar* shall know the speed of your compliance:
But how, Sir, has your power dispos'd of *Pompey*?

Ptol. As heav'n had mark'd him, for the foe of *Cæsar*.
Whose cause the gods so gloriously have own'd:
And as the sword, in *Pompey's* hand, but serv'd
To make the streams of *Roman* blood perpetual,
Our councils have disarm'd, and seiz'd on *Pompey*;
To grace th' arrival of victorious *Cæsar*.

Dec. A prince so young, and careful for his state,
Merits as well our wonder as protection.

Ptol. My merit is my zeal for *Cæsar's* glory.

Dec. Haste, *Quintius*! from the northern tower, let fly
The eagle, signal of our amity.
How will the heart of godlike *Cæsar* glow,
Folding his arms around the vanquish'd *Pompey*!

[*Apart and Exit.*

Ptol. These *Romans*, who contemn the thrones of kings,
By this their insolence to majesty,
Betray the rancour of their vain ambition.
'Tis not the king they hate, but kingly right.
They scorn our crowns from want of birth to wear them:
There's what recoils against their secret wishes,
And turns desponding envy, into virtue.

Enter Photinus.

Now, *Photinus*, the news from *Antony*?

Pho. What greatly will surprize, and may preserve you.

Ptol. Hast thou, from his audience, ought collected?

Pho. Nothing from words: for I was warn'd aloof.

But if my eyes are faithful, yet enough
To know, whate'er might be his charge from *Cæsar*,
The secret errand of his heart was love.

Ptol. Thou tell'st me wonders! what grounds th' as-
sertion?

Pho. Whether at *Rome*, or here, he caught the flame,
I know not; but his gesture, his approaches,
Spoke more respect, than *Romans* pay to crowns!
His looks, his heaving bosom, his confusion,
Confest a foul surpriz'd, astonish'd and subdu'd!
She, conscious of the wounds her form had given,
With all the blandishments of glancing beauty,
With softning smiles, indulgent to desire,
Unloos'd her charms, to make the conquest sure.
Anon, to strike him with her various darts,
When, to his speech, her seeming woes reply'd,
A stealing shower of tears roll'd down her cheeks,
Like dew-drops trickling o'er the bloom of roses.
When turning to disguise the grief, her eyes
Encountring my observance, I retir'd,
Not chusing, while I heard not, to offend her.

Ptol. Cou'd you not guess the occasion of her tears?

Pho. I judg'd them artful, to precede her story,
To heighten her distresses for compassion.

Ptol. If *Antony* shou'd love, love may befriend
Her cause to *Cæsar*.

Pho. Or may ruin it.
Think you, proud *Cæsar*'s heart will brook a rival?

Here's ground, at least, to give him jealousy.
 If it succeeds, her boasted empire ceases!
Cæsar will never be the slave of beauty,
 Tamely to court, and kiss the chain that galls him:
 No, Sir, her truth suspected, sets him free:
 Or to be more the hero, his contempt
 May give her as a slave to *Antony*,
 Whose humbler heart may think the donor bounteous.

Ptol. Confusion! how she plays her sex's wiles!
 The whole artillery of love to thwart me!
 Her eyes wou'd lift his legions in her cause,
 And be the mistress of mankind, for empire.

[*A loud shout.*

Pho. But hark! these acclamations from the port
 Speak *Cæsar* near our shore.

Ptol. Haste then to greet him.
 Some fitter time shall weigh this secret.—Lift!

[*Trumpets.*

Again the signal trumpet, from our gallies,
 Calls us to meet this master of the world!
 His pow'r must judge this prize, for empire play'd,
 Betwixt the monarch, and ambitious maid;
 But if ambition be his fiercer flame,
 The head of *Pompey* shall out-blaze the dame. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE opens to the Port of Alexandria.

Enter on one side Ptolomey wearing his crown, with Photinus and Attendants. From the upper end, the Roman Lictors and Officers with their fasces and military ensigns, &c. While they range themselves on each side the scene, shouts and trumpets are heard. After which Cæsar advances, and Ptolomey, kneeling, addresses him.

Ptol. Lord of mankind! Imperial *Julius*, hail!
 Lo! at thy feet, as to the first of men,
 In awful homage, bows thy prostrate *Egypt*.
 The sun, and *Cæsar*, now, have equal empire:
 Far as his beams extend, *Cæsar* has conquer'd!
 Nor, to the teeming banks of *Nile* more wisht
 His genial heat, than *Julius* to our shores!

What kings are safe, that dare oppose his glory?
 What people free, whom *Cæsar's* arms protect not?
 Take then this happier province to thy care,
 While thus her tributary prince resigns
 His crown, to be adorn'd by *Cæsar's* brow.

[Presenting it to *Cæsar*.

Cæs. Arise, young prince, nor let thy transport lose thee.

Wou'dst thou appear the king, retain thy crown;
 The laurel better suits the brow of *Julius!*
 Crowns are the trophies of tyrannic sway.
Romans may conquer, but disdain to wear 'em.

Ptol. Ye gods! what yet unheard-of virtues have
 You form'd, that only *Roman* souls can reach?

Cæs. Call it not virtue, to resist what tempts not.
 What heirs from heirs receive, blind Fortune gives,
 Where birth prefers the infant to the man!

While heritable crowns entail not virtue,
 The boast were greater to bestow, than wear them.

But whence has *Ptolomey* this single power
 Of vast munificence, where equal right
 Might claim an equal merit from the bounty?

Beware no private wrong to *Cleopatra*
 Prompt thee to offer up a power usurpt,
 Lest beauty shou'd prevail, on power superior,
 To right her sufferings, with the sole dominion.

Ptol. If *Cæsar's* enemies deserve to reign,
 None stand before the claim of *Cleopatra*.
 If on her will the fate of *Rome* had rested,
Pharsalia's field had given the palm to *Pompey*.

Cæs. Were your fair sister, prince, the foe you speak
 her,

Her spirit wou'd, in person, have declar'd her.

Ptol. But if great *Cæsar's* foes deserve their chains,
 Then gentle are the bonds of *Cleopatra*.

Cæs. Let me conceive you, Sir; at once, be plain.

Ptol. What I have urg'd, then, plainly this confirms.

[Presents *Cleopatra's* letter to him, who seems to peruse it.
 Had not our vigilance cut short that notice,
Pompey, forewarn'd, had now revers'd his fate;
 Had headed troops in *Parthia*, or in *Afric*,

Might still have vainly rais'd the dust of war,
To choak the pass of *Cæsar*.

Cæs. Ha! revers'd!

Something tremendous must have caus'd this notice.

Pho. Take comfort, Sir, he staggers at the proof.

[*To Ptol.*

Cæs. Nor can I think her yet the foe of *Cæsar*!
The state of *Pompey* will resolve the doubt. [*Apart.*
Produce then *Pompey* to condemn the queen.

Ptol. Let *Cæsar* be obey'd—*Achillas*, ho!

[*To Achillas, who is supposed at some distance.*

Open the gazing throng, and to our view,
Advanc'd in air, upon thy javelin's point,
Present our evidence of faith to *Cæsar*.

[*Cæsar turning to the entrance, starts.*

Cæs. Stupendous vision! have my eyes their function!
Some god awake me from this frightful dream,
Or raise the living *Pompey* to the field,
That I may meet him there, less terrible!
Hence! from my view, remove the ghastly form!
Nor give weak nature these resistless pangs.

Phasalia now has drawn the tears of *Cæsar*.

Ptol. *Photinus*! oh! the storm is rising! save me!

[*Aside to Pho.*

Dec. How has young *Ptolomey* with words deceiv'd me?
Was this the seizure he had made of *Pompey*?

Cæs. Ev'n in the field, that fight were mournful,
But here, where benefits rely'd on safety,
Where obligations fenc'd him from suspicion,
To trample down the mounds of gratitude,
Inhospitably steel'd, and deaf to honour,
To strike the life to whom your crown was due,
Sets universal nature in alarm,
And warns his foes, even *Cæsar*, to avenge him.

Ptol. *Cæsar*! I grant the deed, that thus offends
thee——

Cæs. The deed! Immortal powers! is there a crime
Beneath the roof of heaven, that stains the soul
Of man with more infernal hue, than damn'd
Assassination? O my curdling blood!
Whene'er the image strikes upon my brain,

Involuntary horrors shake my frame,
And mock the force of intrepidity.

[*Ptolomey offers to speak.*

No more! Impartial justice wou'd be calm,
Nor shall unheard condemn: when *Cæsar* is
Himself, his patience shall endure to hear thee.

Dec. If virtue, or if honour might be judge,
Cæsar was never more himself than now. [*Apart.*

O *Pompey*, now might thy hard fate be envy'd!
If thy great spirit hovers yet in air,
Look down, and triumph, in the grief of *Cæsar*.

Cæs. Reflection has, at length, made way for judgment;

Now urge thy motives for the fate of *Pompey*.

Ptol. What words can save, what *Cæsar's* frown condemns?

If what is done to serve him, can be wrong,
Why strike his arms such terror thro' the world,
That not to serve him, seems the greater crime?
Where fear prevails, what conduct can be blameless?
Will *Cæsar* then resent a passion, which
Himself excites? Involuntary crimes?
Will he oblige the blind to see, the deaf
To hear, or the disorder'd brain to reason?
Must Nature change her course, to act his will?
The wretch that fears to drown, will break thro' flames,
Or, in his dread of flames, will plunge in waves,
When eagles are in view, the screaming daws
Will cower beneath the feet of man, for safety!
Not folly is more ignorant than fear!

If fear be guilt, 'twere guilt to give us fear;
Then let the dread of seeming *Cæsar's* foe
Answer, to *Cæsar's* arms, for *Pompey's* fate.
My life! my crown, are equal in thy power!

If *Cæsar* for an enemy cou'd weep,
What kind of pity must invade his eye,
When a mistaken friend endures his vengeance?

Cæs. If *Cæsar* can deplore an injur'd foe,
Can he, who boasts the wrong, expect his friendship?
Or vainly shall his friend presume, the crime
Will, at the cost of *Cæsar's* fame, be pardon'd?

But friend's a name I've not yet chose for thee ;
 'Twas what my heart had still reserv'd for *Pompey*.
 False and destructive is thy zeal for *Cæsar* !
 T' have sav'd that life, had giv'n mankind repose,
 And made *Pharfalia* glorious ! Tow'ring thought !
 With what transporting joy, the harras'd world,
 Had, in one peaceful, public chariot seen
Pompey and *Cæsar*, o'er their jars triumphant !
 That forward fruit, that harvest of my arms,
 Thy curst, officious, wasteful hand has ruin'd !
 To pass the crime, how might the world arraign me !
 How might the partial senate justify
 The rage with which their votes pursu'd me ?

Ptol. Were I but *Cæsar*'s foe, I might have mercy.

Cæs. Yet, let me not, to sooth my enemies,
 Swerve from the laws of conscious clemency ;
 How black and horrible foe'er the deed,
 'Tis not the fact, but will, creates the crime. [*Apart.*
 Thy youth and inexperience, prince, arrest
 My arm, and turn the eye of vengeance
 On elder criminals, thy flatterers.
 If thou wou'dst prove thy penitence sincere,
 Give up thy counsellors to instant justice,
 As due oblations to the shade of *Pompey*.

Pbo. 'Tis well ! the war's begun ! *Cæsar*, thy heart
 May yet repent this arrogance of pow'r. [*Apart.*

Cæs. And since the burden of imperial rule
 Out-weighs thy strength, call to thy present aid
 Thy sister's right, to share and grace thy throne.
 Had she been heard, what glory hadst thou gain'd !
 What shame, what ills, what intamy avoided !
 If possible, repair thy loss ; but haste !
 Think that each moment, 'till her right's restor'd,
 But swells thy debt of royalty usurp'd.

[*Exc. Ptol. Pbo. and Egyptians.*

O *Decius* ! was there ever day like this ?
 How sudden are the blows of fate ! what change,
 What revolution, in the state of glory ?

Dec. Glory and empire ever will have heirs.
 What *Pompey* once possess'd, is now enjoy'd
 By *Cæsar*.

Cæs. Yet the senate own'd his cause!
Which gave it, to the world, the stamp of virtue:
There his ambition got the start of *Cæsar*.

Dec. Virtue, like gold, will take the stamp from pow'r.
Yet truth must own, in what has pass'd this day,
Had *Cato*'s self been witness of your conduct,
He must with praise, or envy, have beheld it.

Cæs. *Cato* would term it but a specious bribe
For power: That *Pompey*'s blood was, in regard
To *Rome*, reveng'd, to court her senate's favour:
That *Cleopatra*'s beauty, not her cause,
Regain'd her crown: Yet *Cato* has his merits:
And men, one day, may change their thoughts of *Cæsar*.
The time may come, when his destructive arms
Shall well repay this ravage of the world,
And force them, by obedience, to be happy.

So when the swelling *Nile* contemns her bounds,
And with extended waste the valleys drowns,
At length her ebbing streams resign the field,
And to the pregnant soil a ten-fold harvest yield.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

CÆSAR in EGYPT.

*Effossam tumulis cupidè descendit in antrum ;
Illic Pellæi poles vesana Philippi
Fælix prædo jacet, terrarum vindice fato
Raptus* Luc. lib. 10.

A C T III.

SCENE, Before the Tomb of Alexander.

CÆSAR, DECIUS, ACHOREUS.

CÆSAR.

DECIUS, dismiss the train; yet guard the portal.
Observe the strictest order, in our watch:
These sons of Nile are faithless, servile, dangerous.
The fate of Pompey warns us to be wary.
When Antony returns, here let him find me.

[Exit Decius.]

Believe me, good Achoreus, thy disgrace
Commends thee to the breast of Cæsar: Here,
Thy virtue seems a greater prodigy,
Than all the brood, or monuments of Egypt.
Thy just humanity, thy zeal for Pompey,
Became thy venerable years; thy function:
When holy guides neglect themselves for heaven,
Nor fear t' advance their precepts by example,
'Tis then the gods are righteously rever'd.
Acho. Cæsar, thy virtues, knowledge, and thy power,
Incite me now to bolder acts of duty:
And since I find not, in thy calmer soul,
That fierce, untractable, remorseless nature,
Wherewith thy enemies asperse thy fame,

Let not my zealous grief offend thee, *Cæsar*,
If I confess I sigh for thy ambition !

Cæf. Where it opposes virtue, charge me freely !
Be bold ! If I am justify'd to one
Good man, the millions I offend are railers.
Virtue, like the sun, shines not for applause.

Acho. Ambition was my charge ! which when it climbs
O'er violated laws, tramples on virtue ;
Yet of the narrow mountain when possess'd,
The footing how unsure ! the fall how dreadful !
Perhaps by treason ! Treason has ambition !
Or say thou wert secure, how vain the glory !
To stand in clouds, on eminence, alone !
And view thy happier social slaves beneath thee.
E'en then must thou descend ! *Cæsar*, behold,
Fix on this mouldring monument thy eyes ;
Amidst the wonders that our *Nile* can boast,
This best might suit ambition's meditation !
Of all the spacious earth his sword subdu'd,
Great *Alexander*, now commands but this.

Cæf. Soft, *Achoreus* ! Lies *Alexander* here ?

Acho. Here rest his bones ! His bounds of empire, now.

Cæf. Here might indeed the moralist declaim.

Acho. Here, when his ruthless desolation ceas'd,
When his tumultuous soul cou'd waste no more,
Himself receiv'd, and gave his slaves, repose.

Cæf. Thus, when the awful gods wou'd scourge, or
bless

Mankind, they give unbounded power to one.
The vice, or virtues, of the prince, create
Their woes, or happiness.

Acho. Wou'd'st thou from hence
Infer, that *Rome*'s obedience to thy sway
Might make her, with the loss of freedom, happy ?
E'en benefits impos'd, are gentler chains.
Or say the yoke of *Cæsar* might fit easy ;
Yet, who shall hold the reins when *Cæsar* is no more ?
Perhaps a *Tarquin*, or a *Ptolomey* !
A prince of savage, or too ductile nature.
Why, then, O *Cæsar* ! this discordant rage ?
Why is imperial *Rome*, that sway'd the earth,

Herself at variance with posterity ?
 Why wage thy veterans war, without a foe ?
 Why are her fires by sons, brothers by brothers slain ?
 As mutual murder were the public welfare.
 But, *Cæsar*, I am bold ; pardon these tears !
 Think that benevolence deplores, not envy chides thee.

Cæs. What thou hast urg'd, *Achoreus*, heaves my heart !
Cæsar forgets not nature, tho' victorious :
 I grieve to think the innocent involv'd
 In ruins which the guilty have deserv'd !
 Had *Rome* her ancient virtue, with her pow'r,
Cæsar had trembled at her civil wars :
 But luxury, corruption, vice and fraud
 Have drain'd her down, e'en to the lees of *Rome*.
 Her honours, now, by public price are bought ;
 Her magistrates, by blows, not votes, elected :
 Thus is the carcase of her freedom torn
 By beasts of prey, each scrambling for his share.
 Where men are wolves, what wretch wou'd be the lamb ?
 Where laws are violated, arms are virtue.

Acho. Is *Cæsar* arm'd to guard her laws ?

Cæs. Be patient.

Pompey, in war, was great : *Cæsar*, successful :
 We fought, 'till *Rome* was glutted with our spoils ;
 'Till she grew jealous of the swords that serv'd her.
 While I was absent, *Pompey's* arts prevail'd ;
 He wrought the senate to a partial vote,
 That *Cæsar* from his charge shou'd be recall'd,
 And glorious *Pompey* in his pow'rs confirm'd.
 And to give greater lustre to his honours,
 They robb'd my conquests of their due demands ;
 Nor triumph, nor a province, was assign'd me.

Acho. *Rome* to her generals ever had been grateful.
 This look'd, indeed, as if she fear'd her *Pompey*.

Cæs. On this I paus'd :—And to assert my right,
 By their own Tribunes sent my grievances,
 With gentle terms of peace, and due submission :
 Their haughty Consuls, in contempt of *Cæsar*,
 And of those laws that make the Tribunes sacred,
 Drove them with violence from out the senate :
 And, at the hazard of their lives, from *Rome* :

Then call'd forth *Pompey* to oppose me. Him,
 Because she fear'd, *Rome* chose her general ;
 And her, because I knew not fear, my arms
 Defy'd.—I pass'd the *Rubicon*—She trembled !
Pharsalia, since, has prov'd which gen'ral's sword
 Might better have advanc'd her glory.—*Cato*,
 'Tis known, no less oppos'd the power of *Pompey* ;
 Or if his virtues since have join'd his cause,
 'Twas that he thought, since one must be her master,
Rome wou'd have gentler chains from *Pompey's* nature.
 This—*Cæsar* dares deny ; and time shall prove.
 If *Cæsar*, then, is question'd why his arms
 Oppose the virtues he admits in *Cato*,
 Or why he makes them not his practice ? *Cæsar*
 Replies,—He will—but will first have power :
 When that, like fate, is uncontestable,
 Then *Cato's* lectures shall give laws to *Cæsar*.

Acho. *Cæsar*, the gods, alone, can read the heart :
 Thy words, 'tis true, confirm me to revere
 Thy virtues ; heav'n best knows their secret motive.
 On this depend ;—the merits of thy cause
 Will prove, at last, the measure of thy fate.

Cæs. When fate shall call him, *Cæsar* is prepar'd.

Enter Decius.

Now, my *Decius* ! why wear thy looks this sadness ?

Dec. When *Roman* matrons wear the chains of war,
 What *Roman* bosom but regrets the triumph ?
 Never did *Pompey's* fate, as now, affect me !
 Pardon then, *Cæsar* ! if my sighs inform thee,
 The fair distress'd *Cornelia* is thy captive.

Cæs. *Cornelia* ! ha ! thy sighs become thee, *Decius*.

Dec. The fell *Septimius*, who pursu'd her flight,
 Demanding, at the port, immediate entrance,
 To lead his boasted captive on to *Cæsar* ;
 I thought a *Roman* matron's bonds unfit
 To grace the vaunting of a *Roman* traitor !
 And, therefore, stopp'd his triumph, with a guard,
 'Till *Cæsar's* further pleasure might be known.

Cæs. *Cæsar* shall thank thee, *Decius* ! and himself
 Will make his pleasure to *Septimius* known.

But haste! conduct us to this fair distress.
 When Roman virtue is oppress'd by fate,
 'Tis meet the victor on the vanquish'd wait. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, An Apartment near the Port.

Cornelia bound. Septimius speaking to the Roman Guards.

Sept. Why loiters thus your busy officer?
 Is this fit treatment for the friends of Cæsar?
 Was't not this arm, that gave him, at a blow,
 The head, that fam'd Pharsalia cou'd not reach?
 Must we, that bring him captives to compleat
 His conquest, wait, like suitors to present them;
 Mistaken Decius may repent this insult!
 I'll take no thanks, 'till Cæsar has reveng'd it.

Corn. Mistaken murderer? talk'st thou of vengeance,
 For any treatment, that insults thy crime?
 Cæsar, tho' steep'd in blood, abhors th' affassin!
 His arms, tho' impious, strike no coward blows!
 Shall murder claim the wreaths of conquest?
 If Cæsar's cause provok'd thy hate to Pompey,
 Why, like a soldier, fought'st thou not in battle,
 Where arm'd, where sword to sword thou might'st have
 charg'd him?

There had his wounds, at least, confest thee brave,
 And Cæsar, then, without a blush had grac'd thee.
 But as thou art detestable to man,
 'Tis some assuagement to Cornelia's woe,
 That even the foes of Pompey must avenge him.

Sept. Enjoy thy empty notions of dishonour!
 Decisive blows, in spite of railers, have
 Their merit. Cæsar knows the use of valour:
 And, for great actions, must have hands intrepid.

Corn. Why did I waste my breath on infamy!
 But frantic sorrow to the winds will talk! [*Apart.*]

Enter Cæsar, Decius, and Attendants.

Sept. Most mighty Cæsar! ere my tongue presumes—

Cæf. Cæsar disdains to hear—thy deeds have spoke
 thee!

Decius! disarm, and see him closely guarded,
Till injur'd dignity pronounce his doom!

Cornelia's bonds deform the pride of war!

These are not *Roman*, but *Egyptian* fetters.

The virtuous never wear the chains of *Cæsar*.

[*Cæsar* releases her. *Septimius* is bound and led off.]

Corn. O *Cæsar!* hadst thou conquer'd thus for *Rome*,
How greatly might this grace of power become thee!

But while thy sword is drawn against her laws;

O'er every *Roman*, whom thy arms distress,

Such specious comfort is injurious insult!

Cornelia cannot thank thee, for her woes!

If by some public crime I have deserv'd them,

Whence then this pity? If I'm innocent,

Let *Cæsar* name the power, that dares t' inflict them?

Cæf. When civil discords to the sword appeal,

From whatsoever part the wrong commences,

Neither can boast of innocence in war!

Corn. Give up thy own, but spare the fame of *Pompey!*
What senate own'd thy cause?

Cæf. What gods crown'd his?

But, oh! what gods, or senate, cou'd defend

The sword, that brings *Cornelia* to affliction?

Corn. *Cæsar*, thou hurt'st me more by this compassion,
Than all thy terrors, in the rage of war!

Yet boast not, victor, of thy sword's success!

Cornelia's fate has lost the cause of *Rome!*

My cruel destiny has fought for thee!

To that, a victim fell my first lord, *Crassus!*

By that was *Pompey* vanquish'd, not by *Cæsar!*

Thou, but the hand of fate that follow'd me!

But that, th' inevitable will of *Jove*

Had long prefix'd my ruin, to thy fortune,

The liberty of *Rome* had 'scap'd thy chains,

Nor had thy impious arms o'er *Pompey* triumph'd.

Cæf. Alas, we talk on too unequal terms.

The gentlest truth, that justifies my arms,

Wou'd now appear a triumph o'er *Cornelia*.

Corn. *Cæsar*, no! so impartial is my heart,

Wert thou but innocent, my tears wou'd cease:

Had *Pompey's* fate been just, I might have borne it!

But while we see thy fierce ambition prosperous,
And *Pompey's* cause attended with his blood,
Mankind might think, that heaven itself were sack'd.
'That dæmons had usurp'd immortal power,
Revers'd their laws, and made rebellion virtue.

Cæs. Thus virtue, when misled, becomes injurious!
Thou talk'st of *Cæsar*, as if *Rome* were blameless!
As if her senate had preserv'd her free,
Nor long since sold her power to private hands!
While clam'rous guilt, and specious patriot zeal,
Wou'd cast on *Cæsar* the reproach of tyranny.
As if my wrongs, and insults, after service,
Were not the proofs of *Pompey's* usurpation:
Of his o'er-bearing their dependant votes,
To crush the fortunes of rejected *Cæsar*,
Whose only sword cou'd bar his way to empire.

Corn. Thou dost defame him, *Cæsar*; he was true,
Firm, and devoted to the laws of *Rome*.

Cæs. O *Cornelia*! O! 'tis with sighs I tell thee,
Pompey's ambition shone thro' all his arts!
Even to contempt of *Cæsar*, it inflam'd him.
Had he receiv'd my terms of peace with candor,
These desolations never had reproach'd us:
Each had been glorious in a private life;
Nor had *Cornelia's* widow'd arms deplor'd.

Corn. Provoking, gross insinuation! Peace!
Thou know'st thy terms were offer'd as a feint,
T' amuse the senate, and protract thy sentence.

Cæs. That feint shou'd have been prov'd: had I receded,
Then had his arms—But flatt'ring fame deceiv'd him;
'Twas ev'n his common boast, if he but stamp'd
His foot, what legions, at the sound, wou'd wait him!

Corn. Cou'd it be boast, to think his cause might call
'em?

Cæs. The cause of *Cæsar*—wanted not its numbers.

Corn. When violence and rapine sound to arms,
Bankrupts and prodigals are warm for war.

Cæs. 'Tis granted. *Pompey's* army was superior.

Corn. Superior far in virtue, not in spoils!
His troops were cumber'd with the sons of peace,
Men train'd to civil arts, to laws, and science!

Whom place and plenty had difus'd from toil ;
 Unskill'd in war, yet, for their birth-rights, *Romans!*
 Souls that disdain'd their bodies, when enslav'd ;
 And therefore left them, on *Pharfalia's* plain,
 To taint the air with *Cæsar's* shameful glory.

Cæs. When *Cæsar*, like the senate, shall misuse
 The trust the gods assign, let gods forsake him.

Corn. *Cæsar*, some say thou hast a human heart,
 O'er private sorrows melting to compassion.

Cæs. I feel *Cornelia's* woe, tho' she contemns
 My pity.

Corn. I retract the pride : My heart
 Is humbled, *Cæsar*, while the general woe
 Thus bends me to thy feet, with tears for *Rome!*
 Have pity on her wounds ! her sighs ! her groans !
 O yet relent ! and conquer with compassion !
 Compose the wailing world, and yield us peace !
 Thy tender parent, *Rome*, is not obdurate !
 I know her, by my own remissive heart !
 In bare imagination of the joy,
 It melts, forgets its private grief, nor more
 With *Pompey's* ruin will upbraid thy glory !
 O ! yet restore her freedom ! yet relieve her !
 Here end thy conquests ! Conquer *Cæsar*, now !
 And, like victorious *Sylla*, crown'd with vengeance,
 Relinquish that power, which gods nor men cou'd shake.

Cæs. While earth contains a *Roman*, that presumes
 With means coercive to reduce my power,
 All thoughts of peace are but inglorious dreams.
 Let *Julius* cease to be, or now be *Cæsar!*
Rome may detest, but cannot taint my power !
 What conquer'd *Roman* is not free to leave me ?
 What enemy, when captive, is not pardon'd ?
 What are the marks of *Cæsar's* tyranny ?
 But, O *Cornelia!* spite of all my boasts,
 Thy pale calamities upbraid success,
 And, like a chilling frost, deface my laurels !
Cæsar, at best, can but revenge thy *Pompey!*
 There shall thy tears yet triumph o'er his foes,
 And *Cæsar's* social grief revere his fame.
 But I detain thy sorrows from repose ;

CÆSAR in EGYPT. 41

What comforts *Egypt* can supply, command :

Decius, see thou her state be equal to
The *Roman* matron's dignity : her friends,
Her followers, all receiv'd like friends of *Cæsar*.

[*Cæsar* retiring to the end of the scene, meets *Antony*.
They seem to talk apart, while *Cornelia* speaks.

Corn. Am I, ye gods ! so fallen ! so greatly wretched !
That he, who bears unmov'd the groans of *Rome*,
Can lend a sigh to lost *Cornelia's* woe !
Yet dares not she be thankful ? Rigid fate !
While *Cæsar* is the foe of *Rome*, what great ;
What noble virtues, am I doom'd to hate ?

[*Exit*, led by *Decius*.

Cæs. But what, my *Marcus*, could so long detain thee ?

Ant. To *Cæsar* ever has my heart been open :
From thee, there's not a frailty there conceal'd !
Why was I chosen for this fatal errand ?
O ! I have drank my ruin, at my eyes !
Deform'd my faith, betray'd my truth to *Cæsar* !
From thee, as from a conqueror, I came,
Assur'd of triumph, but return a captive !
Her tow'ring charms at once o'erbore my soul !
I spoke for *Cæsar*, while I sigh'd for *Antony* !

Cæs. We, *Marcus*, will be ever friends ! a friend

[*Taking his hand*.

Outweighs th' indulgence of a short-liv'd joy.
Prove, that thy sighs prevail'd upon her heart,
And *Cæsar's* cancel'd hope resigns to *Antony*.

Ant. This bounty, *Cæsar*, binds me to the truth.
Hope had I none, but what my weakness form'd.
Pleading for thee, I trembled at success ;
While her advancing smiles gave me despair !
When, with thy conquests, I adorn'd thy flame,
A conscious pleasure sparkled at her eyes,
Unheedful of the wretch, that burnt, before her.
If love were criminal, despair has punish'd it.

Cæs. Despair and love ne'er vex the soldier long !
Or absence is a sure relief——If not,
When *Cæsar* shall dispose of provinces,
Egypt may fall to *Antony*——'till when——

Ant. May *Cæsar's* fortunes lead him to his wishes.

Cæs. Saw you my orders, to confirm her crown,
Obey'd?

Ant. During my audience, *Ptolomey*,
In state approaching, plac'd it on her brow:
On which the nobles offering to renew
Their homage; " Yet a while defer, she cry'd,
" This doubtful duty—Ere I take my crown,
" From *Cæsar* am I yet to know the terms.
" Of wearing it! my brother boasted to
" Deserve it whole: *Cæsar* perhaps has wrong'd him!"
Then darting her disdain around, she pass'd
The croud, and left them to their dread, astonish'd.
What haughty conflict labours in her breast,
Her private audience better will unfold.
But see, she comes! O *Cæsar* guard thy heart! [*Exit.*]

*Enter Cleopatra, who having made lowly reverence to
Cæsar, he gently approaches her.*

Cæs. Fair wonder of the Nile! this grace to *Cæsar*,
What service can deserve, what toils repay?

Cleo. *Cæsar*, I come to undeceive thy bounty!
A crown restor'd, which right, or innocence,
Might claim, reflects its lustre on the donor:
But let not *Cleopatra's* soul, by fraud,
Or vile concealment of a truth, receive it;
Which might, if known, have undeserv'd the favour.

Cæs. In what can truth be *Cleopatra's* foe?

Cleo. By *Pompey's* death, the earth and seas are *Cæsar's*.
But *Cleopatra*, had her power prevail'd——

Cæs. Had sav'd my rival to dispute the title.

Cleo. The charge is just. And had not spies pre-
vented——

Cæs. 'Twas not in spies, to intercept the virtue!
That still retains its merit, tho' abortive!

Cleo. Then *Cæsar* is the hero fame proclaims him!
Now I revere the grandeur I oppos'd!
My crown, in homage due to *Cæsar*, triumphs.

Cæs. If homage shou'd to dignity be paid,
Cæsar might, rightly, kneel to *Cleopatra*.
Her generous concern, for *Pompey's* fate,

Without the interest her charms might boast,
Alone had been assur'd of *Cæsar's* service.

Cleo. Since *Cæsar* gives me choice, that service,
As to the nobler motive, I ascribe to virtue.

Cæs. Yet beauty, if she please, may mend her choice !
Let us not rob the needy, for the great.
Love begs a little ! Virtue scorns reward ;
Conscious of duty, she content resigns
The thanks, that love with transport wou'd receive.

Cleo. No, in the lover, *Cæsar* wou'd be lost !
Love wou'd deplume the hero, to the swain,
And dress ambition in a vulgar merit.

Cæs. *Cæsar* might scorn, like other men, to love !
But *Cleopatra's* charms exalt her slave,
And crown his servitude, with dignity.

Cleo. This is the language of our menial courtiers,
Who, when their hearts are warm, despise our thrones,
And find an empire on a *Cynthia's* bosom :
But *Cæsar's* loftier views condemn the frailty.

Cæs. A soul so tow'ring, in a form so fair,
As it might dart despair to fighting kings,
Gives the rough *Roman* emulous desire.

Cleo. How wou'd such softness suit with *Cæsar's*
laurels ?

Cæs. Nor gods, nor men refuse the flame of love !
What is ambition, if not crown'd by beauty ?
Can proud pre-eminence, or vain degree,
Lift up the soul to equal heights of joy ?
Can all our pomp, our glory, boundless power !
To punish or reward, revenge or pardon ?
To right the injur'd, or restrain th' oppressor ?
To call forth merit from obscurity,
And give its rags to gaudy sloth or fraud ?
To chase rebellious kings ? To crown th' obedient ?
To give, if possible, the world our laws,
And even compel the stubborn to be happy ?
Can all these boasted attributes of power,
Be, in the pride of doing well, rewarded ?
In vain the course by martial speed is won,
If smiling *Venus* stands not at the goal !
In vain has conquest led me round the globe,

If in the richer circle of this zone
The treasure of the earth illudes my toil.

Cleo. O *Cæsar*! *Cæsar*! cease these flatteries!
Nor give my heart a prospect of delight,
Which only *Latian* beauties can enjoy!
Such transports, there, to merit might be due;
But our *Egyptian* dames are born too near
The glowing sun, to boast of *Roman* lustre!
What I might boast, too early cares deface;
And, like an eating canker, in the bud,
Have broke the slender promise of a flower.
But were I mistress of those real charms,
Which *Cæsar*'s lavish fancy has created,
He'd find my eyes, ambitious as his arms!
My first of love shou'd bless the first of men!
Gods! how the glorious image swells my soul,
T' have distant monarchs crouding to my court,
And, at my feet, their suppliant empires laid!
If, far behind the throng, some dazzling brow,
Circled with laurel, cast an awful look;
Shone o'er their heads, and darkned their pretensions!
How wou'd my transport, thro' the press, make way,
And dart, like *Venus*, to the arms of *Mars*.
While crowns and sceptres, catching in my robe,
In vain shou'd clog the flight of my ambition.

Cæs. Inchanting vision! O! the *Mars*! thou soul
Of *Juno*, wrapt in *Cytherea*'s form.

Cleo. Forgive these fallies of a wandering brain;
The fancy'd being is no more! 'tis lost!
For me, the gods have no such hero found!
Unless my vanquish'd heart—might call him—*Cæsar*.

Cæs. Be *Cæsar*, then—the *Mars* the gods assign thee!
O take me, goddess, gently to thy arms!
There hide my heart, and mould it to thy wishes!
By heav'n! there's magic in thy softning eyes!
So look'd *Idalian Venus* on the swain,
When, to her charms, the golden prize was giv'n.

Cleo. *Cæsar*, thou grow'st too fast upon my heart!
Spite of my boast,
My vaunting wild ambition, I retreat,

I shrink, and tremble at thy power! defend me!
Spare me! speak! for I cou'd hear thee talk for ever!

Cæs. Is this a time for words! when blazing charms,
Like glittering swords, in war, provoke the charge!
Come forth, thou fair defiance, to the field
Of love, and prove the prowess of thy beauty!

Hence, to some secret verdant bower remove,
By art or nature form'd for blisful love;
There wanton *Cupids* round thy couch shall fly,
And kindling flames, for ev'ry charm supply.
There shall, complete, the wreaths of *Cæsar* be,
And crown his conquest of the world in thee!

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

CÆSAR *in* EGYPT.

En altera venit
Victima nobilior: placemus cæde secundâ
Hesperias gentes: jugulus mihi Cæsaris haustus
Hoc præstare potest, Pompeii cæde nocentes
Ut populus Romanus amet——— *LUC. lib. 10.*

A C T IV.

PTOLOMEY, ACHOREUS.

PTOLOMEY.

TALK not of comfort to a wretch forlorn!
My right, my hopes of empire have their period!
My haughty sister, in her charms triumphant,
Now moulds the heart of *Cæsar*, to my ruin!
Her vengeance, like a whirling eddy, draws
Me headlong down, ingulph'd, to rise no more!
While *Cæsar's* conscious tyranny enjoys
The fruit of my ingratitude to *Pompey*;
Yet swells his fame, with insults for the service.
Acbo. Yet, Sir, be calm; impartially reflect
On *Cæsar's* conduct: you upbraid him now,
That in resentment he regards his glory:
When was it known he made it not his idol?
To hope his friendship from the blood of *Pompey*,
Was mixing *Cæsar* in the herd of men!
But since the awful gods distinguish him
With a superior sway, to bow mankind
Beneath their uncontestable decrees;
Think it their will, and make obedience virtue.
Ptol. Can I then yield up, to his rage, my friends,
For due obedience to their sovereign's will?

Acho. Cou'd you abandon *Pompey* ! such a friend !
And perish, to protect his murderers ?
Is *Cæsar* to be gain'd, by farther errors ?

Ptol. What course, in these extremities, can help me ?
This *Cæsar* chafes me, like the hunted lion !
The more I struggle in the toil, the more
I'm bound, girded, self-tangled, in his power.

Acho. Ev'n, at the worst, Sir, safer are you there,
Than in those hands that led you to the toil :
Might I be heard——

Ptol. O ! had I never heard
But thee, these miseries had ne'er befallen ;
Then *Cæsar's* honour had been here my guard !
Nor had the guilt of *Pompey's* blood pursu'd me !
O ! venerable sage ! yet help thy prince !
Assist me ! save me, from this nodding ruin !
And, with thy wholesome counsels, heal my heart.

Acho. Alas ! my prince, what's left, admits no choice !
Those counsellors, that shook, must save your crown !
They, or their master, must be *Pompey's* victim !
Without a murmur then, to *Cæsar* yield them.
The argument they urg'd for *Pompey's* fate,
Now holds a gainst themselves, necessity !
If there be room for mercy, may they find it !
Cæsar, appris'd that I declar'd for *Pompey*,
Holds me in some degree of trust and favour.
If then a punishment, on this side death,
May satisfy their crime, myself will beg
The mitigation, for my prince's honour.

Ptol. The virtues of *Achoreus* shall redeem it.

Acho. See, Sir ! *Photinus*, and *Achillas*, come,
With downward eyes, foreseeing what must fall !
Ill it befits *Achoreus* to insult
The grief which virtue warns me not to comfort.
Permit me to retire——Now, Sir, exert
The king ! be faithful to yourself, and reign ! [Exit.

Enter Photinus and Achillas.

Ptol. Why am I driven to these indignities ?
Why yield you not yourselves to *Cæsar's* mercy ?
Or, must I send you bound, like criminals ?

And come myself, in evidence against you ?
 If in your hearts there liv'd that truth you boast,
 When you perceiv'd his rage at *Pompey's* fate,
 Why stept you not undaunted forth, like men,
 To claim your share of glory, in the deed ?
 But basely . . . your prince deserted, lost,
 To stand, alone, the shock of his reproaches ?

Achil. If *Ptolomey* disdains to be himself
 Our judge, we scorn to kneel for *Cæsar's* mercy.

Pho. Nor came we, Sir, to justify our errors ;
 The infirmity of nature ; we confess them ;
Cæsar's vain-glory has deceiv'd our hopes !
 But if, for *Pompey's* fate, our blood must answer,
 Our sovereign's will, not *Cæsar*, shall condemn us.
 Your victims, Sir, shall be themselves your priests,
 And pierce these honest hearts that fail'd to serve you.

Achil. *Septimius'* hand has taught us how to die !

Ptol. *Septimius!* ha !

Achil. Yes, Sir, the insolence
 Of *Cæsar*, like a *Roman*, he resent'd !
 When, to complete his late *Pharsalian* conquest,
 He brought *Cornelia* captive, to his presence,
 The tyrant's pride disdain'd to give him audience,
 And, in the bonds his prisoner wore, confin'd him :
 The sting of which disgrace so swell'd his heart,
 That the same dagger he employ'd on *Pompey*,
 In his own breast he plung'd, in scorn of *Cæsar*.

Pho. The noble, *Roman*, soul !

Ptol. *Septimius* dead !

Achil. I saw him, on the payment, stiff and breathless.

Pho. Now what's this mighty tyrant's outside greatness ?
 That storms at your ingratitude to *Pompey* ;
 And while he reaps the profit of your crime,
 Yet stiles his treatment of *Septimius*, virtue !
 That daring hand, that gave his pride the world.
 But all is of a-piece ! Not crowns escape him !
 The sov'reign lord of *Egypt* is his slave,
 And, in his sight, must crouch, and lowly bend
 To watch th' imperious bidding of his eye !
 Must give up all, his friends, his empire, honour,
 The yet untainted honours of his race,

A royal sister's violated fame,
To glut the riots of his pamper'd power.

Ptol. Said'st thou my sister!—born for my undoing!

Pho. This night, devoted to voluptuous love,
These paramours, like deities, have revell'd,
In all the luxuries of sensual joy!

The scene selected for their amorous rites,
Is now that bower, she terms the *Paphian* court,
Herself the *Venus* there! the ambient lake,
Which from a thousand gurgling fountains flows,
A stately train of silver swans surround,
Like naval scouts to guard their citadel!

A signal streamer, from the window wav'd,
Raises or falls the golden drawbridge down,
To pass or to exclude attendant slaves,
As solitude incites, or cloy's desire:

A-down the distant vale, in order rang'd,
Silken pavilions form the camp of *Cupid*!
Where new delights for every sense are stor'd.

Their banquets beggar *Egypt* to supply;
As if they meant to waste that world he'd conquer'd.
Now bands of mimic maskers, light-heel'd *Gauls*,
Melodious virgins, or the warbling eunuch,
Beguile the languid intervals of love!
To soft enervate sounds, their souls dissolve,
As fame and virtue were the scorn of greatness.

Ptol. Discordant thunder drown their harmony,
And forked lightnings rivet their embraces!

Pho. Methinks I see her, in her am'rous dalliance,
Wanton, and toying with the fate of *Egypt*.

Ptol. Villain! how dar'st thou rack me with these
horrors?

Unable to avoid, or to revenge them.

Pho. 'Tis therefore to your view, Sir, I present them!
To give your vengeance choice, on whom to fall!
Whether on us, whose arms wou'd set you free,
Or on this wasteful tyrant, that enslaves you?

Ptol. What vaunting project brooding in thy brain,
To save thyself, wou'd plunge thy prince in ruin?

Pho. If, Sir, our lives can your lost crown retrieve,
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Take them! and bury, with our bones, the secret.

Achil. But if our prince dares urge us to the proof,
These hands, that have endanger'd, shall preserve him.

Ptol. So confident! unfold this mystery.

Pbo. The moment that I read, in *Cæsar's* rage,
For *Pompey's* death, the lowring fate of *Egypt*;
Conscious, that open force were vain t' oppose him;
I gave *Achillas* orders to detain,
Conceal'd within our walls, some chosen troops,
That might, in our distress, revenge our chains:
Cæsar returns, this evening, to the palace:
But knows not, that a subterraneous vault,
Beneath this town, whose entrance we command,
May bring your vengeance to his doors, and at
A blow—give *Egypt*, and the world repose.

Ptol. Now by the injur'd majesty of kings!
The vision wakes my soul! bright vengeance dawns!
O! for a moment of resistless ruin,
To crush the head of this enormous tyrant!
Gods! 'twere too much! the thought o'erbears my soul!
Ev'n *Pompey's* head, by *Cæsar's*, were atton'd,
And *Rome* wou'd owe her liberty to *Egypt*!

Achil. Nay more, the conquer'd world, to *Ptolomey*!

Pbo. Howe'er her senate favour'd *Pompey's* arms,
Yet his success had been, as *Cæsar's* dreadful!
Pompey preserv'd had been her equal master:
But both destroy'd, secures her friendship,
Confirms her freedom, and your fame immortal.

Ptol. But, oh! my friends, in vain is all this ardour,
Unless our hopes were sure of execution!
The secret passage I approve, but while
Surrounded by his guards, how may our force,
Without alarm, or chance of his escape,
Approach him! failing of our blow, we perish.

Achil. That, Sir, by hands who have access, shall
reach him.

Some daring spirits in *Cornelia's* train,
Impatient to preserve the *Roman* laws,
Already have embrac'd our enterprize.

Pbo. When next the tyrant deigns to give them
audience,

(Which oft, with smiles imperious, he allows,) Then sure and sudden shall the blow be giv'n! When on a signal, from the dreadful vault, Bursting like thunder, shall our troops rush forth, And e'en defy his guardian gods to save him.

Ptol. O thou hast fir'd my soul, with vengeful triumph!
Ifis! Osiris! Pharian gods ador'd,
 Incline this day propitious to our vows!
 How glorious will your sacred altars blaze,
 When such a victim to your vengeance bleeds!
 What terrors must this waster of the world
 Dismay, when from the teeming earth, revenge,
 And meagre death, impetuous shall assail him?
 So when the prouling wolf, on *Ætna's* vale,
 Thirsting for blood, o'erleaps the rural pale,
 High o'er his head the dreadful mountain roars,
 In streams erect the spouted sulphur soars,
 And boiling to the plain a blazing torrent pours.
 In vain the savage from the ruin turns,
 But ere he dreads his fate, amidst the deluge burns.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE opening to the Bower, &c.

Cæsar and Cleopatra appear sitting at a banquet, attended all by Women. Cæsar attentively reading letters.

Cleo. *Cæsar,* these last expresses have disturb'd you.
 Shall we walk forth? or ride? or sail the *Nile*?
 Perhaps this cell's too gloomy; shall we change it?

Cæs. The place might charm a deity: but while
 Those smiling eyes, with such a soft concern,
 Pour forth their quick'ning glances to my heart,
 Immortal powers might change their heav'n with *Cæsar.*

Cleo. *Cæsar,* howe'er this flattery charms my ear,
 My sense is not so lull'd, but that I saw
 You read those letters with a pensive eye!
 Why were they suffered to invade you here?
 Was this a place for business to intrude?

Cæs. 'Twas your command, my queen, I shou'd peruse them.

Cleo. 'Twas that my heart, then, cou'd refuse you nothing.

I'll know this secret, *Cæsar*, that affects you.

Cæs. Away, you jealous one! there! tire your patience. [Gives her the letters.]

Cleo. My jealousy is cur'd! nor wanted I
To search the secrets, but the heart of *Cæsar*.
Since you permit me, I no more am curious.

[Gives back the letters.]

Cæs. If I seem'd pensive, 'twas the lover's fear;
The fear of being torn from *Cleopatra*.

Cleo. Nay, then I am concern'd, to know the cause.

Cæs. The restless world, I find, envious of *Cæsar*,
Resolves to spin resistance to the last.

These letters from *Achaia*, bring me word,
That *Scipio*, *Appius*, *Juba*, lately join'd,
Have call'd on *Cato*, to command their forces;
Who from *Corcyra*, since, has put to sea,
To head the contest, and revenge *Pharsalia*.

Cleo. Alas, vain men! have they not try'd their *Cæsar*?
Since they prefer their ruin to submission,
'Tis but to march! to meet them! and to conquer!

Cæs. How soon, that march, from *Egypt* might recall me,

Was what o'ercaft my thoughts, for *Cleopatra*.

Cleo. As *Cæsar*'s fame, in arms, first warm'd her heart;
So what supports his glory, feeds her flame!
But vacant moments shou'd indulge desire!

Cæs. O cease, thou soft'ning fyren, thus to chant!
Lest, while I gaze, and listen to thy voice,
I bury, in those arms, the *Cæsar* that subdu'd thee!

Cleo. What is this secret charm, in martial men,
That more than others, finds our sex so easy?

Cæs. The brave, and fair, methinks, become the passion.

Cleo. And yet they tell me, *Cæsar*, once you lov'd
An *Ethiop*'queen! was it her crown that charm'd you?
How cou'd you bear a *Dæmon* in your arms?

Cæs. She serv'd sometimes to kill the soldier's care,
And guarded nature from the chains of beauty.
Soldiers but ill obey their fighting leader!

Cleo. Yet *Antony* has led victorious legions,
Tho' he now sends successful fights to love.

Cæs. For whom? successful fights! impossible!

Cleo. Indeed, I fear me, *Cæsar*, he's thy rival,
For while I gave him audience, his confusion—

Cæs. Was what became the softness of his errand.

Cleo. If he were guilty, you cou'd pardon—

Cæs. Pardon!

Were it his crime that *Cleopatra's* fair?

Shou'd I condemn him, that he thought like me?

Were not his passion justify'd by *Cæsar's*?

Cleo. *Cæsar*, I love you not, you're all ambition!

How can you love, so free from jealousy?

Cæs. Why shou'd I either doubt my friend, or wrong
My *Cleopatra*? Where I love; I trust!

A gen'rous flame's the vigour of the soul!

But shamefac'd jealousy is mean desire!

Where once suspicion enters, *Cæsar's* love

Must leave the banquet to the next invited!

But why these needless wiles, to alarm

A heart too willing of itself to yield?

Cleo. Forgive me, *Julius*! if a heart, like mine,
Thinks art a duty to insure its wishes!

Can I be too secure—I don't complain!

No! when I've cause, my suff'rings shall be silent.

Cæs. Thou soul of love—

Cleo. Let us have music, *Cæsar*.

A pleasing sadness hangs upon my heart,

Which I, methinks, wou'd sooth with harmony.

Cæs. Indulge the softness, and inflame thy *Cæsar*!

☉ *Rome*, thy envy of my fortune, now,

Were just! reproach me! hate me! stile me tyrant!

Let *Cata* rail, but thus let *Cæsar* triumph!

[Embraces her.]

[A trumpet is heard at a distance.]

Cleo. Whence that unbidden sound? Look forth, my

Charmion.

[Exit Charmion.]

Cæs. A trumpet! here!—can call on none but *Cæsar*.

Cleo. A thousand various apprehensions shake me:

Some rashness of the king, t'assert his power!

Cæs. Fear not, my queen, while *Cæsar* is thy guard.

Re-enter Charmion.

Cleo. Now ! th' occasion.

Char. Madam, 'tis *Antony*.

With earnest voice he hollows o'er the lake,
For speech with *Cæsar*.

Cleo. *Antony* !

Cæs. Your leave,
My queen, for his admittance.

Cleo. At *Cæsar*'s pleasure.

But let not me be present to his audience.

Cæs. Think you, I fear to trust your interview ?

Cleo. Cou'd it oblige my *Cæsar*, I might stay.
But in my sense, 'twere kinder to retire.

[*Cæsar leads her forth, and returns.*]

Cæs. I like not this alarm—Some new disorder !
I've been remis—but 'tis the life of *Cæsar*,
To struggle with annoyance.

Enter Antony.

Now, the news !

I read it, *Marcus*, in thy looks, unwelcome !

No matter, speak it whole, nor spare thy terrors.

Ant. *Cæsar*, be now thyself ! the terror's new !
The captains of thy legions mutiny.

Cæs. They must be quell'd ! Proceed ! their grievances,
Give me the terms of insolence, that spoke them ?

Ant. Tho' of themselves, too prompt to murmur at
Their toils, while *Cæsar* revels out the war !

I fear the gen'rous freedom you've allow'd

Cornelia's followers, has inflam'd the tumult !

In friendly bowls they mingle with our chiefs ;

Where sons with fires, brothers with brothers meeting,
Rush into former fondness ! Foes no more !

Remorse, and shame of mutual guilt, subdues 'em.

Now loud they curse the rashness of their cause,

Renounce their hatred, and embrace in love.

Swear, they, no more, will aggravate their crime ;

Nor glut, with *Roman* blood, one man's ambition.

Peace they resolve ! and as they're *Romans* born,

Are free, and have as ample right to end,

As *Cæsar* to commence the war.

Cæs. My patience!

Has conquest then so pamper'd them! so high,
In jauncing pride, that they disdain their rider?

Ant. Nor came they hither (thus they talk) to quell
Egyptian jars: nor, for a wanton's lip,
To prostitute the terror of their arms.

Cæs. Where, *Marcus*, may I face this bellowing herd?
That, like the lion, *Cæsar* may disperse them.

Ant. I left them swarming in the palace court,
Where *Decius*, to prevent the spreading flame,
Holds them in parley, while I made speed to *Cæsar*.

Cæs. 'Tis well; they shall be judges of their general!
It must be so! No time for cool resolves!

The cure must, like the malady, be desperate!

But, *Cleopatra*—No!—Staying to part,
Might let the torrent swell, to part us ever!

Befriend me, *Marcus*, in this exigence;
Wait thou the queen, inform her what has chanc'd,

Tell her, what dire convulsions tore me hence,

But that I left my friend, my dearer half,

To 'suage her fears, and mitigate my parting. [Exit.

Ant. What pleasing terrors fill, at once, my soul!

What solitude! what scenes of soft retirement!

The place in fuses languishing desire!

The fair alone, and pensive! *Antony*

Commission'd, as a friend, to sooth her fears,

To pour out all my full benevolence

Of heart, to calm her sighs for *Cæsar's* absence!

Tumultuous joy!—But oh! the torturing task!

How, in the friend, shall I conceal the lover?

How, for my rival, can I plead sincere?

When my own sufferings want her softer pity?

Why hast thou bound me, *Cæsar*, by thy trust,

To lose this crisis of complaining love?

Thy happier stars, thy pow'r, thy conquests, fame,

Have strew'd thy way with roses, to her arms!

But what, alas! can lift my hopes so high?

My laurels sprout but from the root of *Cæsar*;

Obscure, and shaded, by his loftier boughs:

Despairing *Antony*, at best, but brings

A bleeding heart, more passionately fond,
Yet that, forbid, by honour, to complain.

Enter Cleopatra.

Cleo. So soon dispatch, my *Cæsar!* *Antony!*

[*Surpriz'd.*

Ant. Receives this honour, by the leave of *Cæsar.*

Cleo. My trembling heart! What would thy fears suggest?

The leave of *Cæsar!* did you ask it?

Ant. No!

Cleo. Did he impose it? say! or did he think
The bounty greater, to prevent entreaty?
Why has his absence thus insulted me!
That from another's mouth, I must receive,
What *Cæsar's* will decrees of *Cleopatra!*

Ant. Cou'd you be calm, you'd find his anxious love—

Cleo. Talk not of love! his heart is all ambition!
Beauty has only charms, for useless hours!
But the lov'd idol of his soul is power!
To that, as to his deity ador'd,
He kneels, and thinks no vows but those are sacred!

Ant. Had you been witness of his pain to part,
How his conflicting soul for *Cleopatra*—

Cleo. Why staid he not himself, to satisfy
My heart? can mine be eas'd by deputation?
Assign'd, like irksome bus'ness, to a proxy?
Ev'n bus'ness is preferr'd to *Cleopatra!*
Has wedlock bound me tame to his obedience,
Thankful to wait his leisure of desire?
Have I not scorn'd all pomp of bridal honours?
Deaf to the distant sighs of *Asia's* kings,
To make my heart a present worthy *Cæsar?*
Yet came I free, and spotless to his arms,
Unclogg'd with languid laws of happiness.
And can I bear this cold prudential flame,
That when his int'rest calls, obsequious flies,
Calm to my love, regardless of my peace?

Ant. Am I forbid to vindicate his love?

Cleo. O, had he ever lov'd, he wou'd have thought
The worst of tortures bliss, to silent parting.

Ant. Has *Antony* offended *Cleopatra*?
Is *Cæsar's* love, from ought I've said, suspected?
Name but wherein, and execute his vengeance!
Here with this dagger wreak it on my heart!
For I dare die, to prove the faith of *Cæsar*.

Cleo. Forgive these fallies of a heart alarm'd:
Too fond and faithful, for its own repose!
I have offended you! Passion uncurb'd
In presence of the innocent, is insult:
If I am not unworthy of your pardon,
Be kind, and dissipate my doubts of *Cæsar*.

Ant. Ye gods! how great! how soft her disposition!
[*Apart.*

Cleo. What dire mischance cou'd force him thus away?

Ant. His life! his glory! love! were all at stake!
From causes, now, too tedious to relate,
His menacing Centurions mutiny!
Flush'd with success, and vain of services,
They call their general to account his conquests!
Had he not timely flown, to quench the flame,
The ruin might, ere this, have reach'd him here.
He knew, that parting love counts hours but moments—
And therefore seiz'd that moment to preserve you.

Cleo. How are we sure he may suppress this tumult?

Ant. Banish your fears? leave *Cæsar* to his fortune!
His genius never, at his need, forsakes him;
This cloud will pass; let but his view confront them,
His piercing eye, like the *Gorgonian* shield,
Shall turn this big-mouth'd monster into-stone!
Then when like *Perseus* he returns, in triumph,
Preserv'd *Andromeda* shall clasp the hero.

Cleo. You *Romans* want not wiles of adulation!
You sooth and play, like wishes with our hearts!
When I'm in fault to *Cæsar*, plead for me:
The tongue of *Antony* were sure to gain him!
Had our *Egyptian* court, in all its pride,
The nymph, that of his heart might boast her conquest,
My power might then reward his faith to *Cæsar*.

Ant. *Egypt* has found the face—but *Antony*
Has on himself impos'd despair! the spare
Betwixt his heart and hope—is earth and heav'n!

Nor can my sighs reproach her cruelty,
 Who knowing not her pow'r, is innocent.
 While in my breast the anguish I retain,
 Enduring virtue triumphs in the pain,
 The sighs of honour are not sighs in vain. }
 But shou'd my falsehood once reveal my care,
 To ask her pity might deserve despair.
 When by her eyes inflam'd, upon my tongue,
 Burning to speak, my secret pangs have hung,
 My conscious honour then regain'd the day,
 And bore me guiltless, from her charms, away. [Exit.
Cleo. O Antony! had Cæsar not been Cæsar,
 A heart like thine had taught me gentler passion.
 But thirst of empire seizing on my soul,
 Has drove me down the stream of fierce ambition.
 Why did I dally with his gen'rous flame?
 Searching the wound, I never meant to cure?
 But beauty, wild with pow'r, delights to reign
 O'er hearts victorious, and enjoys their pain;
 And yet how greater far the glorious lore,
 To keep one heart of merit in our pow'r, }
 Than making thousands from the croud, adore?
 Be my sole triumph, but of Cæsar sure,
 My envy'd fame shall with his conquer'd world en-
 dure.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

CÆSAR in EGYPT.

*Quem non ille ducem potuit terrere tumultus?
Fata sed in præceptis solitus dimittere Cæsar,
Fortunamque suam per summa pericula gaudens,
Exercere, venit: nec, dum desæviat ira,
Expectat: medios properat tentare furores.*

Luc. lib. 5.

A C T V.

S C E N E, *The Palace-Court.*

DECIUS, *with several CENTURIONS and
Inferior Officers of CÆSAR's in mutiny.*

I CENTURION.

DECIUS, away! in vain wou'd words appease us!
Our civil war, or Cæsar, is no more.

Dec. Is Cæsar, in one day, your enemy?

2 *Cent.* 'Tis time, that Romans shou'd with Rome be
friends.

1 *Cent.* Have we not spent our lives, in Cæsar's ser-
vice?

Dec. And wou'd you basely close 'em with his ruin?

1 *Cent.* We see no end of his insatiate arms.

Have we not scatter'd ev'ry region round us

With Roman bones, now whitening to the sun?

And what have the survivors gain'd, but war?

More blood and war is all the hope that's left us.

We are determin'd! on, to Cæsar! forward!

Dec. Yet stay your madness! think of milder measures!

Temper may bring him willing to your wishes.

1 *Gen.* Behold these hoary heads, that bend beneath
 Their helmets, and are blanch'd in *Cæsar's* wars!
 These wither'd hands, that feebly grasp their jav'lines!
 Harmless as rural crooks, meer staffs for age!
 Is war supportable to life, like this?
 Is it not time to let diseases end us?
 Have not our toils, at least, deserv'd an urn?
 Or that our wailing friends might close our eyes?
 Still shall we leave our mangled carcases
 Unbury'd, to manure the earth, for *Cæsar*?
 Or knows he not the strength, that yet is left us,
 Might, by one stroke, secure the peace of *Rome*?
 And, with his head, repay the plunder'd world?
Dec. So obstinate! be on yourselves your fate!
 He comes, the dauntless, and the dreadful *Cæsar*!

Enter Cæsar with a javelin.

Cæs. Who are these lordly fires of civil power,
 That summon *Cæsar* to their bold tribunal?
 That, tir'd with toil, would talk mankind to rest,
 Restrain the valiant, and command their leader?

1 *Gen.* Here, *Cæsar*, stands the power that made thee
 great!

Determine, now, to give mankind repose.

Cæs. Repose be thine! Command and toil be *Cæsar's*.
 [Kills him.]

Who next advances to receive dismissal?
 Ye noisy! turbulent! vain-glorious rout!
 Are you the arbiters of *Cæsar's* cause?
 Like fate, to limit, or with-hold his conquests?
 Cou'd you presume, that your poor aid withdrawn,
 Wou'd leave his standards naked in the field?
 If *Pompey's* routed cause, o'er burning sands,
 Can draw such numbers to resume the war,
 Can *Cæsar's* eagles droop, in full success?
 Can the victorious fail of worthier hands:
 To bear our trophies, and divided spoil,
 To *Rome*? While you, inglorious in repose,
 Are deafned with the clangors of our triumphs?
 Hence, from my sight, ye murmur'ring heartless heard!
 Ye undeservers of *Pharsalian* honour!

Such dastard spirits are unfit to follow
Where *Cæsar*, and his fortune, leads the brave.
Hence, to your abject homes! there pine in corners!
There waste your winking lamps of life away,
And leave your general to be singly glorious!

Dec. O mighty *Cæsar*! see thy prostrate bands
Confus'd, and suppliant at thy feet for pardon!
O calm thy dreadful brow! thy *Decius* kneels!

[*They all throw themselves at Cæsar's feet.*]

Convinc'd of what their truth, by me, pronounces!
Thy warlike spirit has reviv'd their flame!
While they behold their gen'ral's breast thus fir'd,
Thus blazing onward in the course of glory,
Their glowing hearts imbibe the martial ardor,
Forgetful of their toils, or wounds unheal'd,
Pharfalian vigour swells their streams of life,
And pants for conquests, to retrieve their *Cæsar*.

Cæs. *Decius*, to thee, *Cæsar* consigns their fate:
Disperse them to their posts: There, man by man,
Examine to the source of this disorder:
If treason sprung it, or meer martial licence,
Those who are sound in heart, retain and pardon;
The factious and the stubborn bear to justice.—
Yet stay—If I mistake not, in the croud,
I see a face, that has a claim to pardon!

That's he! Soldier, come forth—thou seem'st disabled!

2 Cen. *Cæsar*, I am: the sinews of this arm
Are useless.

Cæs. Thou wert wounded at *Pharfalia*?

2 Cen. Has *Cæsar* then forgot? when o'er the head
Of *Brutus* there, this arm was rais'd in air,
Thy hasty sword, to save him from the blow,
Unstrung these nerves, before his fate cou'd reach him.

Cæs. I remember—what mov'd thee to this tumult?

2 Cen. Resentment of thy broken promises.

Cæs. If in my course of cares, thy merit escap'd me,
Why fought'st thou not occasion to remind me?

2 Cen. Because I found it easier to deserve,
Than ask reward? which due from *Cæsar* too,
I thought secure; but felt my arm forgotten,
And therefore rais'd this othe'r to revenge it.

62 CÆSAR in EGYPT.

Cæs. Thy charge is just, and turns thy crime on *Cæsar*;
Thy bluntness speaks it but mistaken virtue.
Give me thy pardon, soldier, for thy wrong.

2 Cen. *Cæsar*, I lov'd thee ever, but was griev'd,
To think the wound, my gen'ral's mercy gave,
Had only mark'd me to reproach his honour.

Cæs. *Decius*, this instant let a donative
Of ten great *Attick* talents be his meed!
And to supply the wreath he might have torn
From *Brutus*' head, to the first vacant cohort
Be his command preferr'd.

2 Cen. What *Roman* heart
Beats not at *Cæsar*'s virtue?

Cæs. If on search
Thou find'st, among these numbers, men whose age
Has led them to the verge of drooping life,
Let sums proportion'd to their service be
Disburs'd, and convoys order'd, to their country.

Omnes. None, *Cæsar*, none! our swords, our lives,
are *Cæsar*'s.

Cæs. Then *Cæsar* is again your fellow-soldier,
[*They shout.*

For further thanks, my *veterans*, attend me.
Lead to the palace.

Enter Cornelia.

Corn. *Cæsar*, guard thy life!

Cæs. Let danger face me, and the guard is present.

Corn. Revenge, and treason, in these walls, determin'd,
Lie lurking for thy blood—the moment that
Thou enter'st here, a thousand furious daggers
Will clash their points within thy bosom! This
Contains the plan, the means, th'accomplices!

[*Gives a schedule.*

Cæs. Gods! I am rivall'd by *Cornelia*'s virtue!
O *Roman* spirit! let my envy thank thee?

Corn. Thanks I refuse; thy envy were my glory!
This just discovery to myself was due.
Without conditions, therefore, have I made it.
Yet I must own, one life e'en honour stands
Engag'd to ask; be that in *Cæsar*'s breast.

Cæs. *Cornelia's* honour, here, gives law to *Cæsar*.

Corn. *Fulvius*, a faithful servant in my train,
(Whose zeal impatient in the cause of *Rome*,
Had rashly join'd him in this enterprize,)
Reflecting how the deed abortive might
Involve great *Pompey's* relict in the ruin,
In duteous confidence reveal'd the secret;
'Twas thus *Cornelia's*, and from her, 'tis *Cæsar's*!

Cæs. O *Pompey*! envy not *Pharsalia's* field!
Tho' *Cæsar* conquer'd, thy *Cornelia* triumphs.

Corn. Yet think not, *Cæsar*, that I've spar'd thy life,
To form a friendship, where my hate is due;
No, I preserv'd thee but to use thy power,
In what I know thy glory is concern'd,
To wreak thy vengeance on my *Pompey's* murderers!
That past; again, I give thee to the sword,
A nobler victim to the laws of *Rome*.

Cæs. Each moment of that life, thou hast giv'n to
Cæsar,

Is lost, while *Pompey's* vengeance is delay'd!
I gave thee orders, *Decius*, to demand
Th' assassins, and advisers of his fate,
Are they surrender'd?

Dec. *Cæsar*, no!—the king
Illudes thy power: Ere his unwilling search
Pursu'd them, we have cause to think, he sent
His private notice to advise their flight.
Ev'n in th' *Egyptian* camp, they're now protected!
Where fierce in menaces, they brave thy vengeance.

Cæs. Brav'd by *Egyptians*! let our troops be form'd!
Pursue them, by a trumpet! if refus'd,
Say, *Cæsar*, by his legions, will demand them.
Call from the fleet our *Germans*, to enforce us!
This scheme describes an aqueduct, a vault
Thro' which this earth-born treason is to speed.
Draw out five cohorts, to secure the streets,
And guard our pioneers, while they dig through,
And with a barrier wall cut short their march;
Then, from the sluices, drown them in the cavern.
Cornelia! when this treason is suppress'd,
Cæsar will give due order for thy freedom,

With convoys, to whatever port, thy friends,
Thy hopes, or fortune of thy cause, shall call thee.

Corn. Cæsar, in vain I leave this fatal shore,
Unless indulgent to my woes, thou grant
One farther boon.

Cæs. *Cornelia* might command it.—

Corn. Of all the trophies thy *Pharsalia* boasts,
Yield to my suppliant sorrows, *Pompey's* ashes.

Cæs. *Philip*, his faithful manumitted slave,
Having preserv'd them, in too mean an urn,
I therefore charg'd *Achoreus* to provide—

Corn. 'Tis not the casket gives the treasure value,
The meanest urn is dignify'd by tears!
The bones of *Pompey* will adorn his tomb.

Cæs. *Achoreus* with the mournful object shall
Attend thee.—*Antony!*

Enter Antony.

Ant. Cæsar, to arms!

From the *Egyptian* camp, our spies inform us,
That for some sudden, hostile enterprize,
Their march is speeding onward to the city!
That fierce *Photinus*, and *Achillas's* rage,
To save themselves, or to redeem their king
From *Roman* power, have blown this tempest up,
Determin'd on their own, or *Cæsar's* fate,
To stake the chains, or liberty of *Egypt*.

Cæs. Thy news has but confirm'd our earlier notice.

Ant. O! I foresaw this beauty wou'd be fatal!

Cæs. Let *Marcus* then be warn'd by *Cæsar's* error!

[*Apart.*

The time yet serves to mend it.—now my veterans!

2 Cen. Now, *Cæsar*, we'll redeem our blasted honour,
And guard thy glories, from the fate of *Pompey*.

Cæs. Since to prevent, our arms arriv'd too late,
Like *Romans* follow, and revenge his fate.

[*Exit, cum suis.*

Corn. No, *Cæsar*, to destroy thee, tho' 'twere just,
Revenge is mean, when stain'd by treachery!
Pharsalia, *Rome*, and *Pompey's* blood, demand
An equal desolation of thy fame!

Ev'n at thy legions head, in open field,
 Where conquest gave thee usurpation ! there !
 There, to deplume thee of thy crested glories !
 When my victorious father, and the sons
 Of *Pompey*, may like echoing hunters chase thee,
 With all thy branching honours on thy head,
 And circling round thy fall, enjoy thy ruin !
 Then, then were *Rome*—and *Pompey's* fame reveng'd !
 But from this blow, the gods and honour guard thee !
 For, O ! thou wert his victor, not assassin !
 And howso'er thy cause reviles thy arms,
 Yet *Roman* justice scorns the sword of treason !

Enter Achoreus with Pompey's Urn.

But see ! the holy priest obeys ! and from
 The gates of plenty comes, to feed my woes.
 With *Cæsar's* charitable dole of death :
 The dear, the mournful, last remains of *Pompey*.
Acho. From mighty *Cæsar*, to distressed *Cornelia*,
 These honour'd, sacred relicts, I present ;
 But that thy piety o'erflows his will,
 A nobler urn had grac'd thy hero's ashes.
 " Go thou, *Achoreus*, (said the gen'rous victor)
 " Compose her sorrows ! mitigate her wailings !
 " Tell her, her virtue has secur'd her vengeance,
 " Binding the life of *Cæsar*, to pursue it.
 " But till more glorious monuments can rise,
 " Entreat her to accept his previous victims."
 Then bending to the great remains, he sigh'd,
 Embrac'd them—paus'd—let fall a tear,
 And with an awful kiss, gave back the charge.
Corn. O sacred virtue ! teach me to receive,
 With thanks, these obligations of my foe ;
 Nor let ungrateful envy lead my soul,
 To wrong the generous by mean suspicion ?
 What tho' he rises by the fall of *Pompey* !
 What tho' his arms opposing *Ptolomey*,
 May fix ambitious *Cleopatra's* crown ?
 Shall I upbraid the vengeance, whose effects
 Disperfes benefit to more than me ?
Cornelia, no ! 'twere impious to revile

The sun, for that his beams are general !
 Judge *Cæsar* then in this, to think like thee ;
 Believe the nobler motive rules his heart,
 And own the debt of his revenge, and tears.

Acho. Thus virtue never is defac'd ! unchang'd
 By strokes of fate, she triumphs o'er distress,
 And ev'ry bleeding wound adorns her beauty.

[*Trumpets and shouts at a distance.*]

But hark ! th' alarm is giv'n ! and *Cæsar* now
 Again is dealing the decrees of fate !
 In time retire ! the ruin here may reach you.

Corn. What ruin can come nearer to my heart ?
 [*Folding the urn in her arms.*]

O grudge me not this dear repast of grief !
 Grief is the only food my sense can bear !
 Love has resign'd its fondness to affliction,
 Which with the same impatience seeks its object,
 And thus wou'd feed its woes with full despair.

[*Shout. Charge.*]

[*She opens the urn gently, and gazes into it kneeling,
 while Achoreus speaks.*]

Acho. Again ! the storm of war approaches ! gods !
 She hears it not ! immers'd in deeper woes !
 Did ever grief thus dignify the heart ?
 See how her agonizing frame endures !
 While tears run back in wonder of her woe.

[*Trumpets.*]

With care observe the fallies of her soul,
 [*To her attendants.*]

While I explore th' impending danger : Guard
 Her griefs from violence, 'till my return
 May judge, if courts, or temples may protect her.

[*Exit.*]

Corn. 'Tis done ! the debt of nature is discharg'd !
 Great, injur'd, peaceful, dear remains, farewell !
 Grief has enjoy'd its ecstasy of pain ! [*Closes the urn.*]
 And now a nobler duty claims my soul,
 Revenge and *Rome* demand me back to life,
 To animate our cause, 'till liberty
 Regain'd, may raise its altars to thy name,
 O *Pompey* ! that last hope alone prevails ;

For that blest hour, I patient breathe, beneath
 These loads of dire calamity. Nor dare,
 'Till that's accomplish'd, lay the burden down,
 Then shall *Cornelia*, thro' the gates of life,
 Rush foremost, with the tidings to thy shade.

[*Alarm.*

Enter Achoreus.

Acho. Away, *Cornelia*! fly, thy foes have conquer'd!
Cæsar is lost! and *Egypt* triumphs o'er
 The fate of *Pompey*.

Corn. Gods! it cannot be!
 Say how! the terrors of the day deceive thee!

Acho. O no! the king, who warily, at first,
 Seem'd neutral in the fray; on his success,
 Exulting now, avows the enterprize,
 Applauds his vengeance, and absolves the crime.

Corn. Still am I lost in wonder? Was not *Cæsar*
 By me apprized, forewarn'd of this design?

Acho. Too short the warning, when so near the blow!
 For tho' his care no moment lost, to stop
 His latent danger, from the aqueduct;
 Yet, ere his cohorts from their ships cou'd land,
 Or those within the town be drawn to order,
 Our speedier troops, impetuous as the tides
 Of *Nile*, came pouring thro' our gates! while *Cæsar*,
 Now, like a vessel from its anchor blown
 Adrift, and useles, down the stream is borne,
 Lost, and unaided, by the wrecks around him!

Corn. Yet hold! nor let me hear of *Cæsar's* fate!
 Lest *Rome*, dishonour'd by the means, shou'd owe
 Her liberty to vile *Egyptian* falshood!
 Lest the perfidious *Ptolomey* shou'd buy,
 With *Cæsar's* head, his pardon, from the senate,
 And ward the vengeance of the gods, for *Pompey*!

Acho. Who next must bleed, the gods can tell; but
 now

In dread confusion, fly the *Roman* eagles,
 Prest, and retreating to the *Pbarian* isle;
 There only have the valiant choice, to fall
 On pointed spears, or perish in the seas

Behind them. The revengeful *Ptolomey*,
 Impatient to resume the reins of empire,
 Flew, on the news, to make the queen his captive ;
 Pretending, now, she is the kingdom's foe,
 Confederate with *Cæsar*, to its ruin !
 Fly then, *Cornelia*, from this rolling danger !
 Outrage and slaughter fill the streets, and sweep,
 Without distinction, innocence along !
 To *Isis*' temple haste ! thy virtue there
 Secure may wait the will of heav'n.

Corn. Just gods !

Had I but life to lose, the tumult here
 Might end my woes ; but lesser cares must wait :
 To guard these dear remains, I wave my fate. [*Exe.*

The SCENE opening to the Palace, discovers
Cleopatra guarded.

Guard. Here our commission ends. Th' occasion,
 Madam,
 Of your confinement now, the king himself
 Will answer—he approaches. [*Ex. Guards.*

Enter Ptolomey.

Ptol. Gods ! I thank you !
 This hour has well repaid the wrongs of empire.
 Thou fatal stain, to the *Lagæan* race !
 Inglorious *Helen* to the peace of *Egypt* !
 Where is your *Paris* now ! your reveller !
 Your champion, *Cæsar*, who, dissolv'd in pleasures,
 Contemn'd the royal vengeance, that surrounds him ?
 What, are thy boasted charms abandon'd, lost !
 Has then this glorious robber left thee hopeless !
 From thy unguarded honour stol'n the gem,
 And thrown thee, like a useless casket, by,
 To make his flight more speedy ? Now recal him.

Cleo. *Cæsar* best knows his time—you say he's fled :
 The flying live ! the living may return !

Ptol. So desperate ! canst thou then form a hope,
 On *Cæsar*'s life ? Are malefactors laid

To live, when o'er their destin'd heads, the sword
Of justice rais'd in air, is falling to the blow?
Such is the state of *Cæsar*, coop'd in *Pharos*!

Cleo. On *Cæsar*'s fate, I know my own depends:
Nor will precarious life, when he's no more,
Be worth my care: yet in his vanquish'd heart
I reign'd one day, the world's imperial mistress!
All empires have their period: mine, tho' short
On earth, shall, perching on the wings of *Cæsar*,
Be borne through ages to a deathless fame!
What beauties yet unborn, reading my story,
Shall find their virtue stagger, at my conquest,
And sigh for *Cæsars*, that, like mine, might love!

Ptol. Confusion! dar'st thou vaunt thy infamy?
Is kindling shame a stranger to thy cheek?
That nor thy race dishonour'd, nor the breach
Of sacred laws, can give thy crimes a terror?

Cleo. Talk'st thou of violated laws! whose heart,
On cool deliberation, cou'd renounce them?
Who deaf to obligations, to thy crown restor'd,
To honour, gratitude, or faith of nations,
Cou'dst basely pierce thy benefactor's bosom,
And stain thy soul, with bounteous *Pompey*'s blood?
While I, at hazard of my throne and life,
Strove by his safety to prevent thy crime.
If, with resentment fir'd, I since have leagu'd
With *Cæsar*, to retrieve my crown; accuse
Thy own injurious arms, that first usurp'd it!
Did I not warn thee too of *Cæsar*'s love?
Didst thou not know my soul was form'd for empire?
And cou'dst thou hope, that maiden modesty,
A peevish coyness, wou'd restrain ambition?
What are the laws that ever yet confin'd it?
Tho' love to *Cæsar*'s merit might be venial!
But nature's whole consent abhors th' affassin.

Ptol. 'Tis well! this spirit shall have further trial?
Who waits? our guard?

Enter Guard hastily.

What means thy breathless terror?

Guard. Look forth, and see, Sir—*Pharos* is in flames.

Ptol. Confusion to my eyes! [*Going to the window.*]

Cleo. It must be so!

The brand of vengeance is in *Cæsar's* hand. [*Apart.*]

Enter Photinus from the other side.

Pbo. O horror! horror! ruin, rage, and slaughter,
With *Cæsar's* fortune, follow at our heels!

O Sir! with shame and terror, I pronounce it,
Fly, fly, while yet occasion serves to save you.

Ptol. Gods! let me know the danger that compels me.

Pbo. While *Cæsar* in the *Pharian* isle was hemm'd,
And to all eyes, that saw him, deem'd our prey,
Death every moment feeding on his front;
And on his rear, no hope, but seas to sink him;
Yet fortune, in his last despair, redeem'd him.
While on the narrow mole, fierce *Decius*, join'd
With *Antony*, a while sustain'd the day;
Himself perplex'd, and raging at his fate,
As if, he dying, had resolv'd to light
His funeral pile, with dread *Phalaric* darts,
That kindle as they fly, he fires the city;
Nor spares our altars from the blazing ruin!
And now far casting o'er the main his eye,
With trembling indignation he beheld
His distant fleet inactive to his aid.
Then heav'd his breast, and springing with the thought,
He headlong plung'd him in the waves——

Cleo. My *Cæsar*!

Pbo. In one rais'd hand aloft above the tide,
Some scrolls of high importance he preserv'd,
And, with his other, plough'd the surge before him!
As oft, athwart the rapid floods of *Nile*,
Some monstrous crocodile, in quest of prey,
Rolls his huge length, thro' showers of darts along;
So, fearless of the hissing shafts around him,
Swam the fell *Cæsar* foaming to his fleet.
His troops, that from his ships beheld his danger,
With shouts, that echo to the heav'ns, receive him,
Nor lose a moment to regain the day!
Now loaded galleys ply their stroking oars,
And in an instant pour them on the strand.

They form ! they march ! thus *Cæsar* re-inforc'd,
Furious, as *Libyan* whirlwinds blows his foes
Before him.

Ptol. Gods ! as fortune were his slave !

Cleo. Born to subdue the world, and charm the fair !

[*Exulting.*

Ptol. What hope can save us ?

Pho. On this side the *Pharos*,

Where yet our fainting troops dispute his passage,
A light-sail'd vessel hulls about the shore.

Thence only can your fortune save you.

Cleo. Hold !

Yet ere you perish, hear a sister's counsel,
Spite of my injuries, a brother's blood
Sets nature in too horrible alarm !

And not preventing, is to urge thy ruin !
From *Cæsar's* arms, what earth or seas can save thee ?

If then thy fear suggests, thou hast deserv'd
His dread resentment, trust me with thy fate :
Ne'er shall these knees unbend from *Cæsar's* fight,

'Till *Cleopatra's* prayers have seal'd thy pardon !

Ptol. Audacious insult ! Pardon ! Shall my crown,
Dependent on a wanton's smile, compound
Thy crimes ? the pandar of my own dishonour ?

Cleo. Thy fate be on thy head !

Ptol. The fate of *Cæsar*,
Alike with *Ptolomey's*, is fix'd and certain :
Who first must perish, to the gods is known.
At least, this hour shall honour lost atone ;
My rage shall on his heart revenge our fame.
Or scorn the life, that dares survive the shame.

[*Exit Ptol. and Pho.*

Cleo. Ungrateful boy ! thy parting arrogance
Betrays the rooted rancour in thy soul :
Had *Cæsar* not espous'd my injur'd right,
Or had my eyes engag'd his arms, for thee ;
Then, what thou term'st my shame, were courtly glory.
I thought thy youth misguided by thy creatures,
That they alone had wrought thee, to the tyrant ;
But find thy nature, to their hands, had form'd thee,
My woman's heart, forgetful of my wrongs,

Wou'd have commended thee to *Cæsar's* mercy ;
 But now, while thus thy hate disdains my care,
 If his just vengeance, for the blood of *Pompey*,
 Shou'd overtake thy guilt ; reproach thy rashness.
 My fame's acquitted of thy wilful fate,
 And grief, in rising empire, shall forget thee.

[*A flourish.*

Hark ! hark ! the *Roman* trumpets, like the voice
 Of fate, pronounce to *Cæsar's* arms the day !
 My hero ! see where joyous *Antony*
 Flies with a lover's haste, to bear the news.

Enter Antony.

Ant. Hail ! bright imperial monarch of the *Nile* !
 For such have *Cæsar's* fortune, and the fate
 Of *Ptolomey* ordain'd thee.

Cleo. Ptolomey !

What dreadful ruin cou'd so soon o'ertake him ?

Ant. As *Cæsar* round the blazing *Pharos*
 Led his well-order'd troops, to quench the flames ;
 Forth from the palace, in disorder'd haste,
 He saw the king, *Photinus*, and the guards,
 Rush thro' a band of *Romans* to the bay ;
 Where *Ptolomey's* young arm so bravely fought,
 That *Cæsar*, in the conflict, call'd aloud,
 Spare ! spare the king ! He, scornful of his mercy,
 With double fury now renew'd the fray !
 But, oh ! in vain ! breathless, at last, he saw
Photinus, and *Achillas*, by his side
 Expire ! a death for their vile crimes, too glorious !
 At length, his fortune desperate, he broke,
 With fury, thro' the tumult, to the mole,
 From whence, into a floating bark he launch'd,
 His last retreat and hope : but here, his friends,
 Too zealous for his safety, urg'd his fate ;
 Such crouds of followers his flight attended,
 That ev'n in *Cæsar's* view, th' o'er-freighted boat
 Sunk foundring down, and perish'd in the deep.

Cleo. Such is the vengeance of the gods for *Pompey* !

Ant. Well has his death atton'd his errors past,
 Since injur'd *Cleopatra*, by his fall,

Enjoys, at last, her undisputed empire.
 Ev'n *Cæsar* fought not for himself, but you:
 This moment to your people he proclaims
 You queen, and to conciliate to your crown
 Their hearts, and render *Ptolomey* forgotten,
 Confirms the laws and native rights of *Egypt*.

Cleo. Can *Cæsar* have a foe, that is not such
 To virtue? [Flourish.

Hark, he comes; my conqueror!
 My wishes lord, and glory of my heart.

Enter Cæsar. She runs to embrace him.

Cæs. O my forsaken fair! my toils, at length,
 In peace and transport yield me to thy arms!
 In all the conflicts I've, this day, sustain'd,
 My fears for thee sunk deepest in my heart;
 And while the soldier fought, the lover trembled.
 But here my heart, collected to its joy,
 Pours out my cares, forgotten on thy bosom.

Cleo. Now ye chaste matrons, that reproach my love,
 Behold my *Cæsar* in this blaze of glory!
 O let the dangers of this day but speak him!
 Let impious treason, thro' the earth, assail him!
 Or, in the *Pharos*, dreadful flames surround him,
 Thence hurl him headlong to devouring seas!
 While, like the ocean's god, he rides the billows,
 Behold him, thro' this war of elements
 Victorious! then! then bid these arms refuse him!
 [Shout

Enter Decius.

Dec. *Cæsar*, the public joy, in crouds impatient,
 Swarms round the palace to behold their queen.

Cæs. A moment, and the queen shall greet them.—
Cornelia.

Enter Cornelia on the other side.

Corn. *Cæsar*, with a divided heart, I come
 At once to gratulate, and mourn thy arms:
 Since *Pompey*, here, no more revenge can hope,
 This fatal shore is hateful to my eyes!

I therefore now remind thee of thy word,
 Thy promis'd convoys, for my free departure.
 Hence let me wing my flight! with *Pompey's* urn,
 To rouse the drooping life of liberty,
 And arm another world, to blast thy laurels!
 O *Cæsar*! tremble! for my soul presages!
 Howe'er thy lawless arms may swell thy power,
 Think not that *Rome*, tho' conquer'd, will endure thee!
 Her genius, like a lion tam'd, one day
 May turn, when least suspected, on his keeper,
 And stalk, in triumph, o'er the limbs that aw'd him!
 Such may be *Cæsar's* fate! the gods have warn'd thee!
 Wou'dst thou be truly glorious, yield us peace!
 To *Scipio*, *Pompey's* sons, and *Cato* now
 I bend my course; if thou hast ought to offer,
 That may concern the harrass'd world's repose,
Cornelia shall report it.

Cæs. Tell them, this!

The laws they fight for, *Cæsar* will maintain;
 Nor are they safer, in their hands, than his!
 When I look round the world, and see
 What miseries attend abuse of power,
 I judge my conquests by the gods assign'd,
 To give their laws new force, and mend mankind;
 If then ambition prompts me to excel
 The greatest patriot fam'd for ruling well,
 Let foul-tongu'd envy burst her swelling heart,
 My conscious virtue shall perform its part.
Cæsar his period to the gods shall trust,
 Nor can, 'till gods forsake him, think his arms unjust.

END OF CÆSAR IN EGYPT.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. OLDFIELD.

*WAS it not bold, from stated rules to rove,
And make the Tragic Muse commode to love?
To shew victorious Cæsar turn'd gallant,
And what, in life, the greatest warriors want!
That all the glorious battles they may gain,
Unless the fair are kind, are fought in vain!
Prim prudes, be sure, will urge, that lawless fire,
In death and desolation, shou'd expire!
That tragedy shou'd fright your hearts from evil,
And shew, that love unlicens'd—is the devil!
Suppose this true—Yet, who's to judge the error?
Wou'd Belles and Beaux refuse the joy, from terror?
Our Author, therefore, tells the downright story,
And lays his Madam's frailty fair before you:
Say, nymphs! who've seen this Cleopatra die,
Were you then cur'd of love? or did you cry
O ged! my Lord! wou'd you were Antony!
Can you then blame a muse, subdu'd, to write,
On what gave Cæsar's heart such full delight?
Since you in music found his charms sublime,
Make not a little common sense his crime:
'Tis true, he had not all the charms in fashion!
His laurels gave not, like tupé's, temptation.
Romans, of old, were no such killing cattle,
Nor wore their hair, like cocks, new trimm'd for battle!
Nor knew of paste, and puffs, the modish air,
With heads, like frozen mops, to melt the fair!
Our dame's, at least, less liable to satyr,
Tho' frail, she chose the grand, not petit maître!
Beside, if Cæsar at her feet cou'd lie,
Your tears may flow more just, for Antony!
Since then, his World well Lost, your hearts admire,
Let her with CÆSAR live, with ANTONY expire.*

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F L O R A :
O R,
H O B I N T H E W E L L . .
A N
O P E R A .

BEING

Mr. Dogget's FARCE of the *Country Wake*, alter'd after
the manner of the *Beggar's Opera*.

Agrestem tenui meditabor Arundine musam.

VIRG.



Dramatis Personæ.

1768.

M E N.

Friendly. A gentleman in love }
with *Flora.* } *Mr. Vernon.*
Hob. A simple country fellow. } *Mr. Moody.*

W O M E N.

Flora. Niece to *Sir Thomas*, in } *Miss Young.*
love with *Friendly.* }
Hob's Mother. } *Mrs. Bradshaw.*

S C E N E, in *Somersetshire.*

F L O R A :
O R,
H O B I N T H E W E L L .

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

After the Overture. Flora and Betty discovered.

A I R I .

To the Tune of, At noon one fultry summer's day.

F L O R A .

*H*O W wretched are we orphans made,
By dying parents wills betray'd
To guardians powers, who oft invade
Our freedom, to our cost?

*Like captives they their wards confine,
Pretending care; but with design
To prostitute 'em for their coin,
To whoe'er bids the most.*

Betty——

Bet. Madam.

Flo. It's a sad life I lead here.

Bet. Life, indeed, Madam, is a sad thing any where
to lovers that are uncoupled.

Flo. Wer't thou ever in love, *Betty*?

Bet. O most cruelly, Madam; but the man I lov'd,
had another more darling mistress—call'd *Claret*—for
whose sweet society I was forsaken.

A I R II. Ye beaux of pleasure.

*The men of pleasure,
Who count the seizure
Of virgin treasure
A pleasing task;
No sooner gain it,
But they refrain it,
Nay, oft disdain it,
For t'other flask.*

Flo. And how do you find yourself now !

Bet. As most folks are, after the loss of an old lover.

Flo. How's that ?

Bet. Ready for a new one.

Flo. Wou'd I were of thy humour.—But my silly heart's so set upon Mr. *Friendly*, that all mankind beside are no more than my own sex to me.

Bet. Then you must have him, Madam, or you'll go into a consumption——

Flo. Ay, but how shall I come at him, *Betty* ?

Bet. Why run a risque, Madam.

Flo. What risque ?

Bet. Run away with him.

Flo. Psha ! How is that possible ! when my uncle locks me up as if I were his only bottle of brandy ?

Bet. You know, Madam, I have sometimes the keys of both in my keeping—and if you please to uncork your conscience, I'll undertake, in eight and forty hours, Mr. *Friendly* shall have at least half a dozen go-downs of you.

Flo. Ah, *Betty* ! I'm afraid you flatter me.

Bet. Nay, Madam, you are as good a judge of that as I ! for you must own, he has a very promising person.

Flo. Psha ! I don't think of his person.

Bet. If any other woman thought half so much of it, you wou'd pull her commode for her.

Flo. Pooh ! but I mean I am afraid you are not sincere in your advice, and that if I shou'd trust you with any design of that nature, you wou'd discover it to my uncle.

Bet. Ah! but if I were to live with you, and have my wages rais'd, after you are married—I know whose suspicion does me a great deal of wrong.

Flo. Swear then to be true, and I will trust you. But, dear *Betty*, be out of the fashion for once, and keep your oath; I'll tell you why I so earnestly entreat you.

A I R III. I, who once was great, now little am grown.

*Custom prevailing so long 'mongst the great,
Makes oaths easy potions to sleep on,
Which many (on gaining good places) repeat,
Without e'er designing to keep one.*

*For an oath's seldom kept, as a virgin's fair fame;
A lover's fond vows, or a prelate's good name;
A lawyer to truth; a statesman from blame;
Or a patriot heart in a courtier.*

Bet. Here then, I swear, by all my hopes and perquisites; by the sweet profits of my place in view, and double wages in reversion; by your lac'd shoes too big, and those too little; by the silk gown you'll give me at your wedding: by all your mantuas, heads, hoops, short hoods and cloaks, and as I hope your last blue atlas never will be worn again! I swear——

Flo. That you will inviolably keep my secrets, and assist me to your utmost, in running away with Mr. *Friendly*.

Bet. I swear.

Flo. Then I will trust you; and when I'm married, *Betty*, every article of your oath shall be made good to you—Look here then, here's a letter I had just written to Mr. *Friendly*, wherein I've promis'd, at twelve o'clock to-night, to be upon the mount in the garden; and if he will take care to meet me on t'other side, and set a ladder against the wall, I'll toss over my band-box, venture catching cold in the dew, and take my fortune with him.

Bet. There's metal in the proposal, Madam—Let's see the letter, he shall have it in a quarter of an hour, tho' I carry it myself.

Flo. But I won't venture neither, unless his answer tells he'll be ready—So, dear *Betty*, be careful, I have no mortal to trust but thee.

Bet. And no mortal fitter to be trusted. [Exit.

Flo. So, now my heart's at ease—I find my resolution's good at the bottom; and since I have set my head upon running away, 'tis not my old uncle, nor the garden-wall shall stop me, tho' he were as wise as a bishop, and the wall as high as a church steeple.

A I R IV. Man in imagination.

*Tho' my uncle strives to immure me,
My lover's voice will lure me,
To leap from the mount o'er the garden-wall,
And fly this bated place.*

*Oh, a tedious day to me 'tis;
But when Sol's in the arms of his Thetis,
Swift as the roe (at my hero's call)
I'll elude my hunter's chase.*

Ah! —————

Enter Sir Tho. Testy.

Sir Tho. How now! Mrs. Irreverence! Am I such a hobgoblin, that you start at the sight of me?

Flo. Sir, I did not think any harm, but when you come upon one unawares——

Sir Tho. Unawares! What! I surpriz'd you then? Your head was full of other matters, which, I suppose, that close committee of the flesh and the devil have absolutely resolv'd to be the fundamentals of your constitution.

A I R V. As I was walking thro' Hyde-Park.

*When a girl fifteen years does attain,
Love's follies invading her brain,
Her virtue's beld by a slight rein.*

*For equipage, hurry and noise,
Gay cloathing, and such female toys,
She'll forego more substantial joys.*

*To a feather or powder'd tupce
Her heart soon a captive wou'd be,
To keep such a one chaste, we must lock her up fast:
That maxim best pleases me*

Flo. Lord! Sir, how strangely you talk to one.

Sir Tho. Talk! you malapert; why who shou'd talk to you but I? Who am I, huffy? Who am I?

Flo. You are my uncle by relation, my guardian by my father's will, and my jailor against mine.

Sir Tho. Then while you are my prisoner, huffy, how dare you take such liberty?

Flo. Because liberty, Sir, is the sweetest thing a prisoner can take.

Sir Tho. Don't you think in your conscience now, mistress, you deserve to be lock'd up?

Flo. I think in my conscience, you ought to let me marry, since I've a mind to't.

Sir Tho. Provoking! Dare you own this to my face?

Flo. Why, Sir, is't a fault? You have kept me in prison for these ten months, and I did not know but my confessing it might deserve a little of your mercy.

Sir Tho. Astonishing! The devil has harden'd you, huffy! you are a fight! Go, go, to your chamber; people will stare at you; I would not have you seen abroad in this condition for—O Lurd! Your brain's turn'd! You shall bleed, mistress; I'll have your room darken'd: Water-gruel, discipline and water-gruel! ye gods!

Flo. Look'e uncle, I find you have a mind to drive me to a hard bargain; therefore, to let you see that I am no hagler, I'll make you an offer which shall fairly come up to the most you can make of me—as thus—

Sir Tho. What new distraction hast thou got in thy head now?

Flo. Hear me: You know I have 8000*l.* to my fortune; and that by my father's will, you are to be allow'd the whole interest of it, 'till I am either married,

or of age, to reimburse your expences in maintaining me; which said maintenance, by a modest computation, may stand you in—Let me see—about seven or eight pounds a year (for I've had no cloaths but my mother's)—Now, Sir, if you'll immediately give me the liberty of marrying the man I have a mind to, I'll engage he shall consent to the throwing of my fortune into the public funds, the minute you throw me into his arms. So you shall have the use of my pence till I am of age, as a premium for advancing to him the use of my person.

Sir Tho. Hum! The girl begins to talk sensibly—But 'tis not yet proper to understand her—Look'e, child, when you have persuaded your lover to make the same proposal under his hand, I shall then believe you are equally mad to come at one another—In the mean time, let me advise you to your chamber, from whence I will allow you the lovely prospect of the garden. [Exit.]

Flo. You may chance to fret for this, my very wise uncle. [Exit.]

S C E N E II.

Enter Friendly and Servant.

Friend. What a watchful old rogue is this!

Ser. A very dragon, Sir.

Friend. To use a young creature so unmercifully.

Ser. Nay; Sir, so uncivilly.

Friend. How, firrah?

Ser. To force her to such extremities, to make her straddle over a great wall, and risque her neck down a ladder at midnight, when he ought to lend her his hand into a coach and six, and out of his great gate at noon-day to come to you, Sir. But the rascal has no breeding.

Friend. By Mercury, I'll be even with him.

Ser. You have reason, Sir; for tho' I say it—

Friend. That shou'd not say it.

Ser. She is a lovely piece of temptation, Sir.

Friend. What's o'clock, firrah?

Ser. By the moon's rising, I believe it may be about, about, a—past ten.

Friend. Then, firrah, about past—twelve—

Ser. You'll have one of her blue filk stockings straddling over the wall, Sir—

A I R VI. At past one o'clock, and a cold frosty morning.

Friendly Sings.

*At past twelve o'clock, and a fine summer's morning,
When all in the village sleep pleasantly,
Cynthia's bright beams, all nature adorning
Shall guide my swift steps to my lovely she.*

*Then my fair Flora, fraught with kind wishes,
I'll fold in my arms, with amorous kisses,
Which serve as precludes to more solid blisses—*

Soon as the vicar has made us one.

But where's the country fellow you promis'd should carry my answer to her letter?

Ser. Who, *Hob*, Sir? Here he is; and if any suspects his face for a pimp's, I have no skill in the science, Sir.

Enter Hob.

Friend. Well, *Hob*, can'tt thou carry this letter to Sir *Thomas Testy's* house for me?

Hob. Yes, Zir, yes.

Friend. Do so, and give it to *Madam Flora*; but take care nobody sees you deliver it.

Hob. Yes, Zir—But must I carry it to-night?—'Tis main dark.

Friend. You must go immediately.

Hob. I hope, Zir, there's no difference between you and Zir *Tomas*.

Friend. Why do'tt hope so?

Hob. Why truly, Zir, I do hear there be; and therefore I don't care to meddle or make between friends;

for 'tis but an unthateful office ; and you know Zir Tomas is very crusty, and if he do's but suspect that I shau'd conzarn myzel, mayhap he may take the law of me ; and you know, Zir, that law is a vrightful thing.

A I R VII. She got money by th' bargain.

*The terrible law, when it fastens its paw,
On a poor man, it gripes 'till he's undone ;
And what I am doing, may turn to my ruin,
Tho' rich as the Lord Mayor of London.*

*Therefore I'll be wary, what message I carry,
Unless we first make a zure bargain ;
I will be 'demnity'd, thoroughly zatisfy'd,
That ch'am shan't zuffer a varding.*

Friend. Pish, the law shall never trouble thee ; I'll secure thee from any harm.

Hob. Very well, Zir, very well, that's as much as I can desire : But pray don't take unkindly what I zay, for you know no man is willing to bring himzel into a primunire if he con help it.

Friend. No, no—Prithee be gone.

Hob. I will, Zir, I will—for—for—Pray, Zir, be pleas'd to read the zuperzcription for me.

Friend. S'death, how I am tortur'd with this foolist fellow, and I can send nobody else without being suspected—Don't trouble thyself with the zuperzcription, but deliver it as I bid thee.

Hob. Very good, Zir, very good—'Tis main dark—Wou'd it not do as well, Zir, if I should carry it in the morning ? I had rather go in the morning.

Friend. Why so ?

Hob. Why, truly, Zir, I'll tell you : At the lower end of Zir Tomas's orchard, one of our poor neighbours being in a disparaging condition, has gone and hang'd himzel—Now there is zome do zay that he walks by night in zeveral zorts of shapes.

Friend. What, and so you are afraid, are you ?

Hob. No, indeed, Zir, ch'am not afraid—I thank marcy, I defy the devil and all his works.

Friend. A pox on thee then, get thee gone.

Hob. Tho' I must tell you, I have a great conceit he will appear to me,—vor, you must know; to-morrow the crowner's quest is to zit upon him, whereof, d'ye see, I'm to be one: and who knows but he may have something upon his spirits that may make him break his mind to me; and if zo, let me tell you, I'm afraid it will make a bad day for zomebody—vor, if *Zir Tomas* had kept his fences whole, mayhap this man had ne'er been tempted to ha' gone into his ground to ha' hang'd himzel. But be that as it will, I'll do your business vor you; therefore pray take you no care, *Zir*——

Friend. Prithee about it then.

Hob. Ay, ay, I'll warrant you, don't trouble yourzel no vunder—vor if I zay I'll do't, I'll do't, that's my humour. [Exeunt.]

Enter Sir Thomas and Servants.

Sir Tho. 'Twill be a hard matter to sink any of the principal, indeed; so that cou'd the girl make good the proposal, I wou'd not care how soon she were kiss'd black in the face; but should I give her the least liberty upon't, 'tis possible when she has made use on't, her conscience might desire to be off. And I dare swear her lover will spare neither care nor cost to come at her without my consent, and gold in particular has a prevailing influence in a love affair, therefore I must watch my ward myself—Servants may be corrupted.

A I R VIII. We'll learn to be merry and wise.

*To guard my Hesperian tree
Requires more care than of old;
That was robb'd by a half deity,
And without the assistance of gold.*

*But in this age, gold softens the mind,
A governante's tongue 'twill lay mute;
Charm prudes, make a coy virgin kind,
Whilst a lover (with ease) steals the fruit.*

Dy'e hear, rascals, look sharp, for this is the usual hour that your soft fighting rogues run a caterwauling.

Ser. Sir! Sir! yonder's somebody with a light coming down the field.

Sir Tho. Stand still then, and observe.

Enter Hob, whistling.

Hob. Zo, this is the house—now let me see—how shall I go about to do this same business—If that old fox, *Zir Tomas*, shou'd 'spy me, he'd maul me vor zertain—But let me alone, I'll be cunning enough vor him, I'll warrant ye—If he zees me, he must have more eyes than two.—Hold, hold, now let me zee vor this same letter—O, here it is—For *Madam Flo*—*Flo*—*Madam Flora*.

Sir Tho. Where are you carrying this letter friend?

[*Sir Tho. snatching it.*

Hob. Letter, *Zir*?

Sir Tho. Letter, Sir! ay, letter, Sir! who did you bring it from?

Hob. Bring it vrom, *Zir*; I brought it vrom nobody, not I.

Sir Tho. How came you by it?

Hob. By it, *Zir*; I did not buy it; why I vound it in my pocket, *Zir*.

Sir Tho. Found it in your pocket—What did it grow there then, ha? Where are you going with it?

Hob. Going with it, *Zir*? I dan't know where ch'am going with it, not I.

Sir Tho. What do you do here at this time o'night?

Hob. I can't tell what I do here, not I—I'll go home, *Zir*, if you please—I wish you a good night.

Sir Tho. Hold, hold, a little, friend, let me reward you first for bringing it, however.

Hob. Not a varthing, *Zir*; indeed, I must not take one varthing, for *Maister Friendly* charg'n me to th' contrary, therefore pray dan't offer it.

Sir Tho. O, did he so—but something I will give you, however: Pray take that, and that, firrah.

[*Beats him.*

Hob. O Lard! O Lard! what do ye strik'n vor?

avore Gad I'll take the law of you, zee an I don't—
what do you go to murder me?

Sir *Tho.* I'll law you, you rogue—are you their
letter carrier? there's more for you, firrah.

Hob. Bear witness, bear witness, zee an you dan't pay
for this. O Lard! O Lard!

Sir *Tho.* Here, firrahs, lay hold of him; till I exa-
mine the letter. Let's see—To Mrs. *Flora*—right.

*The proposal you mention, in case of extremity, will
certainly do, but it will be a much pleasanter piece of jus-
tice to bite him for his barbarity. [A son of a whore, he
means me to be sure.] The ladder, and all things shall be
ready exactly at twelve to-night. [Oons!] If you have
any thing farther of moment, this fellow is honest, and
will convey it safe to your eternal lover,*

Tom. Friendly.

Yes, yes, I find he is honest, with a pox to him, and
I'll reward him accordingly—Here, desire that honest
gentleman to walk down to the bottom of that well—
And let him stay there 'till I call for him.

Hob. I can't do it, as I hope to be zav'd I can't;
pray vorebear, and don't murder an innocent man.

[Falls on his knees.

A I R IX. My father he left me a wealthy estate.

Sings. *I never 'till now was conzarned in strife,
Have mercy, Sir Tomas, and spare poor Hob's life,
And give me my vreedom, as I had bevore—
I'll be a good boy, and I'll do zo no more.*

Indeed I won't—

Sir *Tho.* In with him, I say—

Hob. O Lard! Maister *Jonathan*, I vorewarn you,
dan't be conzarn'd in this: Conzider what you do.

Sir *Tho.* Oons! in with him.

Hob. You are all principals, there are no 'complishes
in murder. Help! Murder!

[They put him down, and Execunt.

S C E N E III. A Chamber.

Enter Flora.

Flo. I heard a strange noise without; I wish things go as they shou'd—My heart beats, as if Mr. What-d'ye-call-'em were in my arms.—Well, this love's a terrible thing—Wou'd the worst on't were over, I'm afraid I shall never be able to go thro' with it.—I am sure here's an odd baffle about it.

Enter Betty.

How now!

Bet. Undone! undone! Madam! Your uncle has intercepted Mr. *Friendly's* letter in answer to your's, and all your design's discovered; he raves and tears like a mad-man, and in his passion has thrown the poor fellow that brought it into the great well—and swears if any body offers to help him out, without his order, he'll throw them in after him.

Flo. Well, if I am here alive, I thought it wou'd come to nothing—It vexes the heart of me.

Bet. But come, Madam, don't be wholly discouraged, for *John* tells me, 'tis a hundred to one but the fellow's drown'd.

Flo. Psha! I wish my uncle was drown'd in his room.

Bet. No, Madam, but he'll be hang'd, and that's as well.

Flo. Do you really think so?

Bet. Poz.

Flo. Then I'll marry in spite of his teeth.

Bet. Right, when he's in one noose, you may slip into t'other.

Flo. Dear *Betty*, step out and see how 'tis with the fellow, for I'm in a thousand frights; and if things are—you know how,—ask when the assizes begin.

[*Exit Betty.*]

A I R X. The lass with the nut-brown hair.

*To forgive sure is great,
But revenge for wrong's sweet,
So for once let resentment prevail;
My guardian relation,
Is in a situation,
Should move a soft breast to bewail.*

*But his sordid cruelty,
Has so perverted me,
I can bear of his death without pain;
When he's swinging in his shoes,
I'll fix my marriage noose,
And (with justice) great Hymen shall reign.* [Exit.

S C E N E IV. *The Well, &c.*

Enter Old Hob and his Wife.

O. *Hob.* Come, wife, never trouble thyself, a wull go a rawging sometimes, and there's an end on't, a wull come home again: I warrant 'un.

Wife. I think o' my conscience it's no great matter whether he does or no.—A base raugue to be out of the way at such a busy time as thick is: The zun has been up this hour and quarter, and that grauceless boy, I warrant, has not been a-bed yet; prithee, husband, step and zee, a'n he be'nt zotting at the park-gate, and I'll draw th' water in the mean time.

O. *Hob.* Do you then. [Exit.

Wife. This boy's the plague of my life, I think—'twere more than time the gammon had been boiled by now. And now the volk will come to the wake bevore he be cold—and then it waun't be vit to be eaten—A jackanapes! when I bid 'em, and beg 'em, and prayed 'em to stay, and he wou'd go—And yet notwithstanding all I have zaid, cou'd I lay eyes on him, I shau'd vorget his roguery, and vorgiv'n.

A I R XI. The *Logan* water is so deep.

Sings. *The shepherdess with looks dismayed,
Because her fav'rite lamb has stray'd;
In angry search her time employs!
But found—that passion's lost in joys.*

*So will it be, with filly me,
When next my truant boy I see;
My heart pleads strongly on his side,
And I shall rather kiss than chide.*

Here have I been blaming the poor boy for not minding his business, and at the same time neglect my own; I must haste to wind up the bucket, or I shall have husband back before I've drawn a drop of water.

[*Goes to the well and sings; Did you not hear, &c.* Lud, lud, 'tis main heavy—Heyday—I believe old Nick's in the bottom o' the bucket, for my part. [*Hob cries out.*] Oh, a ghost! a ghost!

[*Hob appears in the bucket, and she lets the rope go, and he sinks again.*

Enter Old Hob.

O. *Hob.* Heyday! what's the matter, with a murrain t'ye, is the woman in her tantrums?

Wife. A ghost! a ghost!—*Hob's* ghost in the well—ah!—

O. *Hob.* The woman's turn'd vool, I think—let me zee; if the devil be in the well, I'll vetch 'en out on't—here's a rout indeed—Wauns! I think the devil be in the bucket—But now I have got 'en half way, I'll knaw what zort of a devil 'tis, and if he ben't a zivil one, I'll zouze 'en and zop 'en in the bottom agen.

Y. *Hob.* Ah! hau'd vast, vather, 'tis I! 'tis I!

Wife. Ah! 'tis there agen.

O. *Hob.* Hau'd your peace, I zay, the devil can't get in a word for you, I think—Who's there? *Hob?*

Y. *Hob.* Ay, vor love's zake pull away, vather.

O. *Hob.* Prithee lend's thy hond, wife—Bless my eyes! 'tis *Hob* indeed—what in the name of wonder dost thou here, lad?

Y. Hob. Ah! dan't ask questions now, vather—
get me home—*Zir Tomas* has don't; but if there be
law in all the king's kingdom, I'll *capias* 'en vor
zartain; I dan't know but it may prove the death of
me; I'll zue him next *hizi-prizis*, an't cost me vorty
shillings. I'll zue him, come on't what will—zee if I
don't make him pay vor't.

A I R XII. To an *Irish* tune. Trio.

Wife. Oh! my poor boy,

O. Hob. His looks are stark wild.

Wife. Cou'd *Sir Tomas* destroy

O. Hob. So hopeful a child?

Y. Hob. I'll revenge if I can.

Wife. Ah! talk so no more.

O. Hob. He's a great mon,

O. Hob and Wife. And we are but poor.

Y. Hob. All you do zay can zignify nothing,

Ill capias 'en vor't, let cost what it will.

Wife. Go to bed, boy, whilst I get thee dry cloathing.

O. Hob. Think thou art taught to return good for ill?

Y. Hob. I'll indict 'en i'th' crown,

And bind o'er to the session,

Tho'f I zell my beifer, and the auld mare,

Udsblead I'd hang 'en or drown 'en;

O. Hob. Forbear zuch expressions.

Wife. Prithee vorgive, and be not zevere.

Y. Hob. I'll newer vorgive, and will be zevere.

Wife. Oh, poor *Hob*! come along, child, and I'll get
thee a little zugar-zops to comfort thy bowels.

[*Excunt.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

S C E N E I. A Chamber.

Enter Sir Thomas and Servant.

Sir THOMAS.

JOHN, what's become of the fellow that fell into the well last night, has any body taken any care of him.

Ser. No, Sir; your worship said he should lie there till your worship was pleased to call for him——

Sir Tho. Oons, firrah, you have not drown'd the fellow, have you?

Ser. Who, I drown him, Sir! nay, nay, haud yee, I am but a servant, and 'twas you bad me; an any mischief shou'd come on't, 'tis you must answer it—Flesh! what have I to do with it?

Sir Tho. You impudent rogue! wou'd you put your villainies upon me? Did not I see you collar him, did not you lay violent hands upon him, firrah, and am not I a witness against you?

Ser. Lard? Lard! at this rate, a man had as good be a gally slave, as a servant—If one don't do as one's bid, one's head's broke; and if one does, one's to be hang'd fort't—but come what will, the gallows will hold two, that's the best on't.

Sir Tho. He says true, faith—Well, well, keep your own counsel, firrah, and I'll see what I can do to save you.

Ser. Nay, nay, as for that, do you see, do as you see cause—let it go thick way, or let it go thack way, 'tis all a case to me, go which way it will; one good turn will require another.

Sir Tho. Hold your peace, firrah—and be gone——
[*Exit Servant.*] This surly dog is not to be frighted, I see; I must (as is customary with a man in power) protect this fellow in his roguery for my own sake.

A I R XIII. I have left the world as the world
found me.

Sir Thomas Sings.

*A rogue that is hired
To do what's required,
And ne'er stick at honour or conscience,
To compass his ends,
Will destroy his best friends,
For a villain's sure friendship is nonsense.*

*Yet still he may laugh,
Well assur'd he is safe,
And despise all attempts to accuse him;
For his patron oft-times
Promoting his crimes,
Must (for self-preservation) excuse him.*

Enter Servant with a letter.

Ser. Sir, here's a letter for you.

Sir Tho. Who brought it?

Ser. Mr. Friendly's man, Sir.

Sir Tho. Let's see. (Reads.)

*Sir, your niece informs me, that she has made you a pro-
posal concerning our marriage, which I am willing
to ratify, whenever you will please to do me the honour
of a meeting.* Yours.

Humph! that meeting may be to meet with my niece,
for ought I know—I must have the particulars under
his hand, before I seem to understand him: Therefore,
that I don't understand him, shall be my answer.—
In the mean time I'll put on a smoother look to the
girl, and shew her a little of the country diversion
from the mount in the garden; and if they are in
earnest, that good humour will work her to work him
up to my price.—Bid the fellow stay 'till I write him
an answer. [Exit.

SCENE II. *The Wood and Garden-Wall.**Enter Old Hob and Wife.*

Wife. Come, husband, now the boy has got on his dry cloaths, let him be stirring a bit—Come, come, make haste, the town will be vull of volk, bevore we shall get vitted.

O. Hob. Don't trouble thyself, wife, every thing within doors is ready, and there's nothing wanting but the zign to be put up, and look'ye, that shall be done present—*Hob! Hob;*

Y. Hob. within. What zay you, vather?

O. Hob. Tap the ale, quick, quick.

Y. Hob. Ay, ay, vather.

O. Hob. There—now he that will drink good ale, let him come to the sign of the pot-lid—Come, wife, let's to our business within. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Friendly, disguised; Servant, and Country People.

Friend. If this disguise does not conceal me—

Ser. You'll then be out of countenance to no purpose, Sir—But pray, Sir, what do you propose by turning ballad-finger?

Friend. I do propose that *Flora* shall know me by my voice, and that consequently her wits will soon be at work to come at me.

Ser. Well, Sir, but of what use can I be? for I can no more sing, than I can fast.

Friend. But you can help to draw other gaping fools about me.

Ser. There's some sense in that indeed, Sir.

Enter Sir Thomas, Flora, and Betty.

Sir Tho. Come, niece, if you must see the pastime, you may have as fair a prospect of it here, as in the croud.

Flo. I like it very well here, Sir.

Friend. Well, ho! this same is intitled, An excellent new Ballad, in praise of the *Country-Wake.*

Sir *Tho.* Hark! we shall have a merry ballad.

Flo. Bless my eyes!—is not that he, *Betty*?

Bet. The very he, Madam—but hush.

A I R XIV. *A Ballad.* Rare doings at *Bath.*

Friendly sings.

I.

*I'll sing you a ditty, and warrant it true,
Give but attention unto me a while,
Of transactions at court, and in country too;
Toilsome pleasures, and pleasing toil.
Accept it (I pray) as your help-mates you take,
To some 'twill give joy,
And some others annoy,
All's fair at a country-wake. All's fair, &c.*

II.

*“ At courts we see patriots noble and just,
“ Fit for employments of honour and power;
“ But then there are sycophants, unfit for trust,
“ Blend with the great, and in number are more;
“ Slaves, who would honour and honesty stake,
“ With sordid intention,
“ To get place or pension;
“ Strange news at a country-wake. Strange news, &c.*

III.

*Some ladies at court are stil'd unpolite,
Because truly virtuous, and prone to no ill;
Whilst others who sparkle in diamonds bright,
Are stript of their pride at basset or quadrille,
'Till their losses at play do their lord's credit shake;
Then their toys to recover,
They'll grant the last favour;
Strange news at a country-wake. Strange news, &c.*

IV.

*Here most of our gentlemen patriots are,
Tho' very bad statesmen, I freely confess;
They design harm to none—but a fox or a hare,
And are always found loyal in war and in peace.*

E

*The farmer's industry does earth fertile make ;
 The husbandman's plowing,
 His planting and sowing,
 Gets health and good cheer at a country-wake. Gets, &c.*

V.

*Our girls blooming fair, without washes or paints,
 From neighbouring villages hither resort ;
 They kiss sweet as roses, yet virtuous as saints,
 (Who can say more for the ladies at court ?)
 No worldly cares vex 'em asleep or awake,
 But their time they improve
 In peace and true love,
 And innocent mirth, at the country-wake. And, &c.*

VI.

*The schemes of a courtier are full of intrigue ;
 Here's all fair and open, dark deeds we despise :
 Set rural contentment 'gainst courtly fatigue,
 Who chooses the former is happy and wise.
 Now let's pray for the king, and, for England's sake,
 From all faction free
 May his subjects agree
 As well at the court as the country-wake. As well, &c.*

Do you think she knew me ?

Ser. Knew you, Sir ! why I bought one of your ballads for her, and she tipt the wink upon me, with as much as to say, desire him not to go till he hears from me.—Suppose, Sir, you took a cup of nappy here, to pass away the time a little.

Friend. Call for what you have a mind to.

Ser. Here, house !—

Enter Hob.

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming. Your zarvant, Maister Friendly, I'm glad to zee you, you're welcome to the vair.

Friend. I thank you, honest *Hob.*

Hob. I shau'd know that gentlemon—Maister *Richard*, I think.

Ser. Ay, *Hob* ; how do'st do ?

Hob. O Laird, Maister, haw d'ye do? Come, pray zit down.—Maister *Friendly*—Come, pray stay, and drink one pot avore you go.

Friend. Sit down, or this fellow's impertinence will make us observ'd. What do'st thou do with an apron on, *Hob*?

Hob. Adod, I put'n on but just now; vather will do as neighbours do, and every one i'th' town almost zells ale on vair-day—But now we zell several other zorts of liquors, and wine too, an occasion be.

Friend. Wine!

Hob. Ay, all zorts of wine.

Friend. Say'st thou so? Bring us some *Claret* then.

Hob. *Claret*, Zir! We have no *Claret*, we mun not zell *Claret*, 'tis against th' law.—Now you may ha' some o' your *Port*, your *Red Port* now, or your *White Port*, or such zort of stuff.

Friend. Such stuff as thou hast then, prithee bring us.

Hob. Yes, Zir—Ch'am coming—Now in my mind, Zir, what do you think of a little zack; a little zack now, and zome o' your zugar in't, is main good.

Friend. Prithee bring what thou lik'st best thyself, for I'm sure 'twill please no palate but thy own.

[*Exit Hob.*]

Ser. Sir, with humble submission, I don't yet discover any great hopes from this same project of yours. Pray Sir, how do you propose to come at the lady?

Friend. While the garden door's shut, and that old dragon is so watchful of the fruit, there are but little hopes indeed. However, I won't quit the place; fortune may yet do something unexpectedly to befriend me.

Enter Hob, with pots, tobacco, bread, cheese and sugar.

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming.—Here, Zir.—

Friend. Where's the sack, *Hob*?

Hob. Zack, Zir! Odd I dan't knaw, I thought you zaid you had rather have ale.—Ale is indeed much wholsomer for your *Englisch* stomachs.—For my part, I'd rather have ale now. Maister *Richard*, bite a bit avore you drink; come, and in the mean time I'll put

a little zugar in the ale, and make it as good as I con for you. Come, Zir, against you're dispos'd.

Friend. Thank you, *Hob*—This fellow's kindness will poison me. [*Aside.*]

Ser. Not at his rate of tasting, Sir; for he has not left a drop at the bottom.

Hob. Adod, 'tis main good, Zir.—Will you have t'other pot, Zir?

Friend. No; prithee drink this too, and then fetch us a couple.

Hob. Yes, Zir, I will;—Ch'am coming [*Exit Hob.*]

Sir Tho. Come, my merry countrymen, every man take his las, and give us a dance or two, and then we'll have the cudgels out.

Count. Yes, an't like your worship, we are all ready. Come, *Scratch*, strike up. [*Dance.*]

Enter Hob.

Hob. Ay, marry Zir, well done *Ralph*, zet to un *Joan*, zet to un.—

Wife, within. *Hob! Hob!*

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming—*Toll, loll*—In *Mary*—Sides all now—Sides all.—

Friend. *Hob! Hob!*

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming, Maister. *Toll, loll.*

O. Hob, within. *Hob! Hob!*

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming.—What a plague ails vather, trow? An old vool!—Udsblead, he makes more a noise—Set to now, *William*—Ah, rarely done! In, *Mary*; ah, dainty *Mary*! Turn her about, *John*—now, now! a murrain!—You're quite out.—Look, *Ralph* should ha' cast off; and while *John* had turn'd *Mary* about, *Tomas* shou'd ha' led up *Nan*, and *Joan* met *Ralph* at bottom agen; mean-while, *John* shou'd have sided with *Mary*, and then *Mary* shou'd back to back with *Ralph*, and then *Tomas* had come in again, in his own place; and so all had been right—Come, begin again.—Strike up, *Scratch.* *Tol, lol.*

O. Hob, within. *Hob! Hob!* Where be ye?

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming; What a devil can't you be quiet a bit.—*Tol, lol.*

Enter Old Hob.

O. Hob. Hey-day! Hey-day! This is rare sport. Udsblead, I'll strap you, you base rawg ye—Must you be dauncing here, and your mother and I at work?

[Strikes him.]

Hob. Hey-day, what's the matter now? What, must I be beat all days o' my life?

O. Hob. You graceless rawg, mind your business then, do; yonder's your poor mother within, a scawring and scawring 'till she sweats again, and no body to draw one drop of beer.

Hob. I don't care a varthing—I won't draw a drop more, if you go to that; do your worst, and take your course.

O. Hob. Sirrah, come in, and dan't stand dauncing here, dan't ye.

Hob. I won't go in, zo I won't; if that trouble ye, I will daunce, and daunce agen. *Tol, lol, lol—*

A I R XV.

*Sure never was zeen such a rebel,
Thou worst of undutiful boys,
Thy tongue, like the builders of Babel,
Confuses the ear with its noise.*

*Remember thy dreary figure,
When out of the well thou wast brought,
Thy mother and I toil'd with vigour
To save thee—And now thou'rt worth nought.*

Ah! thou'rt an untoward boy as e'er was born. Marcy forgive me for begetting thee. *[Exit O. Hob.]*

Hob. Marry come up, what's here to do, I trow?

Count. Here's the cudgels, an't like you; will your worship please to have us begin?

Sir Tho. Ay, ay, by all means; make haste, *Roger*, and bring forth the hat and favour.

Roger. Here 'tis, an't please you.

Sir Tho. Hang it up there; and he that wins it, let

him wear it—The first *Somersetshire* man that breaks a head, here's half a crown for him to drink ; and he that breaks that rogue *Hob's* head, shall have another.

Hob. Shall he ?

A I R XVI. Go vind the vicar of *Taunton Dean*.

*Go vind the vicar of our town,
And he'll bauld ye an angel o' my head,
And I'll bet you another, and flake it down,
That I break both his, and thy head—*

*Few bouts will set these matters right,
For my cudgel, an't prove a good one,
Shau'd make no distinction 'twixt yeoman and knight,
Sing beydon, dooden, cudden, &c.*

Look ye, he that breaks my head shall ha' zomewhat to do, I'll tell you that.—Let'n be who he wull, he shall earn his money ; ecod I'll rib'n ; and look ye, to begin, here I'll take up the cudgel—and now let the best man here take up the t'other a'n he dare—If he be a *Zomerzetsshire* man, let'n be a *Zomerzetsshire* man.—
I fight for *Gloucestershire*, I don't care who knaws it.

Sir Tho. At him, at him there, what ! is there no body dare venture upon him ? Neighbour *Puzzlepate*, take up t'other cudgel.

Puz. Not I, an't please you, I have enough of 'en already, he broke my head but last week.

Sir Tho. *Roger*—*Sirrah*, do you take up t'other cudgel, and thrash him, d'ye hear, thrash him soundly, *Sirrah*.

Rog. I can't promise that, *Sir* ; I'll do my best, I'll break his head if I can, in love ; and if he breaks mine, much good may do him.

Friend. So ! if *Hob* does but get the better of the combat, the testy knight will certainly be provok'd to come down, and then we shall have sport—*Dick*, help to encourage him.

Serv. Well said, *Hob* ! O brave *Hob* ! now for *Gloucestershire*, *Hob* !

Hob. I warrant ye, maister ; let me alone.

Friend. Here, *Hob*, there's an angel for thee, and if thou break'st his head, I'll give thee another.

Hob. Don't ye veer, maister; ecod I'll 'noint 'en.

Rog. Do, if thou canst—I don't fear thee, *Hob*.

Hob. S'blead, I'll drefs thy jacket, I'll dowse thy *Zomerzetshire* coat for thee.

Rog. Will you?

A I R XVII. In *Taunton Dean*.

*In Taunton-Dean I was born and bred,
And 'tis known I don't value a broken head;
Nor shou'd I fear Hob, were he stout in his wrath,
As Hercules, or Goulding of Bath.
Fal, lal, &c.*

Come on.

Serv. O brave *Hob*!

All. O brave *Roger*!—Huzza!

[*Hob* breaks his head, takes down the hat and favour, puts it on, and struts about.

Hob. Ecod I have don't, I have don't, efaith.

A I R XVIII. Now comes on the glorious year.

*Now, brave boys, the fight is done,
And I the prize have fairly won;
For I knew I cou'd beat'n four to one,
And that he'll sore remember.
Fal, lal, &c.*

Sir Tho. Foul, foul, foul.

Hob. Fair, fair, fair.

Sir Tho. You lie you dog, 'twas foul.

All. Huzza.

Friend. Stand upon your guard, *Hob*, the knight's coming down.

Hob. Is he? Let'n come and welcome; here I'll stand: I'll take no other than *St. George's* guard. If he let's drive at me, vore gad, I'll hit'n o'er the sconce, an he were a knight of gold.

Sir Tho. Where are these bumkins? Now, who says 'tis fair? I say 'tis foul.

Hob. I say 'tis fair.

[Sir Thomas endeavouring to come at Hob, is held by the country people.]

A I R XIX. Come, sound up your trumpets.

*Pray let'n come, neighbours, for I ben't afeard:
Dost think I'll be scar'd, like a child at a rod?
I'll keep my ground bravely, and St. George's guard.
Take care then, Zir Tomas, I'll 'noint ye, ecod.
With a fal, lal, &c.*

[They let him go, Hob breaks his head; he draws his sword. Hob and countrymen run away, Sir Thomas pursues.]

Friend. to Flo. Now, now, dear creature, if ever you would redeem yourself or me from eternal bondage, be kind, and fly into the arms of liberty.

Flo. What wou'd you have me do?

A I R XX. Come, open the door, sweet Betty.

*O fly from this place, dear Flora,
Thy jailor has left thee free,
And before the next blush of Aurora,
You'll find a guardian in me.*

Flora. Fain would I exchange for the better,
Confinement can have no charms.

Friend. Think which of your prisons is sweeter:
This, or a young lover's arms.

Madam, your uncle has left the garden door open; there's no mortal now to oppose your flight—Scout, —Scout, you dog, and see that the enemy don't rally upon us.

Serv. Ay, ay, Sir.

[Exit Servant.]

Flo. Ah, but consider, if my uncle should surprise me.

Bet. Consider, the door's open, Madam.

Friend. Nothing but delay can ruin us.

Flo. O dear, I'm in a thousand frights!

Bet. This is downright provoking! Sir, since you see there's no hopes of my lady, if you can settle the least tip of your heart upon her humble servant, I'll be over the wall in a twinkling.

Flo. Hold, hold; rather than you should break your neck, I will venture—Well, here I am, I tremble every joint of me; now whither will you carry me?

[*They come down.*]

Friend. To a doctor, that shall cure thee of all fears for ever—To the parson, the parson, my dear angel.

Flo. O Lurd! but if he should not be at home now!

Bet. What should we do for something to be afraid of?

A I R XXI. Ranting roaring *Billy.*

*Thus Maidens bely their desires,
Yet languish for what they refuse;
And tho' their breasts glow with love's fires,
Seem cold to the joys they would choose.
The tongue and the heart are two factions,
We scarce reconcile till made brides;
Like statesmen, our speeches and actions
Have commonly contrary sides.*

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. There, you rustic rogues, you hard-headed dogs, I think I've at last met with your sculls—I believe I have notch'd some of your noddles for you.—Hey-day! the garden-door open, and my niece gone!—my mind misgives me confumedly—Niece! *Betty!* Thieves! Robbery! Murder! Lost! Not to be found!

Enter Friendly's Servant.

Serv. So, here he is, and I must bam him till the business is over.

Sir Tho. Thieves! Thieves!

Serv. Pray, Sir, what's the matter?

Sir Tho. Oons, Sir, let me go, or I'll run my sword into your guts.

Serv. Sir, I'm afraid your brain's something out of

order, and therefore 'twill be but a friendly part in me to take care of you.

Sir *Tho.* Blood and thunder ! you dog, get out of my way, or I'll—

Serv. Nay, then—

[*Presenting a pistol.*]

A I R. XXII. Stand, who comes there ?

Stand ; have a care.

Stand ; have a care.

One step to move,

Will fatal prove,

For I know who you are.

Come, Sir, make your thrust—

Sir *Tho.* What the devil are you, Sir ?

Serv. A philosopher ; and this small pop is my argument.

Sir *Tho.* Oons, Sir, I believe you're a highwayman, and your pop there is your livelihood.

Serv. Sir, you may be as scurrilous as you please, provided you don't pass this way.

Sir *Tho.* 'Sdeath, Sir, what business have you to hinder me ?

Serv. Sir, I have no business at present, but to hinder you.

Sir *Tho.* But pray, Sir, how comes it to be your business ?

Serv. Because, Sir, 'tis my business to do my master's business ; and I have some modest reason to believe, that he and the parson are now doing your niece's business.

Sir *Tho.* The devil ! Murder ! Where are they, villain ?

Serv. Pray, Sir, compose yourself, for they are here.

Enter Friendly, Flora, and Betty.

Friend. Your blessing, Sir ?

Serv. Does not that shew a sweet temper in him now, to ask it of you, that are but his bare uncle ?

Sir *Tho.* I am struck all of a heap, and dumb.

Serv. Come, Sir, don't be as obstinate as an old cove-

tous father at the end of a comedy; consider, the main action's over, you had as good be reconciled.

Sir Tho. Oons, Sir, I can't be reconcil'd.

[*Ex. Sir Tho.*

Serv. Go thy ways, like a cross-grain'd old fool.

Friend. Let him persist in his obstinacy, it can be no bar to our happiness. You look melancholy, my love.

Flora. I think I've reason—You promis'd to carry me to a doctor that should cure me of my fears. But, on the contrary, I find that the malady increases, and in nothing more than the dread of your inconstancy. I have for ever lost my uncle's favour, and have now no friend but you—Shou'd you hereafter estrange your heart from me, I am wretched indeed—Reflect on what I've said, excuse my suspicions, and remember there is no return of seasons in love.

A I R XXIII. 'Twas on a sunshine summer's day.

Flora. *Sweet is the budding spring of love—
Next, blooming hopes, all fears remove,
And when possess'd of beauty's charms,
Eruition, like the summer, warms.
But pleasures, oft repeated, cloy,
To autumn wanes the fleeting joy,
Declining 'till desires are lost—
Succeeded by eternal frost. Succeeded, &c.*

Friend. Banish those fears, and be assured they are groundless—*Dick—*

Serv. Sir.

Friend. Run, and call our country neighbours back again to their diversions, in which they were interrupted by Sir Thomas; tell them they shall be merry with me to day, to make them amends for being frightened. [*Exit. Dick.*] 'Twas a happy interruption, for it gave us an opportunity to be for ever fix'd in love.—Look merry, my dear.

Flo. My concern vanishes, now I've disclosed my fears, and cheerfulness will soon resume its throne.

Friend. You shall never have cause to mention those fears again.—

Flo. It is easy to talk thus now, but the difficulty will be to speak these sentiments, with truth, a year hence: However, as I have run all hazards for you, honour will oblige you to conceal your inconstancy from me—shou'd you be guilty of it.

A I R XXIII. Red House. Duetto.

Flora. *Let me not discover
In thee a faithless lover.*

Friend. *I'll never prove a rover,
But true as a turtle to thee, my dear.*

Flora. *Love prompts me to believe thee,
Do not then deceive me.*

Friend. *My conduct ne'er shall grieve thee,
Let this suffice; my heart's sincere.*

Flora.— *Let our lives be spent—*

Friend.— *In merriment;*

Flora.— *With the sweet cement—*

Friend.— *Of soft content.*

Flora.— *May our joys augment—*

Friend.— *May no dire event*

Both.— *Disturb our mutual pleasure.*

Enter Dick, Hob, and Country Folks.

Hob. Is *Zir Tomas* gone?

Friend. Ay, *Hob*; come in, what art afraid of?

Hob. 'Sbled, I was woundily afraid of 's-zword; had he kept to stick, I'd thrash 'em to mummy.

Friend. I'm sorry, neighbours, *Sir Thomas's* passionate folly disturb'd your sports one way; I'll endeavour to make you all satisfaction; this is my wedding-day, and consequently a day of jubilee.

Countryfolks. We wish you joy, *Maister Friendly* and *mistress*—

Hob. I wish ye joy too. But when I was zopp'd i' th' well, I little thought I should live to tell you zo.

Friend. *Hob*, thou shalt laugh at thy danger—now 'tis over.—Come, we'll have a song and a dance, and haste

to my dwelling, and finish the day with mirth and hearty cheer : The night I'll dedicate to love and thee. [To Fla

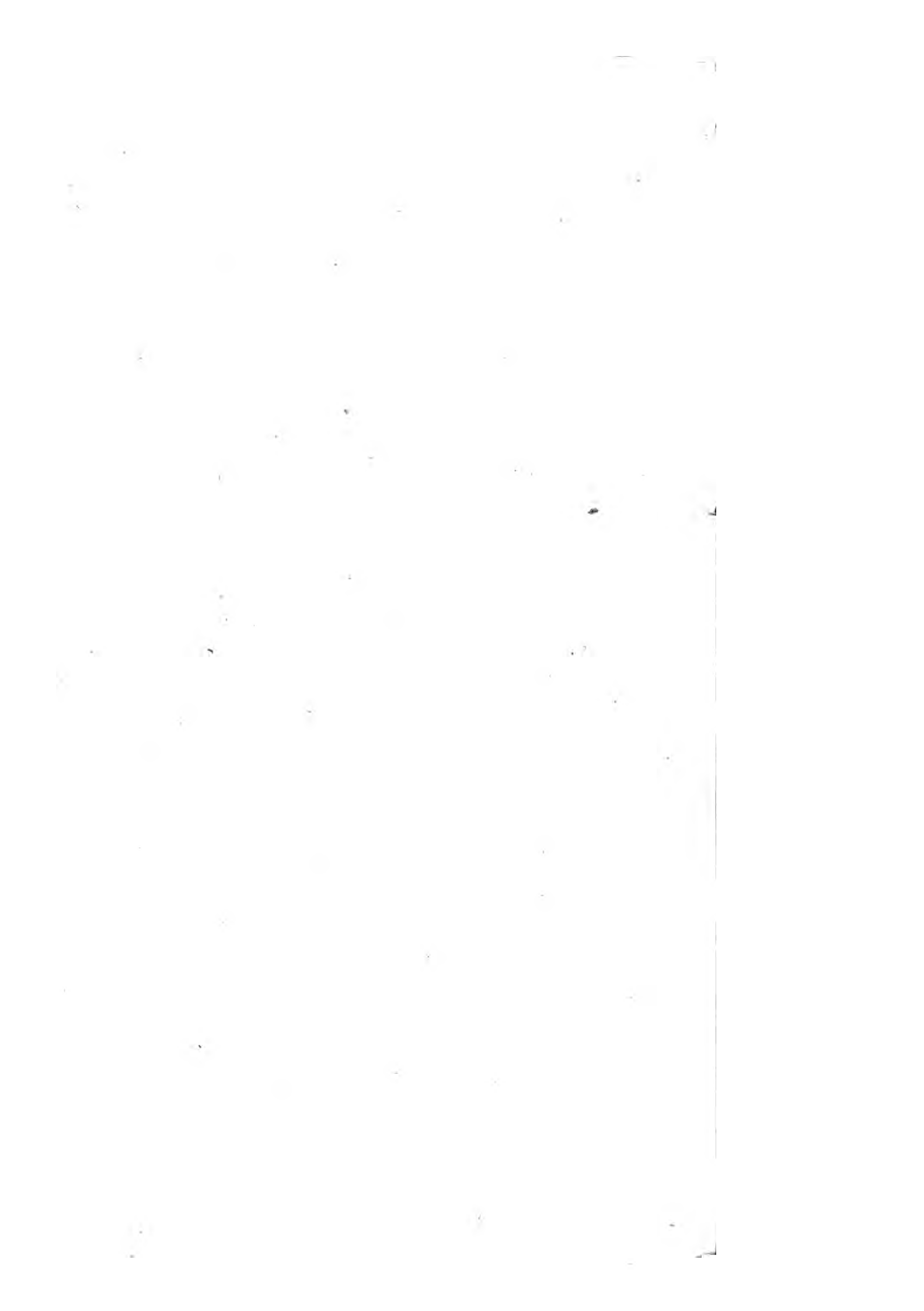
A I R XXIV. Friendly.

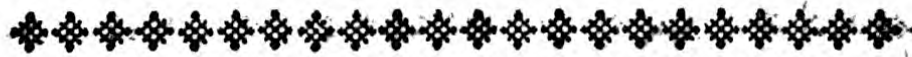
*Success this day has gain'd me possession
Of what I love much dearer than life ;
The coming night shall give me fruition
Of all I can wish in a lovely wife.
To enjoy the sweets the country affords,
Who would not forego the servile flattery of courts ;
To hunt, fish and fowl,
And taste the full bowl,
There is nothing so healthful as rural sports.*

C H O R U S .

*Now from envy free, — All friends loyally
Supplicate with me, — Our guardian divinity,
To bless the king and queen, and royal progeny.
Send us peace, trade's increase, health and prosperity.
May Cupid's darts strike sure—But be the cause the cure ;
In virtuous deeds delight—Happy all unite
In friendship and love.
[A dance, and Exeunt.*

END OF HOB IN THE WELL.





T H E

S C H O O L - B O Y :

O R, T H E

C O M I C A L R I V A L .

A

F A R C E .



Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Major <i>Rakish</i> . An old humour- some, wicked fellow.	} Mr. <i>Penketbman</i> .
Young <i>Rakish</i> . His son, whom he keeps at short allowance.	} Mr. <i>Mills</i> .
<i>Friendly</i> . Friend to young <i>Rakish</i> .	Mr. <i>Oates</i> .
Master <i>Johnny</i> . The School-Boy, a childish surly sprig.	} Mr. <i>Cibber</i> .
Father <i>Benedict</i> . A <i>French</i> Jesuit.	Mr. <i>Williams</i> .
<i>Tom</i> . Footman to young <i>Rakish</i> .	Mr. <i>Wilson</i> .

W O M E N.

Lady <i>Manlove</i> . Mother to Mas- ter <i>Johnny</i> .	} Mrs. <i>Baker</i> .
<i>Lettice</i> . Her Maid.	Mrs. <i>Garnet</i> .
<i>Betty</i> . Another Servant.	Mrs. <i>Willis, jun.</i>

S C E N E, *London*.

T H E
S C H O O L - B O Y :
O R , T H E
C O M I C A L R I V A L .

A C T I .

S C E N E I . *The Park.*

Enter Young Rakish and Friendly, meeting.

Young RAKISH.

DEAR *Friendly!*

Friend. Ha! *Jack Rakish!* how goes the world? What says the old spark your father; does his good humour hold still?

Y. Rak. His humour's indeed the same, though I cannot say much for the goodness of it.

Friend. How so! are you not as free with him, as you us'd to be?

Y. Rak. Yes, and he's as free with me too: the soul of me at least, my pleasures, I mean; of all the vices this town affords, and (heaven bless the reformers) there's a pretty considerable stock still left, I can't keep one to myself for him; he out-does me at my own weapons; out-drinks me, out-whores me, out-swears me, out-lies me, out-wits me, and (which I'll never forgive him)—he out-lives me too.

Friend. That indeed may be the worst part of your fortune. What, has he not increased your allowance yet?

Y. Rak. The title of it he has, but my income is much less than ever it was.

Friend. How do you mean?

Y. Rak. Why, he has obliged me, upon making it up two hundred pounds a year, to play with him every quarter for fifty pounds, at piquet or backgammon; both of which he understands so much better than I, that I constantly receive my rent in nothing but repiques, capotts, gamons, and doublets.

Friend. Why at this rate he allows you nothing at all.

Y. Rak. Not so much as the deal or the dice, by *Jupiter.*

Friend. How can you live without money?

Y. Rak. Faith I am heartily weary of it, and was this minute thinking of a project to bring him to better articles.

Friend. Can I assist you?

Y. Rak. I can't tell but you may: You must know I am (or may be at least) his rival in my *Lady Manlove*. She has given me encouragement, which he is sometimes very uneasy at; now I have no way so likely to carry my point, as by flatly telling him, unless he immediately complies, I am positively resolv'd to pursue my fortune there.

Friend. You could not have thought better; stand to it stoutly, I warrant you bring him down, to the ready down.

Y. Rak. D'ye think so? Egad, old gentleman, look to yourself, or I may chance to jump into the saddle before you. But see, here he comes; ten to one he is now going to visit her.

Friend. Hark you, suppose you give me leave to try his good-nature first; you'll then have a fairer excuse for taking his mistress from him.

Y. Rak. With all my heart: I'll be near enough in the next walk to over-hear you; but if you can make nothing of him, I'll ev'n attack him myself, and come down point blank to the business.

Friend. Away.

[*Exit Y. Rak.*]

Enter Major Rakish, singing.

Maj. Toll, toll, dum, dum, &c.—Ha! my little Ned, how is it?

Friend. At your service, Major: You're brisk and hearty still, I see; how does your son, pray?

Maj. O! a sad dog! the boy's ruin'd, strip'd, strip'd, every day! The puppy will play, tho' he knows no more of the lay than a milkwoman: Why yesterday, now, I paid him fifty pounds for his quartridge, I warrant by this time, the bubble has not so much as a single guinea to play at even and odd with.

Friend. He tells me, that you always strip him, and have oblig'd him to play with you once a quarter.

Maj. That's true, for if I did not take care, he would be throwing it away next minute: So I am forced to oblige him to play with me, tho' I know the dog would rather any scoundrel should win it than his father.

Friend. But this is allowing him nothing in the end, Major.

Maj. Nothing! why don't I pay him constantly, every quarter?

Friend. Ay, but you constantly strip him every quarter: Faith, Major, this way will but drive him to some extravagance at last.

Maj. Extravagance! a hang-dog! Has not nature given him a strong back? Let him live by that, or let him do as I did, turn beau, and live upon tick; let him be civil to his laundress, say soft things to his sempstress, help his taylor to custom, dine with my Lord *Openhouse*, bilk his lodgings, and now and then sharp a play in the side-box.

Friend. This, I know, he's very often forc'd to do; but I believe he's heartily weary on't; for I heard him say lately, he had some thoughts of marrying my Lady *Manlove*: Now, in my opinion, she wou'd be a much properer match for you; therefore I would even advise you to pay him his allowance clear, and let him quit his pretences to her.

Maj. His pretences, a poor dog! from what! his estate! Three shirts, two wigs, and a snuff-box: Does

the nouse crown think to frighten me there, I'll try that presently. I'll visit her this minute; the dog shall starve this twelve-month for his impudence.

Enter Young Rakish.

Y. Rak. Say you so, old gentleman! Nay, then 'tis time to look about me, Sir.

[Pulls the Major by the sleeve.]

Maj. Ha! art thou there, my dear smockface?

Y. Rak. If you're not in extraordinary haste, may I beg the favour to know whither you are going?

Maj. Why dost thou ask, my chicken?

Y. Rak. Because, Sir, I have some reason to believe it may be to my Lady *Manlove*; therefore I thought fit to inform you, it would not be a very proper time, Sir, for I'm going thither myself.

Maj. Adso, that's true, I hear thou'rt going to marry her.

Y. Rak. That's as I shall think fit, Sir.

Maj. Hah! hast thou nothing else to say to me, my dear *Dacky*?

Y. Rak. Sir, if you have any thoughts of going, in plain terms I shan't care to see you there.

Maj. Hah!

Y. Rak. For my business with her is private.

Maj. Is it?

Y. Rak. Therefore your company will but disturb us, Sir.

Maj. Disturb you, ha!

Y. Rak. I hear, Sir, you make pretences there.

Maj. Dost thou?

Y. Rak. And I advise you as a friend, to give them over.

Maj. Say no more, my little *Dacky*. *[Going.]*

Y. Rak. Sir, I have a great deal more to say.

Maj. Say it.

Y. Rak. In short, Sir, I find your good-nature and my fortune are so very low, that I am resolved to marry her.

Maj. To marry her!—Very good—But upon condition I will pay thee thy two hundred pounds a year

constantly, tax and play free, thou art willing to renounce all claim to her, ha! Is't not so, my little *Dacky*? Come, speak, you dear blushing rogue you, speak.

Y. Rak. Look you, Sir, in consideration that you are my father, and one I would not willingly be a rival to, make it four hundred a year, and I'll have no more to say to her.

Maj. Four hundred, my child! wilt thou 'bate me nothing?

Y. Rak. I'm at a word, Sir.

Maj. At a word, my little *Dacky*! Nay, then for a quiet life, do you see, I will give,—I will give thee,—let me see,—what?—Oh! the devil a groat, my little *Dacky*! Bye, *Ned.* Toll, toll. [*Exit singing.*]

Friend. Faith, *Jack*, this I confess is provoking; what will you do?

Y. Rak. Be reveng'd, and rival him this moment.

Friend. Can I serve you?

Y. Rak. Can you lend me your lodgings this afternoon, if a man shou'd have occasion for 'em?

Friend. Any thing I have is at your service.

Y. Rak. I thank you, dear *Ned.* Adieu. If I succeed, you shall hear from me.

Friend. Good luck to you.

Y. Rak. Let me see! Here have I revenge, a good estate, marriage, and an old woman all together in one dish. Now to consult my stomach a little; revenge is a pretty hollow bit, that's the truth on't; and fifteen hundred pounds a-year is well enough for a starving young fellow to piddle upon. But then again, marriage is hell, and an old woman is the devil—Well, and what's a young one? The same after a month's possession. Old, would she were fourscore; for egad, upon second thoughts, when a man is to be noosed, who the devil would complain to be tied up in a rotten halter.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *Lady Manlove's House.*

Enter Lettice and Betty.

Bet. Well, *Lettice*, thou liv'st in a rare family here; thou wilt certainly pick up a fortune; and that's the thing, you know, that picks up a husband.

Let. Nay, I have no reason to complain of my lady's humour; for at any time if I have but a mind to a fuit of knots, or a gown of a week's wear only, 'tis but commending her shape or complexion in a contrary colour, and the business is done.

Bet. And if you have but a warm intrigue to entertain her with, her soul's your own.

Let. Right. Did I never tell you how she served an amorous book of Major *Rakish's* to-day?

Bet. No; how was it, prithee?

Let. You must know, he recommended one of *Scarron's* novels to her; but withal told her one particular page in it was a little smutty.

Bet. So!

Let. Upon which she very discreetly desired him to double it down, that she might be sure to avoid it; but when she return'd the book, that poor leaf was more thumb'd and blurr'd than the beginning of a school-boy's accidence.

Bet. Ha! ha! ha! And no doubt she took as much pains to get it by heart. But now you talk of a school-boy, how stands your affairs with my lady's son, master *Johnny*?

Let. O! in a very fair way, child! Tho' he pretends, upon our late quarrel, to comply with his mother's persuasion of going to *St. Omer's*, (by the way, I hear she intended to make a priest of him) now I know 'tis only to try whether or no I shall be contented to part with him.

Bet. How came you to quarrel with him?

Let. He happen'd to catch me alone, as I was making his bed this morning; his stomach was up, it seems, and the young gentleman was going to fall to before the par-

son had said grace ; upon which I gave him a box on the ear, and vow'd I'd never marry him as long as I liv'd.

Bet. Marry him ! why I thought you had only designed to make a fool of him.

Let. That's making a husband of him, I think ; but see, here he comes ; away, dear *Betty*, for now's my only time to manage him.

Enter Johnny, and walks by Lettice scornfully.

John. *Dick* ! go and see if the horses be come. What dost thou dangle after me for ?

Let. Well, squire, I knew the time, when you would ha' been glad that I wou'd ha' follow'd you : But I find now you never lov'd me. [*Cries.*]

John. It's a lye ! I did love you, so I did, Mrs. *Snappish.*

Let. You wou'd not have the heart to leave me then. Oh ! [*Cries,*]

John. Remember the back closet up two pair of stairs, young gentlewoman—Yaah ! You cou'd squall louder then, when I did but offer to see whether you garter'd above knee or not.

Let. Why I don't garter above knee, you may feel here then.

John. What do I care ! I won't feel there, I'll do what I please, or else I won't stay.

Let. No, squire, you are mistaken in me, I am not such a one neither ; I'll die, before I'll be your whore.

John. And I'll be hang'd before I'll be your fool ; why *Dick*, why dost thou not get the horses ready ?

Let. You shall not leave me then. [*Leans on him.*] If you will stay, I'll be kinder to you ; do but try me till to-morrow : I won't cry out no more indeed. You shall tie my garter where you please, if you won't go.

John. Will you let's busf you then ! [*Surlily.*]

Let. Yes, in a civil way. [*Kisses her.*]

John. Well, will you promise to love me now, and be free with a body ?

Let. I'll love you as long as I live, if you won't leave me. [*Squeals.*]

John. Well, well, what do you whawle for ?

Let. I'm sure 'twou'd break my heart to part with you; pray, dear squire, don't go. [*Lowder.*]

John. What do you keep such a bawling for; I tell you I won't go—Let's bufs you again.

Enter Lady Manlove, unseen.

L. Man. What's here? My young rogue, and that impudent quean in close conference. I'll observe them.

John. But will you promise to marry me to-day if I won't go.

L. Man. So! [*Aside.*]

Let. Marry you, ay, poor fool, you may be sure on't [*Aside.*] But won't you forsake me then, and use me ill?

John. I tell you, I won't use you ill, you fool you.

L. Man. O! I han't patience. Why how now, firrah! What are you doing there? and you, Mrs. *Flirt*, I'll teach you to debauch my son, I will, you stinking jade you. [*Slaps her.*]

John. What do you strike her for, Mother? what do you strike her for? you shan't strike her no more.

L. Man. How, firrah! shan't I strike her! you sawcy rogue, I'll fell you to the ground. [*Interposing.*]

John. Will you? I'll try that. [*Holds her hands.*] Now strike me to the ground, can't you! Let's see you strike me now. [*They struggle.*]

Let. What an unfortunate discovery was this? To be caught just as we had agreed upon articles: But, however, I don't fear him, for I know he will marry me now, if it be only to contradict his mother—Dear squire, don't anger my lady so; pray, Sir, let her go.

John. Why, if she will be quiet, with all my heart; I don't meddle with her. [*Lets go.*]

L. Man. O! O! The rogue has sprained my arms; I shall not be able to stir them this twelve-month.

John. Look'e, mother, I am sorry for't; I did not design you any harm, not I: but why should you offer to strike the poor girl so?

L. Man. Sirrah, what's that to you; how dare you justify her?

John. Why, may be, I had a kindness for her, what then? And look you, mother, to tell you the truth, indeed I do think, you ought to be acquainted with the business—You must know, I design to marry her.

L. Man. Dare you tell me this to my face, sirrah?

John. Why, how should I tell it you, behind your back?

L. Man. Sirrah! How dare you think of such a thing! you Jack-a-napes!

John. Don't you call me names, mother; don't call me names: But, if I do think on't, how can I help it? And pray why should not I think on't as well as you? I suppose you thought of a husband, and why should not I think of a wife? You have had your swing already. Icod my father was no flincher; was not I born of your body, pray? And why should not I get somebody on somebody's else body?

L. Man. Was ever heard such impudence? Sirrah, I shall turn over a new leaf with you. Your governor will be here presently, and he shall know what a wicked rogue you are! I'll make him flea your backside for you.

John. I don't believe you will; and he meddle with me, I may chance to lay him on his back; he flea my backside! he kifs!—won't he?

L. Man. So, so, this is very fine language!

John. Lettice, do you slip away into my chamber, and I will come to you presently.

[*Afide to Lettice.*

[*Exit Lettice.*

Enter Father Benedict, booted, &c.

L. Man. O Father! I am glad you are come; your pupil here, my son *Johnny*, has been making love to one of my impudent maids; and tells me to my face, he'll marry her, he won't go his journey, not he!

F. Ben. Leta me alone! leta me alone! come! come! Madam, 'tis better to give him de good vard—How you do, young gentleman! how you do? Me sal be ver glad to ave de care of you.

John. Ay, and you had best have a care of me.

F. Ben. You no feara dat, dat is ver well; now you be one good shild—

[*Pats him on the head.*

John. What do you tap me o' th' head for? *[Starts.]*

F. Ben. O' me lose you, Maitre *Jcanny*, me lose you.
[Chucks him.]

John. Let my chin alone, will you.

[Strikes away his hand.]

F. Ben. Vat you mean, strike a me! vat you mean? me fal 'ave de vip for you.

John. Who is that you'll have the whip for, you loggerhead you, who will you have the whip for? ha!

[Doubling his fist.]

F. Ben. Loggerhate, jernie bleu, vat is dat loggerhate?

John. You may go look, it's such a fool as you are.

F. Ben. De foole, a ha! me underitanda dat ver well; you call a me de fool, humph.

John. Why, don't you hear I do, dunderpate.

F. Ben. Dunderpate! je vous prie, Madam, vat is dat, dunderpate?

L. Man. A very scurrilous name, Sir; won't you break his head for't?

F. Ben. O, letta me alone, Madam; ecoutes Maitre *Jcanny*, vat vil you say, if vor de loggerhate, vor de fool, and for de dunderpate, me fal give you one, two, tree slaps of the chops, Maitre *Jcanny*? Humph.

John. Why, I say, if you give me such another word, I may chance to wipe you 'cross the jaws.

F. Ben. Ver well, where is de reverence you ave vor me personne?

John. O Lord, Sir, I do Sir-reverence your person.

F. Ben. Allons, den aska me de pardon, aska me de par

John. Ask your pardon, for what! For what! Can you tell, you owl you? Ask your pardon—here, give the poor boy his hat; there, now I ask your pardon.
[Strikes off his hat and periwig, and discovers his crown.]

A hey! what a dickens have we got here?

F. Ben. Ad la grande malheur, vat fal me do? He a discover my couronne.

L. Man. Undone, ruined; I shall never get the rogue to go now.

John. Pray, Sir, what trade are you?

[To the priest.]

L. Man. He is no trade, firrah; but a civil, sober

gentleman, that I have prevailed with to be your governor.

John. He my governor! what, to make a papist of me! look'ye, Madam, as for religion, d'ye see, I han't been taught much of any sort: But adfuckers, this I know, that I won't be a papist; it's a hard case, if a man must go to the devil, he can't take it out in what sort of wickedness he pleases: For my part, I'll even go the way of the flesh, I'm resolved the spirit shall not carry me: Odds-flesh! I won't be priest-ridden thither: Not but I believe this same gentleman knows the road as well as a *Dover* post-horse. But I am not so hot upon that journey, and so will pull off my boots, d'ye see.—Toll; lall, lall. [Sits down and sings.]

L. Man. You impudent young rascal, how dare you offer to pull off your boots? Sirrah, I'll have your bones broke; I'll make you change your tune.

John. No, you shan't—Toll, loll, loll.

L. Man. You saucy rogue, do you laugh in my face, I'll whip your eyes out. [Offers to take Benedict's whip.]

F. Ben. No trouble yourself, Madam, letta me alone; allons: Put on your boote, Maitre Jeanny.

John. Toll, loll, loll. [Looking in his face.]

F. Ben. Vat is dad, Toll, toll, toll? Me say put on your boote. [Cracks his whip.]

John. Ay, it's no matter for that—I won't change my tune; toll, loll, loll.

L. Man. Hold, Father, don't be too severe; I find there is no dealing with him; we must even try what fair words will do.

F. Ben. Ma foy, Madam, me believe dat is de best way.

L. Man. Johnny, my dear Johnny, don't be so wilful, prithee mind what I say to thee.

John. Why, ay, mother—Now your note's altered, d'ye see, I don't care if I do change my tune.

L. Man. Now, thou art a dear child! come, that's my good boy, prithee put on thy boots again; see, here's money for thee! Thou shalt have any thing thou canst ask for.

John. Say you so? Icod, then I'll serve you a brave

trick! that money will buy *Lettice* a pure topping to her wedding clothes.—Why, look ye, mother, because you give me good words now, if you'll give me that purse now, d'ye see, and make Vather Bald-pate walk down stairs, why, I'll put them on again.

L. Man. But will you promise me to go your journey too?

John. Poh, I will, I tell you—why don't he go?

[Sits down, putting them on.]

L. Man. Dear Father, don't let's cross him in this good humour, pray be gone.

F. Ben. With all mine heart, Madam; Maitre *Jcanny*, me be your ver-humble servant. [Exit.]

L. Man. Why dost thou sit upon the floor, *Johnny*?

John. Poh, what does it signify—where's the purse, mother?

L. Man. That's my good child, put on t'other boot, and thou shalt have it.

John. Psha! why, there it is: You see what 'tis to be civil to a body—so now give's the money.

[Fastens her with a piercer to the floor.]

L. Man. Well, but will you promise to get on horse-back as soon as you have it?

John. What, d'ye think I would tell you a lie, mother, and look you in the face in this manner?

L. Man. That's my dear boy; there 'tis, to do what thou wilt with.

John. Toll, loll, loll.

[Rises and pulls off his boots again.]

L. Man. How, now! what does the fool mean?

John. No fool, no fool, mother.

L. Man. Thou wicked villain, I'll— [Finds herself fast.] Ha! what's here: Hark ye, firrah, rogue, what's the meaning of this?

John. That's because you should not follow me: Look ye, mother, always tie a mad bull to a stake. Toll, loll—and there's my tune again for you: now Toll, loll, loll.

[Exit singing.]

L. Man. Was ever woman plagu'd with such a stubborn rascal! What shall I do? Oh! how the rogue has rammed it in.— Who's within there? If I live, I'll

be reveng'd; I'll marry the lewdest fellow about town! nay, the most notorious rogue of a lawyer, but I'll keep his estate from him.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Major *Rakish*, Madam, and his son, desire to speak with you.

L. Man. They could not take me in a better time, neither of them shall want encouragement; here, prithee undo this.

Ser. O dear, Madam, this is Master *Johnny's* piercer.

L. Man. Where is the rogue? Did you see him?

Ser. Yes, Madam; he has just now put *Lettice* into a hackney-coach.

L. Man. And did he go with her?

Ser. No, Madam, he's somewhere in the house.

L. Man. If he offers to go out, be sure you dodge him, and bring me word immediately—Go, bid the gentlemen walk up.

Ser. Yes, Madam.

Enter Major and Young Rakish.

Maj. Madam, your most humble servant: Odsbud! it's a month since I kiss'd your ladyship's hand.

[Offering towards her, and Young Rakish steps before him.]

Y. Rak. It's an age, Madam, since I did; therefore as a longer absent lover, ought to do it first.

L. Man. O dear, Sir, I'll swear you hurt me.

Y. Rak. Can there be harm in such a tender grasp of love! Madam, your charms bound like a rowling deluge o'er my soul, and stifle me in excess of fond desire. Ah! the very pangs of death are on me; I beat and struggle like a drowning wretch for life, and these my last convulsions.—

Maj. Humph!

[Aside.]

L. Man. Well, I really believe I might have satisfaction enough in such a husband, without considering the pleasure of revenge.

[Aside.]

Y. Rak. Will you make it four hundred, Sir?

[To the Major.]

Maj. Oons you dog: I'll lay your head upon both your shoulders.— [Apart to Young Rak.

Y. Rak. O, take me to that healing bosom! wrap me in the warm folds of love! Feed me with the balmy sweets that flourish there; give me new life, and nurse me to an infant dotage.

L. Man. O! I shall faint! I am not able to contain myself.

Maj. Dacky, thou shalt have an hundred guineas; prithee let her alone, my dear boy. [To Young Rak.

Y. Rak. Where am I? sure, 'tis Elysium [Starting back.] for mortal flesh could never feed so high; I surfeit with delight! my soul's all over blifs! my ravished senses ake with pleasure, and I grow faint with gazing. [Falls on her bosom.

L. Man. O, I die! I die! [Aside.

Maj. Dacky, my dear *Dacky,* thou shalt have two hundred pounds.

Y. Rak. Thus let us ever live? thus blest with one perpetual round of circling pleasure; still fainting with excess of love, and waking still to new reviving joys.

Maj. Oons! how the rogue has dissolved her. [Aside.

Y. Rak. You see, Sir, what posture my affairs are in, nothing but full four hundred can forbid the bans.

Maj. Say'st thou so, my little *Dacky,* then there lies your way down stairs, [Steps in between them, and draws.] Sirrah, go, get you gone, dog, go.

L. Man. Oh! for heaven's sake, what do you mean? [Holds the Major.

Y. Rak. Oh! don't be frightened, Madam! I'll tell you the business—You must know, Madam, there is a young lady here in the *Pall-mall,* of a prodigious fortune, whom, it seems, my father positively designs I shall marry, or he will disinherit me; and so let him, Madam, if he pleases: For my part, I confess my soul and body, Madam, are intirely devoted to your ladyship; and if I were to die upon the spot, Madam, I solemnly declare, I would not renounce one tittle of that eternal passion I have avowed for your ladyship's most indelible perfect ons. [Bows and ogles.

Maj. Ha! [Astunished.

L. Man. O fie, Sir, this is most inhuman, to force you only son to marry one he can't love. Come, Sir, for my sake spare him; pray put up your sword.

Maj. Well, Madam, for your sake, d'ye see, I will sheath my indignation: But may I never more hear the dear, dear glug, glug, of a full flask, if all this is not a notorious lie, from top to bottom. But now, Madam, to the business I came for: Look'ye, Madam, if you and I make a match, d'you see—you must expect every ten months, for the first seven years twins, Madam—I always get twins! that whelp's a twin, Madam, and the product of my juvenile recreations.

[*Young Rak. makes love in dumb shew behind his back.*

L. Man. Let me die, but that is irresistibly persuasive.

Maj. I am very proud, Madam, your ladyship likes what I say to you.

L. Man. Well, Sir, I swear you have such a way, and such a son. [Aside.

Maj. Madam, I have fifteen hundred pounds a year clear estate, no children in the world but this boy here; I shall drink him dead in a fortnight; and then, Madam, after my death, 'tis all your own for ever: How say you, Madam, do you like of it?

L. Man. Ay, Sir; but now let me hear your son's proposals.

Maj. Psha! a beggar, a poor dog, Madam.

Y. Rak. Madam, 'tis true, I have not one groat in the world, have no hopes of any thing, for the very moment I marry you, I am sure to be disinherited: Madam, as a friend, I beg you to believe this true, for I cou'd sooner die than cheat you with a pretended fortune. [Kneels.] But if the last extremities of an humble passion have any merit in the eyes of virtue, then shew your pity here, and raise me with a kind reviving hope.

Maj. What a tongue the dog has! [Aside.

L. Man. O dear, Sir, pray rise.

Maj. Psha! Madam, words, words, mere air! Odstud, I have an argument in my pocket, that uses to convince a woman sooner than all the poetical raptures in Christendom: Look'ye, Madam, the only certain

proof of a man's passion, is, when he parts with his money; therefore, as an earnest of my affection, give me leave to lay these four hundred of the king's faces at your feet.

Y. Rak. Which, when you marry, Sir, you know, will be your own again.

Maj. Hold your peace, firrah—There, Madam, dispose of it as you please. *[Gives it into her hand.]*

L. Man. O dear, Major, this is an extravagant piece of gallantry—Bless me! how heavy it is—Pray, Sir, do me the favour to hold it for me.

[Gives it to Young Rak.]

Y. Rak. Tum, dum.

[Leering on the Major, and singing.]

Maj. I must murder the dog, I must murder him. *[Aside.]* Oons, Madam, I could have held it for you.

Y. Rak. But not so fast as I shall: Tum, dum.

Maj. I was in hopes, Madam, you would have made a better use of the money. *[Out of humour.]*

L. Man. O dear, Sir, can I express my concern for you a better way, than by being kind to your children?

Maj. Ay, Madam, but not to my rival.

Y. Rak. So! this has pretty well convinced him my interest is better than his, and now is my only time to tell it him. *[Aside.]* Look you, Sir, if you'll give me leave to speak a word or two in private with this lady, I will immediately convince you, that in her disposing of this money, she had no other consideration than your interest.

L. Man. What can he mean? *[Aside.]*

Maj. Why this might be done, *Dacky*, if I could but persuade myself to trust thee.

Y. Rak. Why, Sir, you shall not trust me out of your sight.

Maj. Humph! say'st thou so, my little *Dacky*? Nay, then I do give thee leave.

Y. Rak. Madam, if you please. *[Takes her aside.]*

Enter Master Johnny behind.

John. So, *Lettice* is safe enough now, and let 'em lock me up if they can—Hey-day! who have we here?

I find my mother has a colt's tooth left yet, I warrant these are a couple of suitors now; Icod, I will put in with them—Sir, your servant. [*To the Major.*] What don't you know me?

Maj. Know thee; prithee who art thou?

John. Who be I? Why, I be—I be—Icod I don't know what to tell him, not I—Why, I be mother's son, don't you see what I be?

Maj. Ay, my dear lad, I see very plainly what thou art, but I want to know who thou art! Who is thy father, child?

John. Who? I've never a father at all, but I believe I shall have shortly; for I see my mother is there hard at work upon one.

Maj. How! thy mother! why, is thy name *Johnny*?

John. May be it is—What then?

Maj. Why then, very shortly, thou wilt be my son-in-law.

John. May be not—That's as I shall like you, may be.

Maj. Odsbud, you young rogue, I'll busf you into good humour. [*Offers to kiss him, he struggles.*]

John. Let me alone! be quiet, will ye! you shan't busf me! psha! [*Spits.*] What a plague do you flaver me so far? You my father-in-law! yes, so you shall; Icod, I'll do your business.

L. Man. Why really, Sir, if this be true, I must needs own, he is a very barbarous man to use his only son at this rate; as far as I can serve you, by furthering this innocent revenge, Sir, you may command me.

[*To Young Rak.*]

John. Hark you, mother.

L. Man. O you wicked rogue! are you there?

John. Lord, don't be angry, mother; I come to talk with you about business.

Y. Rak. Oh! pray, Madam, give the young gentleman leave to speak, however.

John. A good sort of a civil gentleman; I may chance to do him a kindness for this; I'll assure you, Sir, I will, if I can—I am good-natured enough when people are civil to me.

L. Man. Well, what have you to say, firrah?

John. Say! why I understand this old soldier is a suitor to you, and (to tell you the truth) I don't like him: he's a strange hurly-burly sort of a man; he has bus'd and flavered me here, whether I would or no; and has prickled my face 'till my eyes are all of a water.

L. Man. You saucy rogue, is this your business? Know then, firrah, that this gentleman shall be your father-in-law, if he pleases: Come, Sir, if you dare trust yourself with me, I have something to propose to you, from your son, that very nearly concerns the happiness of us both.

Maj. Odsbud, Madam, you overjoy me! But has that dear toad put in a word for me at last then? Has he, *Dacky*? Thou dear son of an unhappy dog of a father, bus me, you whelp; you dear bastard, bus me—I will remember thee for this, my little *Dacky*, Odsbud I will. [Exit with Lady Man.]

Y. Rak. I shall give you cause, I believe.

John. Lord, Sir, how can you let him flaver you so, don't it make your nose tingle? Odsfish, he is gone away with my mother too! Shall I fetch her back again, Sir? Icod, an' you say the word, I'll do't.

Y. Rak. No, no, Squire, let him alone, he will be little the better for it—A good sort of an impudent face this young dog has; he may be useful; I'll strike in with him. [Aside.]

John. Pray, Sir, ben't you a suitor to my mother?

Y. Rak. Ay, Squire; what do you think of me for a father-in-law?

John. Icod, I like you very well, better by half, than that old soldier: What a deuce do you let him take her aside so for?

Y. Rak. Oh! it's a design I have in my head, 'squire.

John. Ay, Sir, but do you know what design she may have in her head? Look'ye, Sir, I mean you well, I would not have you trust her too far neither—Odsflesh! you don't know her——Sir, you don't know her.

Y. Rak. Well, Squire, I'm oblig'd to you for your good meaning; and in return, will acquaint you with my design upon the old soldier.

John. Ay!

Y. Rak. You must know then——

John. But hark'ye, Sir, by the way, who is that old foldier?

Y. Rak. Only my father, Sir.

John. How! how! Icod, then I find you care no more for your father, than I do for my mother. Well, Sir——but pray go on.

Y. Rak. About an hour hence, Squire, I shall privately marry your mother, who, in the mean time, by my allowance, is to flatter the old gentleman with the same hopes, and (to revenge a severe quarrel I have with him) is to appoint him a meeting, (just when our marriage is over) at a friend's house of mine, where I shall have a public opportunity to laugh at his disappointment, and invite him to my wedding supper.

John. Icod, that's well enough: O, dear Sir, shall I not beg the favour of you to get the parson to do me a small job too? Odd, I have a tight young girl here hard by, that I have a main mind to be married to—— Sir, won't you speak a word to him to tack us together, a little?

Y. Rak. How, Squire, to tack you together! whom have you advised with in this business? Who is it you have a mind to marry? Are you sure she's fit for a wife?

John. I don't know, Sir; but I'm sure she's fit for a husband.

Y. Rak. Ha! egad, there can be no harm in tying the young rogue in a slip-knot: This was a lucky discovery; something may be made on't. [*Aside.*] Well, Squire, I'll do all I can to serve you.

John. O dear, Sir, I am mainly obliged to you.

Y. Rak. Nay, I won't only lend you my parson, but my money, nay, my very clothes; egad I'll make a gentleman of thee.

John. Wull you, Sir? O law! [*Overjoyed.*] Icod, then my mother shall make a fool of me no longer—— Sir, as I hope to be married, I had rather call you vather-in-law, than any man in Christendom.

Y. Rak. Psha! Pox! I'll be brother to thee man;

call me honest *Jack*. [*Hugs him.*] We'll smoak, and whore, and roar, and take a bottle together.

John. Is your name *John*? Why, Sir, my name's *John*, too: Adzooks, that's brave; honest *John*, how dost do? Damme! [*Struts.*]

Y. Rak. Why that's well said, boy; egad, thou swear't like a gentleman already—Come, my little rake, now let's take one chearing flask, before the parson does his business; then get drunk, break windows, maul the watch, and bed our new-married wives in the round-house.

John. Ha, boys! gad gramercy, brother father-in-law. [*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, Friendly's Lodgings.

Enter Friendly and Young Rakish.

FRIENDLY.

WELL, dear *Jack*, what success? What have you done with the old gentleman?

Y. Rak. Oh! routed him horse and foot; *ecce signum!* Here's the golden plunder, boy! I did his business the first onset; beat him clearly out of the fort of the lady's favour, and made him pay four hundred pieces contribution, before I delivered her up into his hands again.

Friend. And have you done it?

Y. Rak. For aught he knows I have; but by what I know, I have not: In short, I neither design to quit or keep the lady any longer than she serves my turn.

Friend. How so, man?

Y. Rak. Nay, I won't tell you my plot before-hand: For, here they come, and the farce is going to begin; pray, observe us——You'll stand by me upon occasion?

Friend. O, you may depend upon me.

Enter Major and Lady Manlove.

Maj. Ah! my little *Ned!* wish me joy, wish me joy, lad.

Friend. Joy! of what, Major?

Maj. The joy of all joys, boy: Here's a beautiful lady, firrah, is going to give me fifteen hundred pounds a year to be her bedfellow.

Friend. Very good pay; I wish your service may be able to deserve it.

Maj. Able, Sir! I'd have you to know, I am as young as ever; let me lay my hand upon the mane, Sir, you'll find I can jump into the saddle still.

Friend. I'm glad to see your Ladyship here, Madam.

L. Man. Dear Mr. *Friendly*, I am your most humble servant; tho', I dare swear, you little expected it upon so important an occasion.

Friend. Mayn't we know the occasion, Madam?

L. Man. I vow, Sir, it's such a critical point, I don't know whether my modesty will be able to go through with the discovery.

Y. Rak. If you please to give me leave, Madam, I'll help you out a little.

Maj. Ay, ay, tell him, my little *Dacky*.

Y. Rak. Well, Sir, not to keep you any longer in suspense, the short of the business is this: This noble lady here, generously considering my sufferings, under the tyranny of an unnatural father; and being sensible, that by reason of my indefatigable love to her, I was in a perpetual danger of being disinherited, has, out of her abundant goodness, piously consented to revenge me of the said unnatural father, by this public disappointment of his hopes: Having (to his utter confusion) already taken to her loving husband, the individual person of me his lawfully begotten son——*John Rakish*.

Maj. Humph! what is all this? Do you know, Madam, what the devil is it?

L. Man. All truth, Sir, to my knowledge; the whole truth, and nothing but the truth: So take me *John Rakish*.
[Gives him her hand.]

Maj. Oons and hell! I'll chain the dog to the navel.
[Draws.]

Friend. Not in my house, I beseech you, Major.

Maj. Prithee, dear *Ned*, let me come at him; oh! he's a bitter dog; I can't bear him. [Trembling with passion.]

Friend. Pho! prithee be pacified; if he must be run thro' the guts, he'll deserve it an hour hence as well as now: Besides, I would have you hear what he can say for himself; you know he does not use to be tongue-ty'd upon these occasions.

Maj. Odsbud! and that's true, my little *Neddy*! I will hear the dog, I will hear him; and if I am trick'd, I'm satisfy'd I shall have the pleasure of half a dozen rare impudent faces from the unrighteous bastard, to back his roguery, how'er——Come hither, *Dacky*.

Y. Rak. Well, Sir.

Maj. Ay, that's the look; hark you, iron-face, art thou not a perjured rogue? Dost thou not expect to be split, and broil'd upon the devil's gridiron?

Y. Rak. I don't apprehend you, Sir.

Maj. Didst thou not promise, dog, to renounce all claim to that lady, provided I would quit my title to the four hundred pounds?

Y. Rak. Ay, Sir; but I considered four hundred pound was money; and one had better break one's word, than a good sum; and I thought it would be more profitable to marry the lady myself, and to part with neither; I know, from your own example, Sir, you won't blame me for good husbandry.

Maj. Oh! not in the least, my dear hell-face! thou hast obliged me to the last degree, by marrying this lady; here, I can do no less than settle my estate upon thee, which thou shalt have with a vengeance; that is to say, I will instantly make love to her daughter, offer her my whole estate for a jointure, cut off the entail, get a whole litter of children, and disinherit you, you dog.

Y. Rak. Look'ye, Sir, there I forbid the bans! this lady's daughter is now mine, and I will not have my family disgrac'd, by admitting such a notorious rake-hell for my son-in-law: In short, your pretences are utterly against my consent, and I positively declare you shall never have my blessing.

Maj. What a cross old fellow is this now? Oons! I'd give five thousand pounds to make the whelp my father-in-law.

Y. Rak. Come, come, Sir, for a great deal less money you shall make this my mother-in-law.

Maj. Ha! say'st thou so, my little Dacky? Why, art not married? ha! speak.

Y. Rak. So far from it, Sir, that upon condition you will immediately sign this paper, which will entitle me to four hundred pounds a year during life, and at your decease to the rest of your estate, I am willing this moment to show myself an obedient son, and resign you the lady.

L. Man. Base man! you won't offer to sell me?

[Offers to interrupt him, he keeps her off.]

Y. Rak. Don't you trouble yourself, Madam, I warrant you; and to satisfy you that my meaning's honest, the

writing is so drawn, that unless you actually do marry the lady, you're not obliged to give me a groat.

Maj. Say't thou so, my little *Dacky*. [*Peruses the paper.*]

L. Man. Audacious villain! have you serv'd me thus? I will be reveng'd, tho' I——here, Major, [*Gives him her hand.*] upon condition, you'll never give that villain a groat, I will marry you this very moment, and save you the money; nay, do but engage to disinherit him before to-morrow morning, and I here immediately promise you six thousand pounds in ready gold and jewels, to satisfy any extravagance you shall think fit.

Y. Rak. So!

Maj. Disinherit him! Odsbud, your Ladyship's too merciful; an audacious rogue! to think I could be such a villain to wrong a lady, Madam, of your unspotted virtue. Oons! I never heard such an impudent proposal since I was born, Madam; if he were at the gallows, with the knot under his left ear; nay, if the word were given for the cart to drive away, blood and brimstone! I would not part with eighteen-pence to reprieve him.

L. Man. On that condition I am entirely yours.

Maj. Oons, Madam! I'll ruin him within this half hour; I'll drive revenge quite through his soul; nay, I'll send for the two beggar-makers of the nation, the priest and the lawyer, and make them clinch it on the other side.

Friend. What the devil shall we do now, *Jack*? Was there ever such a disappointment?

Y. Rak. Faith, *Ned*, she had out-trump'd me, that's the truth on't, but I can't lose all, man, I have pam in my hand still.

Friend. What do you mean?

Y. Rak. Her son, her son, boy! the rogue has chosen me for his guardian; he will be here presently; I'll manage him to fetch her about, I'll warrant you.

Friend. Igad, that's lucky; I am glad you are sure of a trick to save yourself at last; in the mean time, *Jack*, try what a court card will do; play your impudence upon them.

Y. Rak. Mum!

L. Man. Now, devil, I am reveng'd of you.

Y. Rak. I fancy not, Madam;——I suppose you

ladyship does not know that these are the writings of your son *Johnny's* estate, by him the said *John* this very day stolen out of your cabinet; which, because I am his guardian, I will thus re-put into my pocket.

L. Man. Monster! You his guardian!

Y. Rak. At your service, Madam.

L. Man. You dare not tell me so!

Y. Rak. O! I have a great deal more to tell you, Madam; I must have a thousand pounds out of your hands to morrow morning, to put him and his wife into a handsome equipage.

L. Man. His wife!

Y. Rak. His wife, Madam; she has had as good an education as your ladyship's service could afford. —
Letlice, I think her name is.

L. Man. Undone! Undone!

Maj. Ha! Madam, what's the matter now?

L. Man. Oh! my child's ruin'd for ever.

Y. Rak. That's as you please, Madam.

L. Man. What says the monster?

Y. Rak. That your son, Madam, shall not be ruin'd, provided you will promise me not to marry that old fellow, unless he signs my settlement. In short, Madam, upon that condition, I will not only resign your son and his fortune into your hands again; but, I will likewise engage to find a lawful expedient to disannul his marriage; which, if you don't immediately comply with me, shall be an eternal secret! so ev'n let him squander away his estate as he pleases, I'll make a shift to glean a handsome livelihood out on't, I warrant you.

Friend. Nay, Madam, this is a very generous proposal; now, if your son's ruin'd, you're the occasion of it.

L. Man. Sir, I beseech you, don't name it: I'll not believe a word he says; I dare swear this is all a sham, a poor pretence, only to get his ends of me.

Maj. Nouns! Madam, you have nick'd it: But, if it were true, let me alone to manage him; I know him by experience. Why, the dog had the impudence t'other day to ask me to lend him fifty pounds; and in less than a quarter of an hour, I brought him down to three and six-pence.

L. Man. No, devil, I shall hear of nothing but revenge.

Y. Rak. Nay then, Madam, 'tis time for me to provide for myself; here comes one I am sure will stand by me.

Enter Johnny with Lettice, and one in a parson's habit

John. Toll, loll, loll! A hey! where's brother father-in-law? [Singing.

Y. Rak. Ha! my little imp of lewdness! How dost thou?

John. How do I? why, I'm married, boy! How should I do?

Y. Rak. Give you joy, Madam. [Saluting Lettice.

L. Man. What do I see? Undone! Undone!

Maj. Humph! The priest there too; nay, then mischief is not far off. [Aside.

John. Well, but hark ye, *John*, how do my mother and you agree? What, ben't you married yet?

Y. Rak. O dear Squire! no, nor am I like to be; she is just going to be married to my father.

John. Odsflesh! I thought as much; did not I tell you, you did not know her? Did not I tell you so? Look ye, *John*, there are two things she never kept in her life, and that is a fast-day and a promise; to my certain knowledge her word is but wind, and Icod she no more values to break one than t'other.

Y. Rak. Well, Squire, it shall never trouble me, as long as I suffer upon your account; for, to tell you the truth, the real occasion of her discarding me, was my friendly promotion of your marriage: But, there's a very easy way to reward my service, which is, that upon condition my father will sign this writing, you will generously condescend to choose him for your guardian.

John. I'll do't, an'twere ten times more, to serve you; let's see the writing, I'll do't, Icod.

Y. Rak. There, Sir. [Gives them to him.

John. Look ye, Sir,——You——Mr.——Mr. *John's* vather here; I don't know what your name is, not I; but if you think fit, d'ye see, to sign this paper, I'll make you my guardian——That's all I have to say to you:——So take and look it over.

Maj. Let's see, my dear lad.

Y. Rak. Madam, I am sensible a word from you wou'd

finish the business; if you will stand my friend, I am still ready to disannul your son's marriage.

[*Aside to L. Man.*

L. Man. Alas! heaven knows, I would do it, were there but a possibility of your making your words true.

Y. Rak. Madam, this gentleman's word and honour shall be your security.

Friend. Madam, I'll engage for him.

L. Man. Well, I find it is in vain to contend with him; therefore, dear Major, sign it immediately, and from this moment, all I have is yours.

Maj. O Madam! a word from you would make me do ten times more. [*Signs it.*] There, *Ned*, you are obliged to see him perform articles; if he keeps his word, much good may it do him.

Y. Rak. Come, Squire, are you contented this gentleman shall marry your mother, and be your guardian?

John. Yes I be; and so let him take my writings—and pray don't ye cheat me now; it's for *John's* sake, I tell you that—

Y. Rak. Madam, now to dissipate your fears: In one word, I must tell you, that your son *John* here, my brother elect, is not married.

L. Man. How? not married! You overjoy me, Sir: Make it appear, and you shall never want a friend of me.

John. What a devil makes you raise such a lye now?

Y. Rak. Prithee, dear Squire, don't interrupt us.

John. I will interrupt you then: What do you shove me for? I be married, so I be! yes I be, I be.

Y. Rak. Silence! Come, Mrs. *Lettice*, pray satisfy my Lady, and this good company, concerning your suppos'd marriage with this young gentleman.

John. Ay, ay, do let her speak, with all my heart; see who will prove the liar, Mr. *John*.

Let. Well, Squire, since I must speak then, I declare before my lady and this good company, that I neither am your wife, nor ever will be.

Y. Rak. Now, Squire, what say you?

John. I say she lies—she is my wife, and you know it well enough, and the parson knows it too: What a rope did I give him two crown-pieces for?

Maj. Nouns! I don't know what to make of this bu-

finess; one says ay, and t'other says no—Prithee, dear *Domine*, put us out of our pain: Come, answer to the question, Are they married or not?

Foot. I must confess, Sir, at my master's request, I did mumble over a parcel of words, that satisfied the young Squire, as well as if they had been canonical: But to convince you that it was not in my power to do him any injury that way, I am no parson, but your worship's humble servant and footman, *Tom Skipkennel*.

[*Throws off his gown.*]

Y. Rak. Trusty *Tom*, at your service, Madam.

L. Man. Well, dear Sir, this was kindly done of you.

Let. Madam, I beg your ladyship's pardon: I must confess I had like to have married my young master; but Mr. *Rakish* soon convinc'd me, what an uneasy life I must have expected from your ladyship and the rest of his relations: But to satisfy you, Madam, that I never intend to have any thoughts of him as long as I live, Mr. *Rakish* has been pleas'd to give me his bond, to pay me thirty pounds a year during life, provided I immediately leave the town, and go and live with my friends in the country; which I faithfully promise your ladyship to perform to-morrow morning; and so, dear Squire, pray wish me a good journey, as I do you a better wife, and many happy days.

John. What will you leave me now? Are these your tricks? Pray give me my purse again, since you won't marry me, young gentlewoman! You shall have no fine clothes, I'll tell you that; give me my purse, will ye?

L. Man. Sirrah, let her alone; that purse you purloin'd from me, and she shall keep it: Nay, to reward her honesty, I'll present her with this ring, as an earnest of my future kindness.

Let. I humbly thank your ladyship.

John. What! and so I am to be cheated out of my money too: This is along of you, Mr. *John*.

Y. Rak. Come, come, Squire, don't be troubled; when you want money, come to me: In the mean time, hark in your ear, I have a pretty young wench in my eye for you—she will be in town in two or three days—Mum!

John. Psha! what do I care for a wench, if I can't have her when I have a mind to it! Ad, I thought to have had such a night on't now! and now the parson has said grace, you tell me I shall go to dinner a month hence.

Y. Rak. Why then, to stay your stomach, go with me to the last act of the play, and I'll show you one that never deny'd a man twice in her life.

John. Ay, so you say! but I warrant she will pull me by the hair, if I offer to meddle with her.

Y. Rak. Come, come, I'll stand your friend; observe what I say to your mother—Madam, your son is sensible of his error, and desires your ladyship will take him into favour again; from this time he has promised never to disobey you.

John. No, no more I won't indeed, mother, if you will but let me go with Mr. *John* to see the play to-night.

L. Man. Well, be obedient for the future, and no reasonable freedom shall be denied you.

John. Oh, Lord! thank you, dear mother; I am glad we are friends again: Lord! I am so glad! Won't ye buss me, mother? [Kisses her.]

Y. Rak. So, now I hope we are all friends.

Friend. Well, Major, are you satisfied that your son has perform'd his articles? Shall I deliver him the writing?

Maj. Why the dog has done something for't, that's the truth on't; though I will lay fifty pounds I have seven to four upon't before to-morrow morning.

Y. Rak. Well, Sir, I wish you joy, and thank you for my settlement; tho' it's an hundred to one, the world will think you have given it me, because you could not help it.

Maj. Ay, and I warrant, *Dacky*, they will be apt to say too, that thou art as well satisfy'd, as if I had given it thee with a good will.

Y. Rak. Ay, people will out with their bold truths now and then: You see, Sir, the strange power of a little money; but now it's very probable you and I may be good friends as long as we live: But when old gen-

gemen expect their sons should love them heartily, without an hearty allowance, it's a sign they have more money than wisdom: Where fathers are close-fisted, and think the want

Of worldly blessings does their sons no wrong,
Those sons will think such fathers live too long.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE SCHOOL-BOY.

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X E R X E S.

A

TRAGEDY.



1000

Handwritten text, possibly a list or notes, with some lines starting with numbers like 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

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Handwritten text, possibly a list or notes, with some lines starting with numbers like 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

P R O L O G U E.

LONG have we strove with passion and grimace,
 To show you vice and virtue's differing face:
 Virtue's reward has woo'd you to its charms,
 And vice expos'd, shou'd laugh you from its arms.
 Virtue we vainly offer to your taste;
 Tir'd with instruction, and agog for jest,
 You abhor the wholesome plainness of the feast.
 In vain on pois'nous vice wou'd satire trample,
 For what you shou'd contemn, is your example;
 In vain we wear the buskins, or the sandal;
 Your judging false, makes our instruction scandal.
 The wife provok'd to wrong her husband's bed,
 Was meant his cure, by punishing his head:
 But you from hence, not kind, but jealous grow;
 Think all wives false, when usage makes 'em so;
 Reform the brute, you keep the woman true.
 The powder'd fop, for drawling speech, and dress,
 Expos'd, shall laugh: But then so likes his face,
 He dresses in the stage's looking-glass.
 The high-kept miss, when shewn the fate of jilting,
 Smiles! gets a new spark——sets fools a tilting,
 A second time she's warn'd, and so improves,
 Till, in due time, about the pit she roves,
 Reduc'd to Doily's stuff, no stays, and dirty gloves.
 Thus ev'n sage Collier too might be accus'd,
 If what he's writ, thro' ignorance, abus'd:
 Girls may read him, not for the truth he says,
 But to be pointed to the bawdy plays:
 Far be't to think such his intention was.
 Thus ev'n sound physic, if wrong taken, shall
 In flame diseases, which it meant to heal:
 Now, tho' men die, physic has virtue still,
 Wou'd you but come with minds attentive, bent
 To laugh at follies, vices to resent;
 Warn'd by the dangers painted, wou'd you learn
 To shun abroad what's here the wise man's scorn:
 Calm would be then the zealot's hasty rage;
 And good men, fearless, might support the stage:

PROLOGUE.

*Then, as at Athens, to learn virtue's rules,
Crowds might we hope for from deserted schools,
To see our labours, by just laws allow'd,
And public treasures pay for public good:
Like them encourag'd, we like them might write;
Athenian hearers rais'd Athenian wit.
In favour then of us, begin to-day,
To make a just construction of a play:
So shall the impious Xerxes' terror move
The chaste Tamira's tears from ruin'd love.
His first attempt for virtue you approv'd;
But now, fair nymphs, by nobler passion mov'd,
Our author has to your just praise design'd
A brighter image of your sex's mind.*

EPILOGUE.

*T*O friends or foes, whatever fortune sends him,
Gallants, our author thus, in short, commends him:
If from his present dulness, Sirs, you fear
The danger of his writing once a year,
To cure his future itch of writing ill,
Now, headlong, throw him to the muses' hell.
But if, from what you've seen, your thoughts incline,
That any sparks of heat or genius shine,
Let loose your favours, wave poetic laws;
And, to your wishes, swell him with applause.

X E R X E S

Dramatis Personæ.

<i>Xerxes.</i>	King of <i>Persia.</i>	<i>Mr. Verbruggen.</i>
<i>Mardonius.</i>	} His generals.	<i>Mr. Hodgson.</i>
<i>Artabanus.</i>		<i>Mr. Betterton.</i>
<i>Aranthes.</i>	A commander.	<i>Mr. Seudamore.</i>
<i>Memnon.</i>	<i>Artabanus's</i> lieutenant.	<i>Mr. Freeman.</i>
<i>Cleontes.</i>	The king's creature.	<i>Mr. Thurmond.</i>
<i>Poet.</i>	An impudent fellow.	<i>Mr. Boyn.</i>

Tamira. Wife to *Artabanus.* *Mrs. Barry.*

Maskers, Magi, Soldiers, &c.

S C E N E, *Persia.*

X E R X E S.

A C T I.

The **SCENE**, *near Xerxes's Palace.*

Enter Mardonius and Arantes.

Aran. **H**A V E patience, brave *Mardonius*.
Mar. Patience! 'tis the coward's virtue.

I'm a soldier brought up in arms,
And when the noble end of life is gone,
My country's honour lost! my king with shame repuls'd;
Our foes insulting; we still hopeless of revenge;
Where is there room for patience?

Aran. I am a soldier, Sir.

Mar. Then talk like one.

Aran. I would not talk; the tongue's a woman's
weapon;

While there's a *Greek* on earth, my arm shall speak my
thoughts.

Mar. Why didst thou mention patience then?

Aran. Because I knew 'twou'd anger you.

I but oppos'd you, like a rapid stream,
To make you foam and rowl with double force.

Mar. O'er whom?

Aran. Th' *Athenians*! Think on *Salamis*;
In that deep sea the *Persian* honour sunk.
'Twas there our dazzling sun, great *Xerxes*' glory, set
for ever.

Mar. Confusion!

Aran. Does then the name of *Salamis* offend you?

Mar. Furies and hell! Canst thou be pleas'd to hear it?

Aran. I am——to hear it does offend you.

And, now I've rais'd you to my end propos'd,
I've that shall keep your brave resentment warm.

Read there the list of our surviving troops,
Which I with utmost care have join'd: [*Giving a scroll.*]

If yet you think it not too late to head 'em,
To-morrow's sun shall see a general muster,
Where every face will speak an heart resolv'd:

'Tis true, they're scarce an handful

To the numbers we set out with; yet still

A brave revenge, revenge for glory lost,

Is such an animating cause,

As must inspire our arms with double fury.

Mar. Ay, now the soldier speaks! This talk becomes
thee;

Methinks the voice of fate informs me now,

That proud *Themistocles* shall dearly buy

His boasted spoils of *Perfia*.

My heart's on fire at the reviving thought,

And bounds to be in action.

No more remains, but that we seek the drooping king;

And form him for the vast exploit.

Aran. Brave *Artabanus* is in search of him;

'Tis said, on information that the enemy

Had a design to hinder his retreat,

He posted privately to th' *Hellepont*;

But ere he cou'd arrive, a furious storm

Had quite dispers'd his bridge of ships,

And that way stopt his passage:

How he escap'd, I hear not.

See, Sir, *Artabanus* comes;

We probably may learn of him.

Enter Artabanus, dejected.

My Lord, you're welcome! doubly welcome now; but

How have the gods dispos'd our master *Xerxes*?

Mar. If thou canst utter aught,

That may advance our eager hope, be bold,
 And let thy words come forth, as if the fate
 Of *Greece* were lodg'd upon thy tongue;
 For know, *Mardonius* stands with you resolv'd
 On brave revenge, or death.

Art. Then welcome death, for brave revenge is lost.

Mar. What! While our lives are ours?

Art. Nothing is ours: *Xerxes* is no more himself.

Mar. I grant *Thermopylæ* and *Salamis*
 Have alter'd him ———

But yet he lives, and while he lives there's hope.

Art. Far less than ev'n his death could give us:

'Tis true his body crawls, and drags
 A frantic being; his soul is drown'd in *Lethe*,
 Insensib'le, and deaf to glory or dishonour:

O! were it possible my silence cou'd

Conceal his shame, by heav'n

This loyal hand shou'd stop my tongue for ever,

Mar. Amazement seizes me; relate the scene,

For my impatient soul's all ear to know

The worst that fate can threaten.

Art. Behold him then, this fatal monarch, *Xerxes*,

Late universal master of the earth and seas:

First of so formidable, so vast an army,

That, as they mov'd, whole rivers still were drain'd,

To quench e'm on their thirsty march;

Th' o'erburden'd earth grew weary of her load,

And when they clos'd their squadrons, groan'd to bear
 'em.

Mar. By arms a glorious host, and wanting nothing
 but an head.

Art. And that, alas! grown weak, the noble body
 dies;

Ev'n by a handful, at the fam'd *Thermopylæ*,
 (Fam'd indeed to *Grecian* glory) 'twas mangled, all
 Most shamefully subdu'd, and lost.

Mar. Nothing but a *Xerxes* cou'd ha' lost 'em.

Art. Behold him yet a second time,
 The master of his fate: A fleet so numerous,
 Their vast provision left a raging famine on
 The neighbouring coasts: The spacious earth

Was stript of men, and women till'd the ground
 Ev'n the wide element of air cou'd scarce
 Afford 'em breath to fill their swelling sails:
 By arms a glorious body too; invincible
 To mortal thought: But conscious heav'n
 Foreseeing, while it thus bestrid the seas,
 It must in time have led the earth in chains,
 Decreed it *Xerxes* for the fatal head,
 And that way totter'd it to ruin,
 And now behold the amazing change of greatness!
 By heav'n, it strikes my soul to think
 'This awful man, who muster'd half the world
 In arms, at *Salamis* should be reduc'd
 So low, that ev'n a common fisher-boat,
 Without one slave to wait his nod, was all
 He cou'd command, to save his person in a shameful
 flight.

Mar. Wer't not for shame, my eyes wou'd melt to hear
 The moving tale: But tears are too effeminate. No!
 Let girls and lovers weep! A soldier should
 Resent his fate: Why dost thou fold thy arms,
 And, fighting, shake thy head? Is there beyond
 This shameful flight, yet more of shame?
 For that's the only pain that galls a foldier.

Art. There is, alas! and a severe one too! his vain,
 His proud, (and what the history of man
 Could never parallel) his monstrous resolution
 After flight: He says he made th' *Athenians* fly;
 He lost no battle! *Greece* still trembles at his name,
 In arms more fam'd than ever,
 And that the envious world should know:
 And when, amaz'd, I urg'd the contrary,
 He turn'd away, and talk'd to sycophants,
 Who, as I spoke, still sooth'd his lethargy:
 To sum the tale, in spite of all opposing sense,
 He has resolv'd to enter *Persia*,
 In a splendid triumph; I saw him move
 Amidst his shameful pageantry, in all
 The haughty pride and state of an insulting
 Conqueror; poor slaves and vagabonds are hir'd
 To personate the seeming captives of

A real victory ; vast empty coffers,
 Suppos'd of treasure taken from the enemy ;
 High-castled elephants, rich gilded trophies,
 Spoils, and armour, trumpets, and songs prepare his way :
 The people stare upon the gawdy show,
 And rend the skies with echoed welcomes ;
 While he in solemn pace stalks proudly on,
 And ev'n outwells the hero of a theatre.

Aran. O vile disgrace of arms ! A triumph ! Hell !

Mar. Impossible !

Art. Then it can't be true : Would it were not.

Mar. Gods !—No more, I'll haste, and stop this
 vile procession,

Charge his folly home ; my honest tongue,
 Ev'n from this precipice of tow'ring pride,
 Shall break his fall, and catch him back to glory. [*Ex.*]

Art. Yet stay, my Lord, this rashness may be fatal ;
 'Tis madness to oppose the mad, (for so
 Indeed you'll find him) let this fit of his
 Wild frenzy pass ; (I'm sure 't must have an interval)
 Let's take him in his cooler thoughts ;
 To-morrow were a fitter time.

Mar. You have instructed me : 'Tis well ! To-morrow
 then.

Aran. What if we mingled with the crowd, to see
 him pass ?

Art. I think 'twere well to observe his actions,
 That we know to chide him.

Mar. Do you your pleasure :
 For me, I dare not trust my temper.
 I know 'twould burst, and ruin all : Farewel. [*Ex. Mar.*]

Art. Hark, the trumpets speak him near at hand !
 And see the pageantry appears ! [*They stand apart.*]

*Enter Cleontes, and a poet preparing the way, and order-
 ing the Chorus for the triumphal song.*

Aran. What are these ?

Art. The same I told you were so busy with the king,
 While I exclaim'd against this mad solemnity :
 That cringing spark, now the rough war is done,
 Has purchas'd a commission in the standing guard :

'That never wrote a verse he did not like,
Nor e'er lik'd any more, than those the world had
damn'd.

The vulgar with his madrigals are caught by th' ears,
Excessive impudence thrusts him into the court ;
And there they laugh to hear him praise himself.

Aran. Him I guess to be the orderer of this day's
foolery :

What, a Chorus too ! We shall be entertain'd anon.

Art. Peace, let's observe 'em. [*They stand apart.*]

Cleo. O glorious day ! Were ever seen such crowds
Of pleas'd spectators !

Poet. Ah, happy people ! Happy *Xerxes* !
Now we shall turn the glass of time,
And make it run the golden age again.

Cleo. Now merit will have leave to shew her head,
All arts and industry, the heav'n-born gift
Of poetry shall flourish,

And men of wit, like you, shall be rewarded :
Believe me, Sir, you grace the laurel ;
Great *Xerxes* did it honour, when he plac'd it there.

Poet. I think so.

Cleo. You'll be the envy of *Parnassus*.

Poet. I always was, Sir : For, d'ye observe me,
While other fools were drudging, to acquire
A name by the pathetic, and the dull sublime ;
I, unthought of, o'er a bottle, would now and then
Surprise them with my madrigals, my songs,
My whims and knick-knacks,
Carry'd the vogue of town and court before me ;
Whipt off the laurel from despairing brows,
And by the hand of merit fix'd it on my own.

Cleo. Were it not time the *Pæon* should be sung ?
We're just upon the palace.

Poet. Yes, Sir, it shall be sung, and gloriously,
When I give the word : I love to have 'em
Wait a little, it makes 'em take
The more notice of me—Now sound, ye slaves !
That all the world may hear——my words.

Cleo. Prepare, the king approaches.

The CHORUS being hung on each side the stage,
Enter Loyalty, Love, Peace, and Plenty.

After a martial symphony, Loyalty sings.

Loyalty. *Prepare, blest sons of art, prepare
To raise the thund'ring voice of war:
Sing, sing, and sound the hero's fame,
Let warlike notes his warlike deeds proclaim.*

Chorus. *Sing, sing, &c.*

Loyalty. *Now cease the noise, and while we meet him,
Let Love and softer joys make haste to greet him.*

Love advances.

Love. *Welcome, hero, from the toils of war!
Welcome! as rest to pains and care:
Welcome! as kind returning day,
To souls that doze the night away!
Welcome! as hope to lovers in despair.*

Chorus. *Welcome, hero, from the toils of war!*

Peace and Plenty come forward.

Peace and } *See! see! what softer blessings wait*
Plenty. } *The happy triumph of the great:
Peace and plenty fly before him;
Peace and Plenty make mankind adore him;
Peace and Plenty tune his soul to love,
And give below a taste of joys above.*

Grand chorus.

*Give him on earth, ye pow'rs, long life and peace;
And after death, immortal bliss.*

The song ended.

*Enter trumpets sounding, a train of captive kings and princes,
women and children, several nobles bearing palms, sol-
diers with spoils and trophies; Then Xerxes advances
from the farther end of the stage.*

Xer. *Thus, in despite of their resisting fate,
The unwilling gods, those busy rivals*

In my rising glory, are forc'd
 With fullen envy to behold my triumphs :
 Look from your chrystal battlements ! look down,
 Ye pow'rs amaz'd, to view a foul unshaken
 By these baffled storms of chance ! A soul
 That dares resolve to bear your utmost wrongs,
 And grapple with oppos'd omnipotence.

Cleo. Thou deity ador'd ! Immortal *Xerxes*, hail !
 To thee are held the lifted hands of *Perfia*, [*Kneeling.*
 When war or tumult wou'd molest her quiet ;
 To thee she bends her knee, in humble gratitude
 For foes subdu'd :
 Let every head bow down, and kiss the earth
 That bears him to our view : Soldiers and children,
 Virgins and lovers ! All without distinction kneel
 Yet lower, prostrate as the veil of night,
 That wraps the globe in darkness. Down ! bow down,
 And kiss the earth with adoration.

*All fall upon their faces, but Mardonius and Arantes,
 who stand unseen.*

Art. O shame to glory ! [*Aside.*

Aran. Incredible stupidity ! [*Asides.*

[*The sun appears o'ercast here.*

Xer. Now by my yet untasted joys of power,
 This looks a god——It is !
 For see ! the dazzled sun contracts
 His golden beams, he hides his face and blushes
 To behold a rival power above him.

Art. Gods ! how his drunken fancy swells him. [*Aside.*

Xer. Ha ! what means this sudden face of death ?
 How fell these heaps of prostrate bodies ?
 O spleenful fate ! they're dead ! malicious planet !
 Am I left alone to rule, the monarch
 Of an unpeopled world ?——'Tis well, ye pow'rs,
 Your dire decrees shall be obey'd ! Up ! Up !
 From your sleepy graves ! Rise all ! revive and take
 New life, from power to give it.

Aran. Amazing frenzy ! [*Aside.*

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Dread Sir, the reverend *Magi* are at hand,
And come with pious joy, to gratulate your triumphs.

Xer. Let 'em come on, and we approve their zeal.

Enter the Magi.

1 Mag. Long live victorious *Xerxes*!

Thou dread commissioner of fate, in whom
Th' all-knowing gods repose the care and business
Of the world below: From thee mankind receives
Its happiness so fast, our prayers to heav'n
Are still but thanks, for benefits enjoy'd.

2 Mag. Thou sacred head! instruct us to be grateful.
Both to the gods, and thee: What hecatombs
Are due for this auspicious day?
How shall we thank the ever-glorious sun,
For such a king? What vows? what offerings too
Are due to *Neptune*?

Who through the dangerous seas,
Has thus return'd thee safe to *Persia*?
O say: Where shall we find out victims
Worthy of their altars?

Xer. How now, Priesthood! Is this the way:
Your fawning piety would sooth an injur'd king?
Have not those pow'rs, alarm'd by sea and land,
Oppos'd my spreading glory? Am I not
Xerxes still, and must at last ignobly sue
For peace, by a precarious sacrifice?
Yes, slaves, I'll feast your gods ador'd;
They shall have offerings, priests! they shall!
Th' injurious sun, the seas and wind that saw,
That sunk and scatter'd my stupendous navy,
Shall feel the vengeance of a rousing deity.
Give order that the wind receive three hundred lashes.
Let fleeting *Aeolus* be whip'd from pole to pole,
Then drive him to some hollow cell confin'd, and tell
The roaring god, his master *Xerxes* is reveng'd!

1 Mag. O impious thought! avert this madness,
heaven!

Xer. How now ! What, would your grave devotion
startle me ?

Away, draw out an able band of archers,
Mount 'em on the battlements of yon lofty tower,
And let 'em shoot a thousand arrows 'gainst the sun.

2 Mag. O blasphemy !

Xer. As many chains be thrown into the sea,
And bind the blue-hair'd *Neptune* to a rock !
Prepare a hundred bars of vast hot glaring iron,
Then plunge them hissing down
Into the burning bowels of the deep ;
And while his scalding billows boil and foam
With raging torture ;
There let him rave, and dash his batter'd limbs,
Like a despairing slave for ever.

Away ! take all the wings of swift revenge,
And see my will perform'd ! Now, priests !
Are these fit offerings for your mighty powers ?
I cou'd not stay to send 'em with your lazy prayers
To heav'n, your wanton thoughts have dipt their wings
Too deep in pleasures of the earth, to let 'em mount
so high.

Where's all their idle bolts, their brandish'd light'ning
now,
To blast the man that dares oppose 'em ?

2 Mag. While frantic passions talk so wild and loud,
The voice of reason is of little force :
But still remember, king,
Tho' while you live, the gods retard your doom,
Yet after death, a sure revenge will come.

Xer. Away ! ye senseless dreamers of the world to
come,
Who dare pretend to fright mankind with tales,
Of what shall happen after death :

But yet can give us no account of what
'The soul endur'd before it put on flesh !
Hence from my sight and thoughts for ever !
Begone, ye expensive lumber of the world ! [*Ex. Magi.*
[A shout at a distance.]

Cleo. Behold, great Sir ! a thousand skilful archers,
From yon high spacious tower,

Aloud proclaiming war against the sun :
 They brace their stubborn bows, and look
 Resolv'd to make their arrows reach him. [*Thunder.*]

Xer. By *Jove* they're there ! Ha ! what means this
 rising storm ?

By all my power unshaken, my foes above are startl'd
 At my daring fury ; I'll stand and view
 The god-like war ? See ! how the fleet winds [*Louder.*]
 Are posted to the sun, with tidings of
 Impending danger ! Hark ! the dreadful news
 Is told, in peals of bursting thunder ! ha !
 By arms the noble charge is given ! [*The stage is darken'd.*
 For see ! th' alarm'd god retires !

He dares not climb the skies, he reins his fiery steeds !
 He stops ! he turns 'em back, and rattles down [*Lightning.*
 The Eastern hill of heav'n ! See ! see ! [*Falling.*
 How the foaming courses flounce and tare,
 And dash the spangled skies behind 'em !

[*A shower of rain.*]

Now, by my own immortal soul, I'll mount
 The burning car myself. I'll have it drawn
 By slow-pac'd elephants, and every gladsome day
 Shall shine a year :
 New order, new seasons shall be born,
 Ev'n from the womb of this stupendous darkness
 New nature shall arise, and bless the world
 With one eternal spring ! [*The sky is cleared.*]

Cleo. Ha ! the sun appears again ! I'll humour his ex-
 travagance.

See, sacred Sir, 'tis done ! Behold
 A new-born light adorns the skies,
 And seems t' applaud your vast creating thought.

Xer. Ha ! 'tis so ! the harrass'd gods are weary of the
 fray :

Why let 'em rest ; and now alone
 The business of the earth shall fill my thoughts :
 Draw near, ye royal captives of my terrestrial war,
 And listen to pronouncing fate ! No longer now,
 The chains of victory shall gall your valiant minds ;
 Your future bonds shall all be love ;
 For ever now be free ! be safe ! *Xerxes.*

Is no more your foe!
 No more the toils of war shall break my slumbers,
 The lust of conquest shall inflame me now no more,
 Nor fate shall dare to cross my will, which thus
 Resolves to give mankind a general peace,
 And rowl the wanton globe in pleasure.

[The captives are unbound, and the people shout;

And now to spread my resolution through
 The spacious world, here I proclaim, to any head
 That shall invent a new untasted draught
 O luxury, rewards unlimited,
 The earth and sea shall throw their treasure up
 To make him happy

Y

Let young-fledg'd heroes court the noise of war,
 And starve their pleasures, but to feed their care:
 Let fond ambition's wing still scorn to rest,
 Still soar to prey, without desire to taste:
 For me, more solid bliss my days shall crown,
 I'll taste the pleasures which my arms have won.
 Eternal springs of love and gustful joy
 Shall feed my ravish'd sense, without the power to
 enjoy.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

The SCENE, Xerxes's Palace.

Enter Cleontes and the Poet.

CLEONTES.

YOUR fortune rises, Sir, your muse has charm'd
the king;

After the banquet, he intends to see
The mask perform'd : But what's a fairer demonstration
Of his favour, I am commanded to entrust you
With his secret love——He much relies on you.

Poet. Possible! O ye gods! a pimp! [Aside.
Then my prayers are heard! The devil's in't
If I don't thrive now!

Her name, dear Sir?
Her name and quality : I'll melt her down
With a distich : She shall be rhym'd to raptures.
Her name, Sir?

Cleo. Her name is *Virtue*, Sir.

Poet. *Virtue*! She does not belong to the court, Sir,
does she?

Cleo. That must be our care to find out : You know
The king resolves to taste no common pleasures ;
His fancy therefore leads him to enjoy
A marry'd beauty, of untainted virtue ;
One that dares defend her honour
Against the utmost storms of fortune :
Whom neither threats or bribes of power can shake,
Nor all the subtle arts of languishing desire.

Poet. Look you, (not that I believe we shall) but
Suppose we should find such a lady ; pray,
What would his majesty do with her ?

Cleo. He'd first use all his arts and power to bend her
virtue,
And if he found it yield, despise her ;

But if she stood his love unmov'd,
Then force should give him a delight,
Which her consent would ruin.

Poet. O ho ! then it seems, his majesty wou'd
Only have a slash at her virtue ! Very good !
A marry'd lady, you say, that won't cuckold
Her husband for love or money ! Why now,
After all, that must be a very odd
Humour in a woman !

Cleo. Yet such a one there may be found, Sir.
You know the fair and fam'd *Tamira*,
The wife of noble *Artabanus* :
The king, before her marriage, was in love with her,
And often made attempts upon her honour :
But meeting still severe repulses,
Offer'd her at last his crown, and ev'n that,
She with the same indifference rejected.
The general on this was banish'd ; she follow'd him,
And to the hazard of her life, embrac'd his fortune.
The king at last, with absence, cur'd his love ;
And wanting soldiers for the war with *Greece*,
Call'd *Artabanus* home, restor'd him to his honours,
And gave *Tamira* to his arms : But he
Remembers now afresh her former cruelty ;
And resolutely vows to satisfy
His old revenge, and the remains of love.

Poet. A satisfaction for the gods above !
But hark you, Sir ! Are you sure 'tis *Artabanus's* wife ?

Cleo. The same : I mention'd several,
But most the king inclines to her.

Poet. By *Jove*, we'll dub his lordship then ! we'll dub
him :

Now my revenge is perfect : He gave me
Nothing for my last dedication.

[*Aside.*

Cleo. I guess the king expects her at the mask.
But see our general, and *Artabanus* with him,
I like 'em not, they're enemies to you and me.

Poet. Oh ! let me alone with 'em !
You say the king has positively
Commanded none shall pass his presence arm'd ?

Cleo. He has——I'll retire, and inform him
They are here, while you demand their swords.

Enter Mardonius, Artabanus, and Arantes.

Mar. What mean these double guards?

Poet. Safety, Sir; safety!

Mar. What art thou?

Poet. I am a wit.

Art. I'll not take your word, Sir.

Aran. O 'twere charity, my lord, since he can't keep it.

Poet. I'll write no more dedications, my lord!

Art. 'Tis well resolv'd. 'Twere insolence
To libel men of honour: For what wer't else,
To tell the world they like a muse,
Which just before the world had damn'd.

Poet. Your lordship's picture was not ill drawn be-
fore it.

Art. 'Twas every where unlike me;
Thou drew'st my honours all o'er white,
Without one touch of shade to heighten it:
It look'd to me a flat insipid nothing.

Poet. The very image of your lordship's gratuity.

Art. 'Tis a vain pride, not gratitude, rewards
The undeserving; to encourage thee,
Were an affront to real merit.
To the presence——on my lord!——

Poet. You must leave your sword, Sir.

Mar. Who demands it?

Poet. Your humble servant, Sir.

Mar. Here, take it slave! [*Presenting the point.*]

Poet. Ah! not by the wrong handle, I beseech you,
Sir.

Mar. The meaning of this insolence! You, gentlemen,
Is it the king's command?

Guard. My lord, it is.

Art. 'Tis likely, dispute it not, my Lord! There,
gentlemen! [*They give their swords.*]

Mar. Gods! That a man so great in arms,
Should ever know the guilt of fear! See where he comes
Amidst his court of women now! O shameful change.

Enter Xerxes, follow'd by a train of ladies, Cleontes in discourse with him. Tamira amongst them.

Xer. Did you see her, say you?

Cleo. She follows in the train, my lord.

Xer. Let her be near us at the mask : I wou'd
Appear a gentle lover first, and try
The force of passion, and heart-wounding eloquence :
I know, tho' real, they would plead in vain ;
But that 'tis heightens my delight ; for when
She thinks the lamb-like lover dying,
In the vain pursuit, the bounding lion then
Shall start, and drag the unwilling prey.

Aran. Health to your majesty.

Xer. *Aranthes*, welcome ! welcome, *Aranthes* !
Valiant *Mardonius*, welcome !

Mar. I never durst be a coward, Sir—But now,
Methinks, you should not know me for *Mardonius*.
I us'd to wear a sword !

Xer. O ! 'twere needlèss, unless you had enemies.

Mar. There still are *Grecians* living, Sir.

Xer. And they were born to live.

Mar. Yes, and conquer too ! Your pardon, Sir ;
I love 'em not, tho' they deserve my love.

Xer. Ha !

Art. Take heed, my lord, your words have mov'd
the king.

Mar. Then do yours soften him : For I want temper.

Xer. [*Afide.*] I'll find a fitter time to silence him.
Such men are hateful, and will oppose my pleasures.

Art. We came to intreat a private hour with your
majesty.

Xer. The court at present is dispos'd to mirth
And pleasure : After the mask, I'm yours.

Aran. We'll attend your majesty.

Xer. Your entertainment shall be soft
And pleasing ; what the music wants, may be
Supply'd in love : But that's a feast, my lord, [*To Art.*]
You never seek abroad, that are so sure
A welcome guest at home.

Art. I owe that blessing, Sir, to your indulgence;
And see, she's here! Your majesty will pardon me.

[*Art. goes to Tam.*]

Xer. 'Tis your duty, Sir.—By heav'n
He loves her, after four years enjoyment!
Had she been mine, e'er this I'd loath'd
The sight of her—Not but she's fairer than the beams
of day!

Softer than a lover's hope—and virtuous—to an infolence.

Tam. [*To Art.*] I hope you're not displeas'd, my lord.

Art. No! But what was it brought you hither?

Tam. Indeed the hopes of seeing you.

Art. D'ye not fear the king should gaze upon you?

Tam. If you fear it, I'll retire.

Art. No, 'twould be observ'd: But yet beware of him.
He often dwells upon your praise of late.

Tam. Indeed I'm sorry, if it troubles you,
Else could hear it with indifference.

Xer. Come, Sirs, our entertainment waits us.

Artabanus. You'll trust me near your lady?

Art. That trust will be her protection, Sir.

Xer. Begin the mask.

*While a symphony is playing, Luxury arises, sleeping on a
bed of roses; and Mercury enters to him.*

Mercury. Awake, soft Luxury, awake,

The smiling gods befriend thee,

And with pleasures here attend thee;

Now feast thy senses, and receive

The sweetest joy the gods can give.

Awake, &c.

*The Scene drawing, discovers several Deities, attended by
their several Pleasures: Cupid advances.*

Cupid. With me, these rival gods contend,

And each asserts his power to bless;

Thy voice alone the strife must end,

Who know'st all pleasures in excess:

And wanton Cupid comes to prove

Life has no joy like lawless love.

Luxury. *What kind reward shall I receive
From them, to whom my voice I give?*
Cupid. *That thou unbrib'd mayst give thy voice,
Eternal freedom to possess thy choice.*

Mars advances to a warlike symphony.

Mars. *Sound! sound! the trumpet sound,
The warrior's soul alarm?
He fights!—They fly!—and now with conquest
crown'd,
What god can give a nobler charm?*

Luxury. *No more! no more! Ah throw thy arms away!
For with 'em Love shall sport and play;
The trumpet now shall softer sound,
And swell, and weep, and gently wound.*

Hymen descends.

Hymen. *If softer love can make thee blest,
That bliss in marriage is possess.*

Indifference interrupts him.

Indiff. *Away! away! no life can be
Like that, mankind enjoys in me:
Indifference is the happiest state,
On which no care or sorrows wait;
Nothing hating, nought admiring,
Never wanting, ne'er requiring;
Never pining for possession,
Nor yet slighting kind occasion:
Joy is welcome still to cheer me,
Sorrow never shall come near me.*

Mar. and In. } *If peaceful joys can make thee blest,
together. } *In him, or me, they are possess.**

Luxury. *Begone! dull pair, I cannot take,
Or grant a joy in either:
Be chain'd for ever back to back,
And wander thro' the world together.*

Chorus. *Begone! dull pair, he cannot take. &c.*

*The Pleasures bind Marriage and Indifference together, and
drive them off the stage: Then Venus advances.*

Venus. *Would you know the sweetest joys,
Which Virtue wisely keeps from fools;
Then steal a mistress, break all ties
That would confine your love to rules.
From Vulcan forc'd to hide my charms,
I modest still, and cold must prove:
But, ah! when in my warrior's arms,
I live! and give a loose to love.*

Lux. *and* } *All other loves but faintly taste,*
Venus. } *Or still repeated, fly too fast:
But the lover,
Will discover,
Changing,
Ranging,
Makes the bliss for ever last.*

Luxury. *True joy is now reveal'd;
Come, Pleasures, dance and play;
All! All! to Venus yield,
Fair Venus wins the day.*

*[While the Pleasures dance, the four last lines are repeated
in grand chorus. After which the company rises.]*

Xer. Now, my lords, what think you of these softer pleasures!

Is not a peaceful court, adorn'd with beauties,
Far beyond the prospect of a dusty camp?
Shew me an army now, that dares resist 'em;
That could unconquer'd, view their charms!

Mar. I cou'd ha' shewn you one, Sir; your pardon ladies.

Xer. What!—They were valiant old soldiers!

Mar. No! young and lusty, in their prime of years
and health;

I dare allow the ladies each to conquer seven men,
But seven hundred thousand wou'd have held 'em to't.

Xer. You are allow'd this liberty, my lord;
Your years excuse you.

Mar. I ha' lost no taste of manly pleasures.

Xer. How did the music take you?

Mar. Tho' it were loose, I cou'd ha' lik'd it
In a proper season; to me 'twas harsh
And out of time: When I have nothing else
To do——I'll have a mistress and a lute.

Xer. Why, what have men to do on earth,
But to indulge their appetites? How shou'd
We stop the swift career of time, unless
We load him well with pleasures e'er he flies away?
Old men, I find, can be content to dream
Of happiness: Away! Some fruit and sprightly wines!
Conduct the ladies to the grove of jessamines,
And strew the best perfumes of nature as they pass.
Your ear, *Aranthes*. [*The courtiers conduct the ladies.*]

Tam. to *Art.* Pray, my love, excuse me! I dare not
follow 'em;

During the mask the king let fall
Some wanton words, that trouble and offend me;
Forgive this fault, I'll ne'er be seen at court again.

Art. This prudence has oblig'd me: farewell. [*Ex Ta.*]

Xer. to *Aran.* Nor e'er in common talk speak slightly
of my triumph?

Aran. My royal lord, his private thoughts I know not;
If they were ill, he ne'er would utter 'em:
I have indeed observ'd him thoughtful when
We speak of you, and he has sought
This opportunity to tell
Your majesty the cause.

Xer. I can ill spare it now; my pleasures wait,
And they brook no delay.

Aran. Beseech your majesty, but a moment.

Xer. A moment! 'Tis an age! Let him be short.
Too plain I read his fullen thoughts;
He takes an ill time to thwart me!
Let him beware my sleeping will,
For if it wakes disturb'd, it may be fatal. [*Aside.*]
Now, Sir, your grievances!

Mar. Are they not written in my face?

Xer. I read nothing there but age,
And that indeed's a grievance!

Mar. Sir, you love me not!

Xer. Go on! have you any more?

Mar. Gods!

Xer. Speak lower.

Art. Forbear, my lord, you'll ruin all!

Mar. Speak thou then, that can be master of your passion.

Art. My royal lord, may I intreat permission,
I wou'd unload that grief, which heavily
Has brought us to the court.

Xer. You have our leave, the rest be silent,
Till I commission 'em to answer.

Aran. I submit.

Mar. I'll do my best.

Art. Then thus, my lord,
We grieve to think your late expensive triumph
Was not worth the sums it cost you: That all
Your trophies, spoils, and treasure ta'en from *Greece*,
Are now thrown by for lumber:
That ev'n your royal captives, led in golden chains,
Were abject slaves before they wore 'em:
That a benumbing lethargy has seiz'd your soul,
And sunk your glory in unmanly pleasures:
That women, flatterers, and servile poets, are
Your only favourites now: That we,
Whose loyal swords have ever been your guard,
Ere we can gain admittance to your sight,
Are forc'd to give 'em up to base-born slaves,
Lest we shou'd sheath 'em in your jealous heart.
We grieve that your surviving foldiers are
So little known, the many thousands
In your service dead, so soon forgotten.

Xer. Proceed.

Art. You may remember, Sir,
In your prosperity of arms, when once
You drew your hardy millions up, and saw
Th' amazing space of world was taken
To contain their numbers,
You then bedew'd your cheeks with tears, to see
So many gallant souls in perfect health,
Which you was sure, in one short age of man,
Th' inevitable throat of death must swallow.
If then so late, because a certain end
Cou'd move your soul so far, what floods of grief,
What raving madness shou'd possess you,

When you reflect, that they were all devour'd
 At a meal ;
 One fatal battle flew 'em for the tyrant's feast,
 And for his table spread the earth with slaughter.
 By heav'n, our foes report, they are asham'd
 T' have conquer'd men, that can so tamely bear their losses ;
 Others, less insulting, say, (and that indeed does wound us)
 That we stand ready all, and raving for revenge,
 But want an animating king to lead us.

Mar. Nay, Sir ! they talk yet worse than this——

Xer. 'Tis not yet your time to speak.

Mar. Would it were !——I ha' done.

Xer. Have you any more ?

Art. No more, my lord, but that
 You wou'd believe my words, the dictates of
 A loyal heart, that bleeds to serve you.

Xer. *Aranthes*, you !

Aran. My lord, my griefs are told by *Artabanus*.

Xer. Now, Sir, you have leave.

Mar. I am unarted, Sir, in any grace of speech
 To stir the soul ! My words are plain and honest,
 Too short to hide a crime with eloquence ;
 I'm downright angry, where-e'er I see
 The face of shame : Ye gods ! had I but ta'en
 The cue t' have spoke the half what he has utter'd,
 Ye had appear'd a—I want a name to call a king by :
 But come, Sir, I'll return the music you have giv'n :
 I've yet a tongue will better speak
 My thoughts ; a voice, that once cou'd warm you faster
 Than a filken mistress, and was perhaps
 As leth to let you sleep a' nights.

Xer. Where is this powerful orator ! Let's hear him !

Mar. Bid the trumpets enter.

Aran. Now you strike him home, my lord.

Enter trumpets.

Mar. Here ! here's the harmonious tongue shall plead
 my cause,
 And rouse your startling soul to glory ! Sound a charge.

Art. Yet hold ! by heav'n I plaud my fellow-soldier's
 heart ! [Embracing Mar.
 And see, my lord ! what hardy squadrons join to back
 him ! [Looks out.

Look! how they move! what a martial grace and order!
 Gods! Victorious terror's in their eyes, and now
 Suppose within a well-pitch'd field,
 The swelling foe, advancing to our foremost ranks,
 We fix our chosen ground, and stand impatient
 To receive 'em! the neighing steeds too foam and champ,
 And tear the earth, and shew a noble lust of war!
 And see they come! the glowing soldiers shout;
 The signal's given, and death in ghastly wounds
 Deals various fate around him!

While clashing armour, spears, and rattling shields,
 Drums, fifes, and trumpets, (glorious horror!)
 With their stupendous clangor crack the skies!
 Now stretch th' alarming voice of war! Sound till
 From your swoln veins the springing blood gush forth!
 Imagine now the eager arms of victory
 Extending to embrace us! sound! as if
 The glorious scene were here in real action!
 Sound! and wake the ghost of this departed hero!

Aran. O glorious harmony! [*They sound a charge.*]

Art. O powerful charm!

Mar. By arms, it sets my glowing veins on fire!
 I burn! my spirits rave with fury for the war!
 Away, to horse! to arms! why stand you, Sir, unmov'd,
 As if a low-born fear had fix'd you here inanimate?
 Can you be deaf, when great revenge and honour call?
 Are there such charms in a detested sloth and ease?
 Gods! where have you tameness left, to stand thus long
 Suspected not to dare? Sound a fresh alarm,
 And let the martial din ungrave the dead to rouse him!

Xer. On forfeit of your lives, forbear your insolence!
 Audacious traitor! thus to brand
 My hallow'd pleasures with the name
 Of slothful ease and fear! I'll have thee think,
 Unknowing slave! that nothing in itself
 Is good or ill, but as it pleases me.

Mar. I say no. There will be shame in cowardice,
 Tho' *Xerxes* were a soldier!

Xer. Ha!

Aran. Forbear, my lord, consider 'tis your king that
 hears you.

Mar. I ha' no king ; 'tis merit, not a crown,
That makes a king : When pride and sloth debase
The soul of majesty, the crown's a toy,
No more in worth than what it weighs in gold :
I scorn a king, whose robes can only speak him royal.
Xer. Witness, ye gods, how loath I am to wake,
And crush this slave, who, like a crawling insect, dares
Disturb the sleeping lion——

Mar. A lion !

By heav'n I've seen a hare, a woman's courage,
Dare beyond thee ; the martial *Artemisia*,
Whose aiding arm in fight supported and disgrac'd thee !
The warlike woman shew'd a manly rage :
The courtly king, a woman's trembling fear :
Ever wer't thou last in battle, foremost
In the flight, humble in danger, and when
The danger's past, insulting !

Xer. Seize the traitor ! hence ! and bear him to a dun-
geon !

There let the furly lion growl and champ
His galling chains in vain ! I'll try him in the den ;
Hard fare, perhaps, darkness and chains may tame him.

Mar. A dungeon ! Now by the power of arms,
thou'lt found

The only place an honest man can bear in *Persia* !
Thou poor inverted king, whose favour is disgrace,
Whose frowns are honour now ; thou canst not raise
My glory more, than thus proclaiming to the world
Thou hat'st me : But when
This lion grumbles o'er his chains alone, beware
Thou send no *Persian* fools to gaze at me ;
Lest in my round of thought I should believe 'em *Greeks*
That keep me there ; and bounding from my couch,
Grasping with fury the mistaken prey,
With flaming eyes, should stare their souls away. [*Exit.*

Xer. To the dungeon, hence, and load him down
with massy fetters.

By heaven I'll find a way to take
An undisturb'd repose ; I'll have my streams
Of crystal pleasure clear'd of all these martial weeds,
I'll tear 'em by the roots, and throw them useles by.

Art. My Lord, howe'er your soldier's heat—

Xer. I'll have no more to do with faucy war!

Were now ten thousand times the millions
I ha' lost in arms, intreating, begging as for life
One animating word to bid them move,
I'd not unsheath my sword, to be enthron'd with *Jove*.

[*Exit.*

Art. Why! why ye powers! has such a tainted soul
The care of th' empire? Or if the gods have stamp'd
Divinity on kings, fixing them far above
The reach of common men; why then have we
The eyes of reason to inspect their faults?
Why are we born with souls to loathe dishonour,
And yet by honour bound to bear it?

Aran. How! To bear it! No! That loyalty's dis-
honourable

That bids me bear dishonour: When subjects
Are no more the care of kings, we then
Have only left the laws of nature to protect us;
And nature ties us all to self-defence:
We must in time resent the blows we've taken:
Mardonius' freedom must be sought, and suddenly:
The current of our treasure ebbs too fast;
It must be stop'd by right and privilege:
The late expences of our gaudy shame
Exceeds th' account of necessary war:
And shall we sleep, when from our hands by force
The gripe of tyranny has wrung our fortunes!
More I cou'd say,
If I believe that words cou'd win you to
An honourable action.

Art. *Aranthes*, I was never slow to such a call,
Nor needs the cause a tongue,
But yet the understanding's difficult,
And will require our friends' best counsel.
To-night at my own house I'll summon 'em,
There speak our griefs at large.

And may the blest event to ages prove,
No crown fits safe without the people's love.

[*Exeunt.*

A C T III.

The S C E N E, The House of Artabanus.

Enter Memnon with a paper.

MEMNON.

HONESTY's a notion, and only reigns,
Like women's chastity, in cold untempted
minds:

It must be so! I ever thought that villainy
Had an ugly face: but now I view it
In the flattering glass of interest, it seems
No monster!—Of a fairer form than half-starv'd vit-
tue.

—Yet let me think a little—

Here I am trusted with the names of several men,
Who have combin'd to free th' imprison'd general,
To seize the king, and force him to renew
The war with Greece! Nay, I've subscrib'd my own,
T' assist 'em too, and now am going to inform
The general of it: The undertaking is but just;
For old *Mardonius* lov'd the king, and lies
In chains, because he offer'd proof on't: *Xerxes*
Is unfit to hold the reins of empire;
He throws them loose, and lets it run to shame
And luxury—Why don't I haste to stop him then?
And by the execution of what I've sworn to act,
Prevent my country's ruin—But stay! suppose
I fail in my design (as sure 'tis dangerous)
If I am taken, can my country save me?
Or, if I succeed, am I sure my country
Will be grateful? They'll say, perhaps, 'twas interest
Led me on;

And let me starve, while they partake the blessing !
 They may be base, and probably they will !
 Then 'tis not safe to trust 'em ; nor can I
 On th' other side be sure of life, if I delay
 This great discovery :—Why then, 'tis fixt !
 I'll take the surest way to find reward from *Xerxes* ;
 And when my pardon and reward are sign'd,
 Then let 'em call me fool, or tell the king
 I am a villain.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Artabanus, Arantes, &c.

Art. Never was cause, my friends, more chearfully
 Embrac'd, never were hands more fit for action,
 Nor ever greater glory waiting on success :
 'Tis not the thirst of others' wealth, or dignities,
 Nor envy of a favour'd faction, that inflames us,
 No mercenary end : 'Tis bleeding honour calls us
 To revenge her wounds ; 'tis *Xerxes*, not the king,
 That stands accus'd : If *Xerxes* can relent,
 Still let him wear the crown ; if not, the crown
 By us remov'd, can dignify
 Another head for empire.

Aran. 'Tis not who reigns, but who reigns well, is
 king.

Art. He that neglects the regal office,
 Should be compell'd to lay it down ;
 And we who feel the smart of that neglect,
 Are only proper judges where to place it.

Aran. Let us but once more see *Mardonius* sworded,
 We shan't be long to seek a man that's fit
 To wield a sceptre : I long
 To hear how he receives our undertaking !
 Why lingers *Memnon* thus ? may we believe
 He's not refus'd access to him ?

Art. You may, I have unbar'd the prison gates with
 gold.

[*A servant whispers Artabanus.*]

Come, gentlemen, the night begins to walle,
 Our small collation waits us : *Arantes*,
 Pray, conduct our friends ; I'll give some orders
 In the house, and follow you. [*Exit Aran. with the rest.*]

Enter Tamira in her night-dress, weeping.

Art. What mean these tears, *Tamira*?

Tam. O, can you love like me, and ask that question?
'Tis true, I counsel'd what you have undertaken;
Yet cannot help my woman's fears: Not but
I love your honour more, than both our lives;
Yet, when I run o'er the frightful hazards,
The dangers imminent you meet,
To purchase and preserve it, then I could wish
Some humble shepherd were my love,
Whose sole ambition were a rosy chaplet;
Not a crown:
Who in some sweet retreat of blooming nature,
Naked of honours, but enrich'd with love,
Might give and take delight unknown to crowns,
And drive, with undisturb'd repose,
The melting hours before us.

Art. Be witness, heaven, how these words transport
me!

For still thy fears, I know, are born of love,
And love's of kin to honour.—Couldst thou behold,
Ev'n in the softest moment of our joy,
Our native country in distress, the bloody arm
Of tyranny just rais'd to give the wound;
And not with horror throw me from thy arms
To stop the blow? Think what a glorious tale
Futurity shall register of him,
That first stept out to save her!
And if opposing death should cross the brave attempt,
Then shall it farther still be said for thee,
This man, this honest man, the memorable *Artabanus*,
Beyond his life his country lov'd,
Yet, equal with his country, lov'd *Tamira*.

Tam. O, shall it be said *Tamira's* fears
Oppos'd this glorious enterprize? Perish
That wife who's so impatient of her joys,
That, to indulge her love at home,
Would turn her husband's honour out a starving! No!
Go on, my dearest lord! leave me, and cheer
Those gallant friends who've sworn to assist you:

If you return with life, my love will find
A thousand thousand ways to welcome you—Hark!
What knocking's that? Who can it be thus late?

[*A loud knocking.*]

Do you expect more friends, my lord?
Pray heav'n no ill be towards us!

Art. Be not concern'd, my love, I guess
'Tis *Memnon* from the general: Within there!

Enter a Servant.

Haste to the portal; know first their business,
E'er you give admittance; unless it be
To my lieutenant *Memnon*: Be calm, my love. [*Ex. scr.*]

Tam. I cannot, while this noise continues!

You shall not stir, my lord; heavens! how I tremble!

Art. Now! Who is it? [*Re-enter with the steward.*]

Serv. My lord, your steward.

Art. The news!

Stew. Defend yourself, my lord! some danger's towards
you.

Going to my rest, within the outward lodge,
I heard the thronging tread of passengers,
Whom from the window I discover'd

To be the guards:

They now are marching round the orchard wall,

In order to beset the house:

I heard 'em say too, as they pass'd along,

Kill none, let 'em be taken all alive.

Art. Death and horror! we are betray'd!

Tam. O fly, my lord!

Let me conjure you, by the pangs

Of my distracted love, fly! fly! e'er yet

A moment can befriend you.

Art. Impossible! I leave my friends in danger!

Tam. Run! haste, and rouse 'em from the jaws of
ruin. [*To the serv.*]

O fatal enterprize!

Art. That we may gain some time to think, lead you
The servants to the eastern gate, [*To the steward.*]

Command 'em, on their lives, to keep it bar'd

'Gainst all would force their enterance. Gods!
Was ever noble action so untimely born?

O, *Tamira*!

Tam. What power, what fate can stop our headlong ruin?
Some pitying gods look down, and stretch an arm,
To keep our lives and love unparted!

O that the earth wou'd open wide, and take us thus,
Thus undivided to the centre! [*Throws her arms on him.*]

Art. If we deserve your rage, ye pow'rs!
Now hurl your thunder to destroy us:
But strike us closer, not asunder with your bolts.

O! must we part, *Tamira*!
Curst be the hell-born slave that durst betray
Our honest lives. Ill rest betide his frighted soul,
Devouring guilt,
Like the *Promethean* vulture, know his perjur'd heart,
And mark him for the carrion of mankind.

(*Aran. within.*) Ruin'd! betray'd, and lost!

Art. O my friends!

Enter Arantes and the rest in disorder.

Aran. Distraction! *Memnon*;

Art. Ha! What of him!

Aran. He! He! that curst, that canker'd slave, for fear,
Or base reward, has sold us all: I now
Descry'd him by the distant light of torches,
In conference with the king, who smiling comes
I'th' rear to catch us in the shameful toil!

Art. O that a curse wou'd kill the villain!

Aran. Let's send it then upon our pointed swords,
Since we've no hope of safety left;
Here! let us fix our stand, and if the villain
Dares to face us, rush all at once to reach his heart,
And die like men, reveng'd upon our ruin.

Art. Impossible to 'scape such numbers; No!
Let's down to the postern gate, and try
To leap the orchard wall; or now the darkness of
The night befriends us, mingle with the guards
'That are in search of us, seem hot as they
In the pursuit, and that way take our chance
To 'scape 'em undiscovered. [*A loud noise without.*]

Aras. Away! they are upon us:
Succeed or not, we know at last to die.

[*Exit with the rest.*]

Art. I follow you.

[*Tamira holds Art.*]

Tam. My lord! my love, I cannot leave you!

O let me part with you and life together!

Art. This is no time to part like lovers,
Nor yet to tell thee half my fears!
The king! Revenge! and lust! I can no more;
But shou'd thy frightened virtue call for help,
Let this speak for me.

[*Gives her a dagger.*]

Tam. By heav'n it shall; and home: But do not venture
To the orchard: Here in the house below there lies
A secret vault, in former times of some religious use,
And now is only known to me: There I conjure you lie
Conceal'd till safety call you forth: Nor hell, nor envy can
Betray you thence, unless I prove unfaithful.

Art. O might we never part till then!
Hark! they are entering! shew me! [Exeunt.
After a noise of the gates being broken down, enter Xerxes,
Memnon, officers and guards, with torches.

Xer. Where! Where's this infernal brood of traitors:
By heav'n, I'll crush 'em in the nest! Away!
Look out! Search every hole that fear can creep into:
Nor earth, nor hell shall hide 'em from my vengeance!

*Enter at the other door Cleontes, and guards, dragging in
two of the conspirators dead.*

Cleo. Here! this way, shew the bodies to the king!
Great Sir! two of the conspirators
This moment breath'd their last.

Xer. Was't not my strict command to take 'em all alive?
Who was it dar'd to kill 'em?

Cleo. My lord! it was their own despair,
For, e'er we cou'd beset the orchard,
These two, with several more, that just before escap'd us,
Made an attempt to leap the wall;
We interposing in the moment,
Demanded 'em our prisoners;
At this, they, looking round with hopeless eyes,
To one another's breasts their pointed swords advanc'd,

And rush at once to an embrace
Of friendship and of death.

Xer. O spiteful fullen traitors! bring in the torture!
By heav'n, I'll have them rack'd to life again!

Mem. My lord, these wretches are but the limbs
Of the conspiracy; it only halts for want of them!
If you would have it hush'd for ever,
Cut off the head, their *Artabanus*!

Xer. Thou hast inform'd my rage: Say, slaves,
Among those that fled, saw you *Artabanus*?

Cleo. No, my lord, we rather chose to let them fly,
Than give him time to 'scape, while we pursu'd 'em.
If with the rest he was, he's still i' th' house, my lord.

Mem. Then we are secure of him: I left him here;
But see, they've found his wife;
If he lies yet conceal'd, she must of course
Be privy to the place.

Enter Tamira, guarded.

Xer. Now! Is *Artabanus* found?

Guard. My lord, we've left no place unsearch'd,
That jealousy can enter; but can no where find him:
And when we urg'd his lady to discover him,
She call'd us fools, and said we ask'd her idle questions.

Xer. So brave! But this is done in spite to me:
The traitress knows I love, and therefore she insults:
But thus I tear the passion from my breast,
And in its room take fell revenge and hate! [*Aside.*]
Bring in the rack! I'll try if that can make
A woman speak her mind.

Mem. 'Tis here, my lord.

Xer. See you that, lady?

Tam. Yes, and feel it in my thoughts.

Xer. What think you of it?

Tam. That I could bear it, Sir, t' avoid a greater pain.

Xer. What's that?

Tam. Disloyalty to my husband, and my love.

Xer. That shall be try'd: Where is your husband?

Tam. I have hid him, Sir.

Xer. Where, traitress?

Tam. I dare not tell you, Sir, he has commanded me
I should not.

Xer. He then commands thee to the torture!
If thou would'st 'scape it, speak! for I will know.

Tam. You shall! You ask to know
Where I have hid my husband?

Then I must tell you, tyrant, in my heart,
Where you, nor yours can enter to remove him.

Mem. Put her to the trial, Sir! the rack keeps no
secrets;

Women are so impatient of a little pain,
That only squalling in their natural labour,
They'll forswear mankind. [*Aside to Xerxes.*]

Xer. By heav'n, I'm pleas'd to see her folly rave,
Thou talk'st as if the rack were but a sport! Hast thou
Been ever sensible of any pain like this?

Tam. Ten thousand times a greater: I have known
The pains of hopeless love: Nay, after that,
The agonies of blushing to reward
The man that lov'd me.

Xer. How feelingly she talks of love, ev'n in
The face of horror! Art thou not afraid of death?

Tam. No! This moment from my window I beheld
These two unhappy wretches run into
His arms, and see! how soon they're quiet! death!
Alas! he's now my nearest friend! look here!
I wear him in my bosom, Sir;
My husband plac'd him there.

Xer. Thy husband! To what end?

Tam. During his absence to keep dishonour from me.

Xer. O the inveterate slave! *Memnon*, walk unobserv'd
Behind, and wrest the dagger from her. [*Aside.*]

Mem. I shall, my lord. [*He steals round.*]

Tam. That whisper has a meaning I am jealous of;
By heav'n 'tis so! The villain meets my purpose!
[*Observing Mem.*]

Xer. Once more! Where is thy husband?
Confess, and yet preserve thy life.

Tam. Thus far I will confess: That I am now indeed
Almost afraid of death: For it would grate my soul,
To leave my husband's ruin unreveng'd;

(For I despair again to make him happy)
 And that's the only wish that makes me fond of life.
 Forgive me, duty, if I mistake the breast;
 But great revenge, and love, instruct me here!

[Stabs Mem.]

Xer. Disarm her! Seize her, slaves!
 I'll trust the wygriffs loose no more.

Mem. Furies and death, she's reach'd my heart. [Dies.]

Tam. So may all traitors die! 'Tis done!
 The noble task, that love had set me
 For the remains of life, is nobly ended;
 And now I am at leisure for
 The idle holiday of death.

Xer. No, fullen traitress! thou shalt be years a dying.

Tam. Let me be ages, Sir!

Xer. Begin the torture!
 I'd have my glory live for ever!
 By heav'n, she mocks my vengeance! [They bind her.]
 Now, where are your smiles of scorn, lady?

Tam. Here! in my soul, which thus contemns thee,
 tyrant,

Thinking to bow it down to baseness.
 Alas! my body now wou'd sink to th' earth,
 With horror of yon agonizing tortures;
 But that my daring soul shoots, like a temper'd spear,
 Quite thro' the falling trunk, and gives it power to stand.
 Now satiate thy rage, strip off my trembling flesh,
 And when thou hast piece-meal torn these frailer limbs
 away,

Still shalt thou leave unmov'd a naked mind
 Erect to heav'n.

Xer. Away! and drag her to her fate, [She is carried off.]
 My stern revenge will brook no more defiance.

Cleo. My gracious lord, might your poor slave advise—

Xer. Preserve thou thy own life, and tempt me not,
 I tell thee vengeance takes up all my soul.

Cleo. But yet, you see, my lord, she minds it not!
 You are not thus reveng'd!—She mocks the torture!
 Now, Sir, may I advise—

Xer. Advise me! What! Not ev'n the damn'd can
 groan

With more variety of pain—Look there !

Cleo. I see, my lord, and plainly see from this,
Were she in your arms, she'd feel at once
A greater pain, and you a sweeter vengeance.
Methinks she's lovely yet ! her charms new pointed !
See, how her snowy bosom heaves and swells
With inward pains, disdaining to confess 'em.
O miracle of distressful beauty !

Xer. Not yet a groan ! No sigh or tear for mercy !
Reveal thy husband yet, and I forego
My justice !—By yon heav'n she's dumb and dauntless !
See, how she gnaws her lips, and firms her brow !
With fullen virtue she supports her soul,
And bears it with unheeded resolution !

Cleo. Stupendous woman !

Xer. Forbear a while—— [To the executioners.

Cleo. With half this pain, I've seen a malefactor
Make the torturer tremble with his groans !
Can all this fortitude be born of love ?

Xer. If it be——

What mortal man can merit such a love ?
If love can make her smile in such a raging pain,
What must he do, when wrapt in real pleasure !
What racks of blissful joy, what raptures must she give !
By heav'n, they must be tasted——
Unloose, and feat her by me. [*She is brought in all bloody.*
I'm now a convert to her undaunted virtue.
Thou glorious woman, whose unconquer'd soul,
In spite of wrongs, resolves my rage to pity,
For ever now, thine and thy husband's injuries
To me, are cancell'd and forgiv'n. My crown's
Too little to reward thy constancy ;
But if thy husband's life and safety can,
Nay, and his friends too, they are thine,
Thy goodness has redeem'd 'em.

Tam. What said you, Sir ? you do not flatter me !

Xer. Search round my kingdom for a wish, 'tis thine. [*Weeping.*
Or wealth, or empire, all too poor a gift,
For such exalted virtue !
But ask ! O speak ! and teach me to be grateful !

Tam. O my cheer'd heart ! Shall I not ask in vain ?

Xer. Speak and enjoy thy wish !

Tam. Indeed, it is an humble one : I ask
Not wealth or power, I ne'er was fond of dignity ;
Nature and reason ever taught me to believe,
No taste of life cou'd be, but in the free,
Th' intire possession of the man that lov'd me.
Give me his life, and him the life of those
Unhappy friends his rashness has engag'd,
And I am more than happy.

Xer. All this I had resolv'd unask'd ;
Can nothing more be given to cheer thy life ?

Tam. A little more, if I might speak.

Xer. Speaking is to enjoy.

Tam. Then give us leave, my husband, Sir,
Our little infant, and myself, with the remains
Of our inheritance, to seek retirement
On some remote and unknown clime,
Where power and state may never more
Disturb the peace of our unmurmuring love.

Xer. Draw up a pardon strait for *Artabanus*,
And those with him concern'd in this conspiracy.
Here, fair one, take this ring ! Give it thy husband ;
Be that thy triumph, and his passport thro' the world.
Now gently raise and bear her to the palace,
And let our own physicians have the care of her.

Tam. Alas, my lord, I want no art, such words as these
Wou'd heal a wretch expiring of his wounds !
O let me kiss your sacred feet,
And thank you with my grateful tears of joy ;
Thus let me weep, and wash your cruel guilt away,
Till gods and men stand wondering at your virtue !

Xer. Rise, fair creature ! Live, and enjoy the man
that loves thee.

Tam. Now you indeed have rais'd me, rais'd me, Sir,
From death to life, to love, and to my husband !
But haste ! O lead me to him, e'er my wounds are cold,
That I may fold his body in these bleeding arms,
And print it o'er with crimson characters
Of eternal faith !
And now let base detraction blush

To call us cowards, or inconstant souls,
 Since ev'ry drop that falls from me,
 May to our injur'd sex's glory prove,
 That racks nor hell could shake a woman's love. [Ex.]

Xer. Then thou'rt the first that never could be won,
 And therefore only fit to feed a love
 Luxurious as my own: Now follow her;
 Seize her husband the moment she discovers him,
 And bear him to the scaffold.

Cleo. You gave your royal word to spare him, Sir.

Xer. No, fool, I gave my word to find him out.
 Justice demanded him; and since the rack
 Produc'd him not, I might with justice then
 Make use of policy; and now I'm both
 Secure of my revenge and love.

Cleo. Then she must not die, Sir?

Xer. Oh, no! she lives and shall be lov'd to ruin!
 I've prov'd her virtue now, and find
 It worthy of a siege: I'll further try
 If all the moving penitence of love can take her;
 If (as I wou'd) she still resist that pow'r,
 The noblest way to conquer is to storm;
 'Tis opposition gives the victor glory!
 Oh! what a noble guilt will swell my soul,
 When she lies drown'd in tears, and trembling in my
 grasp!
 Nay, after my abhor'd possession, I'll hold her down
 With smiling spite, and talk my raptures o'er;
 In her unwilling ears I'll pour such tales
 Of loose desire, her very soul shall feel the rape.
 And though—

Her words may beg I wou'd her life destroy,
 I'll make her eyes confess that she partakes the joy.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

The S C E N E, the Palace.

Enter Xerxes attended, a Messenger offering him a letter.

X E R X E S.

WAIT on me to-morrow ;
I'm not at leisure now for business.

Mess. To-morrow, may be too late ;
They're of importance, and concern
The safety of your royal person.

Xer. I tell thee, slave, my will's my safety :
When danger dares to face me,
I'll command it from my person.

Mess. But, Sir——

Xer. No more, my pleasures wait.

Enter Cleontes.

Now, my *Cleontes*, what news from love ?
How does *Tamira* bear her heavy change of fortune ?

Cleo. Oh ! never did the weeping eyes
Of pity view a scene so mournful. When first
We seiz'd, and forc'd her husband from her arms,
She wrung her hands, and shriek'd, and tore her flowing
hair !

Beating her breasts ; and in her wild despair
She broke thro' all the guards, with an amazing force,
And strain'd her arms once more around him.
We strove to part him from her hold ; but she
Still clung, and clasp'd him with such convulsive force,
That from her half-heal'd wounds the starting blood
Agen sprung forth——

And sprinkl'd those with pity that oppos'd her.
Mov'd by that sight, we stopt a while,
To let her take a short, a last farewell.

Quite breathless now, her head upon his bosom lean'd,

She wept, and spoke with dying eyes
 The tender anguish of her soul.
 He press'd her close, and call'd, *My life!*
 She sigh'd and groan'd, and offer'd an embrace,
 But there, alas! her wasted spirits sunk,
 And left her on the floor expiring.

Xer. Extravagance of love!

If only to behold her parted from a husband's arms
 Were such a mournful sight,
 Oh! what a beauteous ruin will her sorrows make,
 When rifled of her dearer honour!
 She weeps and wails, with swollen eyes looks up to heav'n,
 And chides the neuter gods for their neglect of innocence.
 But say, how have you dispos'd her husband?

Cleo. While she lay fainting on the ground,
 We hurry'd him to prison; then us'd all our care
 To bring her back to life.

Xer. Is she then recover'd?

Cleo. To life she is, but hardly to her senses.
 She speaks to none, nor minds another's speech;
 Pensive she sits, with folded arms,
 Fixing to th' earth her blood-shot eyes, and looks
 The piteous image of true mourning misery.

Xer. How are her wounds?

Cleo. By virtue of an *Arabian* plant, she has
 Already lost the pain: They were at first
 But slight, tho' smarting.

Xer. Use all the power of art to cheer her spirits;
 But keep her still within the palace.

When you perceive she is inclin'd to talk,
 Let me hear of her——

Mess. I beg your majesty——

Xer. Agen this plague! Whence are these letters?

Mess. From my master, Sir, the governor of your
 new-erected fort.

Xer. (*Reads.*) Ha! He tells me here, some rebels are
 in arms,

——That you are able to inform me farther!

Say! Who? what are they?

Mess. Most of 'em are those the *Grecians* left un-
 slaughter'd.

Xer. In arms !

Mess. Yes, Sir ; and in order too : They have been
Long us'd to war : You taught 'em first the trade,
And now they say, they'll set up for themselves.

Xer. So blunt ?

Mess. They talk but little, Sir ; they look their thoughts,
And threaten in their silence.

Xer. *Arantbes* at the head of 'em ?

Mess. I saw and spoke with him.

Xer. What said the traitor ?

Mess. He bid me tell you, Sir, Unless the general
Were free to-morrow, he'd himself find hands
To force the prison gates.

Xer. So resolute ? What was their number ?

Mess. When first I view'd 'em, they appear'd
Not above ten thousand : But in four hours
I perceiv'd them doubled.

Xer. Ha ! It may be dangerous then too far
T' incense a gathering power——It must be so !
Here, take the royal signet ; haste, and stop
The execution of *Artabanus*. [Exit an attendant]

Nor is it fear that makes me do it ;
But, on my second thoughts, it may advance
The glorious project of my loose desire :
(For she'll believe, when I protest it so,
That love of her has made me pitiful.)
Beside, the news will call her spirits home,
And make her fit so much the sooner for my arms. [*Aside.*
Post to thy master, back : Bid him draw out
Those forces under his command, and meet the rebels.

Mess. The rebels are more than thrice his number.

Xer. No more ! But let him do't, or die !

Mess. I am gone, Sir. And if he takes my counsel,
His few shall make their number greater. [*Aside.*

Xer. I'll think no more, nor shock my ease,
To entertain a thought of toilsome arms !
But yet, I am not safe till these are quell'd——
Let hood-wink'd fortune use her senseless will !
Man sees in vain, and does in vain oppose her :
Fight, or neglect 'em, still my fate's decreed ;

Nor is't in me to shun a future ill,
 Unless, with pow'r to act, heav'n gives me will.
 Yet thus to live in doubt, a torment is!
 Then magic art shall set my mind at peace:
 I'll to the *Magi's* cave, whose charms shall prove
 What fate's design'd my empire, and my love. [Exit.

The SCENE changes to the Magician's Cave.

Re-enter Xerxes alone.

Xer. Come forth, ye pow'rs on futurity:
 You, that with pow'rful charms unlock
 The cabinets of heav'n, and steal from thence
 The hidden fates of kings and empires,

The Magi appear.

Haste from your gloomy cell, and summon all
 Your art to wait a monarch's pleasure.

Mag. Command us, and our art obeys.

Xer. Tell me what end my empire is decreed,
 If I by foes, or foes by me shall bleed.
 Tell me what pleasure I in love shall know;
 If love, or force shall make the fair one bow.
 Exert your art, and prove what spells can do.

Mag. Prepare the charm: The charm must be
 To *Sophiel*, who delights in harmony.

1st Mag. sings.

*Sophiel! Old sire of early fate,
 Who seest before the gods debate;
 That know'st of yet unbeing things,
 The fates of uncreated kings,
 Of men, of empires, and the doom
 Of thousand thousand years to come:*

1st Mag. Appear!

2d Mag. Appear!

3d Mag. Appear!

1st Mag.

Sophiel!

By the moon's pale beam,

*That faintly glimmers o'er the Stygian stream,
Appear, &c.*

2d Mag. Sophiel!
*By the ocean's ebb and flow,
Whose hidden cause we ne'er cou'd know,
Appear, &c.*

3d Mag. Sophiel!
*By the subterraneous winds, that make
The trembling earth and centre shake.*

Chorus. *Appear! Thrice! Thrice! invoc'd, appear;
Whether in air thy form does stray,
Or under earth by charms is bound,
Swift! swift as light'ning, dart away;
Or fierce as thunder, tear the ground.*

*Sophiel arises in the form of an old man, all in white,
and speaks.*

Soph. Too curious man! Why dost thou seek to know
Events, which good, or ill, fore-known, are woe?
Th' All-seeing Pow'r that made thee mortal, gave
Thee every thing a mortal state should have.
Fore-knowledge only is enjoy'd by heav'n,
And, for his peace of mind, to man forbidden.
Wretched were life, if he fore-knew his doom;
Ev'n joys foreseen give pleasing hope no room;
And griefs assur'd, are felt before they come. }
Yet loose the charm; be wise! O send me back;
And what's decreed by fate, with patience take.

Mag. Thou beg'st in vain to cross our monarch's will: }
What he commands, spirit, I charge thee tell;
Speak, or I'll bind thee in an everlasting spell. }

Soph. O! spare me, and I speak: nor blame my care;
I thought, in kindness, I might say, *beware*.
Know then, rash man, thou'lt lost the happy hour,
Which fav'ring fate once gave within thy pow'r:
While thus thou liv'lt in thoughtless luxury, }
Slighted of friends, of foes despis'd, thou'lt die;
In madness only fam'd to late posterity. }
But thou in love a stranger fate shalt know;
The fair one shall, but shall to virtue, bow.

With humble love pursue, and thou shalt find
Thou art deceiv'd, alas ! in womankind. [*He descends.*]

Xer. Spirit, thou ly'st ; I ne'er despis'd shall die ;
I'll change my death, to prove that fate can lie.
Shou'd fortune threaten what thy words declare,
I'd free my soul, to be reveng'd on her.
And for my love, I will the raptures know ;
She shall to love or force, not virtue bow.
Virtue may please, and give dull souls a feast ;
But ravishment's a joy for gods to taste. [*Exit.*]

The SCENE changes to a private room in the palace.

*Enter Cleontes and an Officer, and servants setting
out a banquet.*

Cleo. Dispatch, dispatch ! the king approaches.

Off. I guess the meaning of this preparation !
But is the lady in a condition, think you,
To be entertain'd ?

Cleo. Her husband's liberty and pardon have recall'd
her spirits.

Off. Has she seen him then ?

Cleo. She has : I saw their first meeting here, i' th'
palace.

Off. Sure 'twas a joyful one.

Cleo. It was indeed ! Joyful, even to a face of sorrow.
So movingly she wept her griefs away,
'Twere hard to judge which seem'd the greater pain,
The terror of his death, or the distracting joy
Of his return to life : For ev'n there she tainted.

Off. Where is her husband now ?

Cleo. After the hurry of their joy was over,
He beg'd her leave to visit brave *Mardonius* ;
She, loth to part, but more unwilling to deny,
Dismiss'd him, on his promise of a quick return.
That visit was the only thing cou'd part 'em,
And now the king's secure of opportunity,
If in the interim her husband should return,
Your orders are, to give him no admittance.
See all the anti-chamber's clear'd. Away ! she's here.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Tamira alone.

Tam. How tedious are the absent hours of love!
Life's an unpleasing dream when he's not with me:
'Tis worse! 'tis death, and wishing to be born agen!
I am impatient of my state——When, when, my love!
Sure time stands still, to fly the faster at our meeting!
Our hours in love have wings; in absence, crutches.
What can this music mean? Address'd to me?

[Soft music,

Good heav'n! the king! and yet I read no terror

Enter Xerxes, bowing at a distance.

In his looks——Innocence should never know
The guilt of fear: I'm yet——
To thank him for my husband's life!
When bounteous heav'n gives a surprizing joy, *[To Xer.*
We bend our grateful knees to thank the gods: *[Kneels,*
Kings are their images: Such thanks as heav'n
Accepts (the humble all that man can pay)
Receive, O sacred prince, from me; who, like a god,
Have giv'n me life restor'd, and more than life,—my
husband!——

Nor wou'd I have you think that any power on earth,
But a resitless love, cou'd e'er have forc'd
My honest heart to brave my prince's anger!

Xer. Ay! there indeed thou'st nam'd a motive
That might excuse the foulest crime,
And wash it fair as innocence!
Unconquerable love! Oh, who can brave his power!
A power, that braves the eldest law of nature:
Ev'n self-defence is lost where he exerts his sway;
For who'd not rather die in proof of love,
Than suffer life, untasting of his joys?
When *Jove* created love,
He made a greater god than *Jove*!
Hadst thou design'd the ruin of my empire,
At love's command, 'twere treason not t' obey!
From him alone our hell or heav'n we prove;
He bids the damn'd despair—the happy, love!

Tam. Defend me heav'n! Whither wou'd he drive!

Xer. Riches, ambition, glory, pride may boast
 Their several charms to raise our souls aloft ;
 Yet from the height of all their tow'ring thoughts,
 When on the eager stretch to kiss the skies,
 Thus do we see 'em lur'd to earth, like me,
 And rest their weary'd wings upon the hand of love !
 Why dost thou turn away ? Is it such pain [*Takes her hand.*
 To be belov'd ! to be ador'd ? [*Kneels.*
 Can penitence and humble tears offend thee ?
 The gods are not averse to those. We kneel
 To heav'n, and taste of mercy !
 O why ! why didst thou take an angel's form,
 Without the softness of an angel's mind ?
 Canst thou not pity me ?

Tam. Alas ! it is not in my pow'r :
 Still as my thoughts grow soft, my husband steals 'em
 from me !

And he's so greedy of the joy, he strips my soul,
 And leaves me cruel to the world beside.

Xer. Be cruel still, yet will I still love on : I have
 Consider'd all the vain impossibilities of despair,
 Yet have resolv'd to use no other help but love !
 But such a love ! fed with so soft a flame !
 So fond of misery ! so impotent of hope !
 It must be inoffensive to the chastest ears !

Tam. Why do you hold me like a frighted dove,
 That trembles in your hand, and murmurs for its mate ?
 'Tis most inhuman to be cruel 'cause you may.
 'Tis true, I am your slave, and in your power.

Xer. Behold, I throw it off ! Be free : I scorn
 All power but humble passion,
 Which thus disrobes the purple king,
 And strips him to the starving lover.
 But shall I, must I starve before so fair a banquet ?

Tam. I have no room
 To entertain another guest. You may
 Disturb my love, but never can be welcome to't.

Xer. I'll bring with me a tender sighing heart ;
 A lover's heart, that bleeds, that languishes,
 And dies, to make me welcome.

Tam. Give it to those that starve; on me 'tis lost;
I, in a faithful husband, have eternal plenty.

Xer. Husband's the grossest food of love;
The ignorant and vulgar have their share of him:
The poor contented drudge of idle nature;
Cheated of blifs, to be the tool of propagation.
But didst thou know the joys a lover brings,
Thus wouldst thou clasp me in thy willing arms,
And, mad with wild desire, confess [*Embracing her.*
Thou hast been fed, but never knew'st to taste before.

Tam. Strike! strike me deaf, ye gods! O violence
To the ears of virtue!

Xer. Virtue's the bane of blifs; and while it checks
The husband's love, love leaves the lover free.
The miser husband starves a generous flame;
He thinks you lavish, when you most are kind;
And even fears to ask—
What with a loose the happy lover takes.
He's still impatient of unknown delight;
Begs with unsated longings to improve the blifs,
And adds, by asking, to the store of love.
By heav'n, she must be mine! my soul's on fire!
And while I grasp her thus, she must dissolve, or burn!
She melts! she pants! her conscious eyes confess the joy,
And sparkle from her flames within!
The god of love lays prostrate all her charms,
And thus I seize her, yielding to my arms.

[*Eagerly embracing her.*

Tam. Tyrant, 'tis false! I neither melt or burn!
Exerting thus the strength of innocence,
I dash thee from thy lustful hopes for ever!

[*Breaking from him.*

Stand off! approach me not! for if thou dost,
By all the wrongs of my undaunted love,
These hands, resolv'd with horrid force,
Shall tear my guilty eyes away, and dash
The reeking balls upon the ground before thee.

Xer. Why then the spirit ly'd
That said I was deceiv'd in womankind.
I knew my hopes to conquer thee were vain:
I now despair, and that secures my pleasure!

Women that yield to love, or vile reward,
 Are things below the passion of a monarch's soul :
 But she that can, like thee, be deaf to power,
 To conquering love, yet bear the rack for love,
 She is, indeed, a banquet for the gods !
 I'll be their taster now——

And serve up in ravishment to them.
 Hadst thou submitted to my eager love,
 Perhaps in heat of blood I had enjoy'd thee,
 And after left thee like a common thing,
 Despis'd and hated for thy easy giving.

Tam. O happy thought ! he teaches me to 'scape him !
 Forgive me, love, if now I seem the thing
 That love should most abhor. [*Afide.*

Xer. Now, where's that hand will hurt those beaute-
 ous eyes ? [*Seizing her hands.*

Strive not, nor think thy cries can move ! yet do !
 Resist me still ! still curse my hated flame !
 'Twill burn the fiercer, when oppos'd :
 Methinks thou art not cold, as I could wish.
 By heav'n, I'll grind thy sullen hate to love,
 And glut my vengeance with abhorr'd possession.

Tam. And why abhorr'd ? [*Smiling.*

Can there be horror in so sweet a pleasure ?
 Can force be needful to the yielding fair ?
 I find you think me, what I seem'd, all ice !
 Ah ! little, little do you know of womankind !
 Our lives, our thoughts, our very souls are love !
 Our tears are softness, and our coyness, fear ;
 Our frowns affected, and our smiles decoying ;
 Our hearts are tender, and our tongues belie 'em ;
 Our wishes secret, and our eyes betray 'em ;
 We must be cruel, e'er we can be kind ;
 And use resistance to be more desired :
 But when our cruelty has done its part,
 And kindly prov'd how ill the wretch can bear,
 Then ! then ! our joy's secure——A look can cure
 despair ! [*Looks wantonly on him.*

Xer. Amazement !

Tam. You thought, perhaps, because I bore the rack,
 That I could only bear a husband's love ?

Alas ! I suffer'd that in spite to you,
 Not love to him ; for you were then my foe !
 My interest brib'd me there to suffer :
 My stolen pleasures now are all secure,
 The rack has fix'd my reputation fair,
 It now shines out with such a glaring light,
 It blinds the eyes of jealousy.
 By heav'n I know, were you unkind or base,
 And shou'd divulge the joys I now resolve to give,
 (So fair my honour stands) it wou'd not be believ'd.

Xer. Nay, then the spirit did not lie : For I
 Confess, I'm now deceiv'd in womankind.

Tam. And why deceiv'd ?
 Cou'd you believe these eyes, the stars of love,
 Were fix'd ? not planets wand'ring round the world,
 To search and taste of sweet variety ?
 A husband's love ! Perish the stupid wretch,
 Whose heart once fir'd, seeks not to burn for ever :
 And has a husband fuel to maintain the flame ?
 I ne'er could find it so. For me ! I own,
 An hundred eager lovers have supply'd his room ;
 Youths form'd to melt, and charm a woman's heart :
 While he abroad has fought his country's cause,
 I've still been raising love recruits at home.

Xer. By all my hopes, a strumpet !

Tam. But all the conquests that my eyes have won,
 Are poor and low, compar'd to you : To make
 The monarch of the world despair and weep !
 Is something sure beyond the power of love :
 It prides my soul, to think my frowns have force,
 And charms me now, to dress my heart in smiles.

Xer. Thy frowns were smiles to me ; thy smiles are
 common :

A monarch cannot feed on what has pall'd his slaves.

Tam. You seem uneasy, Sir ; permit me touch your hand,
 To taste your kisses ! Now you're grown so cold !

Xer. Gods ! That a strumpet cou'd appear so chaste !
 Why did I form such monstrous hopes, to taste
 A woman's virtue !——'Tis notion all !
 Lewdness and life are what they take together.

Tam. And why ! Is that a name to fright you ?

Why did you woo, unless to win my love?
How cou'd I yield, unless I turn'd a wanton?

Xer. But thou'rt so foul, I loathe thee:
With looser beauties to delight my blood,
Such as will sell their honour for a price,
I'm hourly serv'd, and pall'd! 'Tis vulgar! No!
My hope was here——

To taste thy beauty and thy virtue too:
But know, that royal appetite's above
The handled offals of a common love:
Thy virtue tainted, thou hast lost thy charms;
I now condemn you to your husband's arms:
But since thy lust my furious love has tam'd,
As a reward, take all my guards inflam'd;
Or if they fail to slack thy loose desire,
So I am free, set all the world on fire. [Exit Xer.]

Tam. Gods! Can it be? Is then the face of vice
So loathsome, ev'n to the vicious?
Triumph, you guardian powers of virtue!
And let your care of innocence this day,
To your eternal glory be recorded;
For this escape shall tell the world a tale,
To make your precepts more ador'd than ever.
The looser beauties now shall blush to hear,
In what disgrace their lewd embraces are.
A tyrant lustful, and debauch'd with power,
In search of bliss, an humble passion wore,
Conceal'd his lust, his slighted crown threw by,
And only hop'd from love's authority:
But when he found his subtlest art was vain,
Unveil'd his soul, and shew'd the brute again.
The trembling nymph inspir'd, for succour flies
To loose desire, safe in that foul disguise;
She palls his flame; he starts, and dooms her back
To all that life can give, or happy lovers take. [Exit.]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

S C E N E, *the Palace.**Enter Xerxes, attended.*

X E R X E S.

THRO' all the unmeasur'd bounds of wild delight,
 I never yet cou'd taste substantial joy,
 Or know one pleasure more than common men.
 If I indulge my appetite, I'm cloy'd;
 Uneasy now with what I lately long'd for:
 If when my blood is high, I taste of beauty,
 I lose the bliss, because my power commands:
 The peasant there takes more delight than I,
 That travels thro' despair to sweet possession.
 When, deaf to injuries, I make my way
 Thro' others ruin,
 Stern conscience stops me short, and will be heard,
 She keeps me waking, when the world's at rest,
 And stuffs my pillow with a thousand thorns! [*A shout.*
 Ha! what mean those shouts! they sound a mutiny!

Enter Cleontes hastily.

Cleo. Arm! arm, my lord! the city's in a tumult;
Aranthes, having forc'd the prison gates,
 Has freed *Mardonius* from the dungeon,
 Who drags his chains along the crowded streets,
 And calls 'em brave rewards for loyalty.

Xer. Insulting traitor!

Cleo. Another party here produc'd a rack,
 Stain'd with the blood of fair *Tamira's* wounds!
 Here in another place,
 Three dead virgins, whom you had lately ravish'd,
 In spiteful pomp were carry'd round the streets,
 To turn the people's hearts against you;
 And I much fear, their fury will be fatal.

Xer. Meet they no opposition?
The magistrates, do they stand idle?

Cleo. They're out indeed; but shew an hollow-
hearted power,
Unarm'd, and unresolv'd to quell 'em:
'Tis said that *Artabanus* too,
Is raising friends to join 'em.

Xer. Let him, *Mardonius*, and *Aranthes* be proscrib'd,
Set on each head an hundred talents:
Mean while, to make the rabble ours, let 'em
Have leave to plunder every rebel's house,
Then set 'em all on fire.
If children, wife, or servant there have shelter,
Let none escape, but bury all in flames.
Alarm the guards! bar up the palace gates, and follow
me. [Exit.

The SCENE changes to the City.

*Enter Mardonius in chains, Arantes bearing his sword,
Magistrates and People shouting.*

Aran. Fellows in arms, and you my friends of peace,
Both equally oppress'd beneath a tyrant's yoke,
Behold our liberty in chains;
This loyal arm and head bufied in wounds,
And watching for our country's peace and honour,
Half-starv'd, and fetter'd like a common traitor;
Unask'd, and unadvis'd of you, have we presum'd
(Presuming first, you'd not condemn the action)
To force the prison, and set free this man,
Free from a tyrant's power, but still in chains:
If you pronounce 'em worthily put on,
Him, and his sword to your discretion we surrender,
To arm, to execute, or free himself and you.
Is it your will he be remanded back,
To end his life in shameful bonds?
Or shall he take that sword, inur'd to action,
And lead you forth to brave revenge, and liberty?

People. Arm him! arm him! Liberty! liberty! &c.

[*They give him the sword, and unbind him.*

Mar. If supple words,
 My noble countrymen, must speak my thanks,
 I shall appear ungrateful for this trust repos'd :
 If blows have eloquence, I'll be a talker :
 Let it suffice, that I am free and arm'd.
 Not my own wrongs, but yours shall edge my sword ;
 Your liberties infrin'g'd, your rights destroy'd,
 Your ancient glory sunk in sloth and tyranny ;
 Your ransack'd houses, and exhausted treasure,
 Your tender virgins, and your wives deflower'd,
 The public wrongs, and poor *Tamira's* rack,
 Are stings too venom'd, not to swell resentment,
 Ev'n to your wishes height ! Once more, I'm yours ;
 Let heav'n but smile, tho' *Persia's* head lie low,
 I've yet an arm to ward the tyrant's blow.

Omnes. Liberty, &c.

Enter an Officer and four Soldiers of Artabanus' party.

Offic. Here, gentlemen ;
 Place yourselves at the corner of this street,
 While I go privately to the house ;
 If we can bring his lady safely to him,
 He'll not be wanting to reward our care. [A shout.]
 Hark ! the tumult's near us !
 Ha ! what means yon glaring light !—It seems some fire !
 By heav'n ! the house of *Artabanus* all in flames !
 Nay, 'tis the same ! I know it by the portal ! look !
 Look ! how the rabble scramble for the plunder ?
 What thankless care they take to save
 The plate and furniture ! See ! how some venture
 Burning, to be rogues, and yet would tremble
 Should an honest cause require 'em.

Rabble, within. Away with her, &c.

1st Sold. And see the torrent rowls this way.

Offic. Ha ! by heav'n, the lady too ! *Tamira*
 And her child rudely dragg'd along the streets,

(Within.) Away with her ! to the palace ! to the king !
 away with her !

1st Sold. What's to be done ? We are no number to
 oppose 'em.

Offic. Let us run back to *Artabanus*, and if

Possible, bring him down to her relief,
Before they carry her to the king! Run,
They are upon us.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter Tamira plunder'd, her hair and cloaths disorder'd;
the Rabble with her Child, she striving to recover it.*

Tam. O barbarous, cruel men!
If ye are men, be touch'd with human pity;
If you seek blood, take mine, but spare
That harmless babe! Tear not my heart-strings from me!
You once were young and innocent yourselves,
And now, perhaps, have children of your own.
O! could you bear to see 'em torn by cruel hands
From off their tender mother's breasts?
Wou'd it not make you bleed, and tear your hair,
And pierce the heav'n's with your shrieking sorrows?
1 Rab. Come! I say, give her the child, it has done us
No harm, and will do us no good.

2 Rab. The child's my lawful plunder, and I'll keep it.

Tam. [*Kneeling.*] Dear Sir, you look with eyes of
mercy on me;

If you have power, command; if pity, speak him fair;
So, at your latest hour, may you sweet mercy find
Of heav'n, as now you shew it me.
But see; his bloody arm is rais'd! O stop [*She rises.*]
The fatal blow! O hold! for pity hold!
See, Sir, I've that will charm you to compassion;
This diamond—— [*Takes it from her bosom.*]

2 Rab. Ay! that diamond——

Tam. The first dear pledge of my unhappy love,
To save a more endearing one;
Weeping I bestow you: 'Tis all i' th' world
Of value I have left me:
And were I starving now for want of food,
If this were only left to feed me, wou'd I starve,
So much beyond my life I prize its worth!
But, oh! so far beyond 'em both I love my child.

2 Rab. Ay! now I feel the woman! let's see the ring.

Tam. Here, gentle Sir, and with it take
Ten thousand prayers——Sir——

2 *Rab.* You must have no child, till I have such another diamond.

Tam. By all my woes, I am a beggar!
You cannot be so cruel to refuse me now;
Believe me! search! take all! strip me
To pinching cold, to every thing but shame.
Tear off this idle robe, it misbecomes me,
While that tender infant needs it.

3 *Rab.* Pshaw! away with her! must we stand to hear
A woman prate?

2 *Rab.* Ay! ay! away with her! &c.

Tam. My child! O savage creatures!

[*Catching at the fellow, she falls on the ground.*

Om. To the king! to the palace! away with her.

Tam. Ha? the king! not all your force shall drag me;
Thus will I dash the ground, and tear a passage
To escape him! fierce thunder strike me to the grave!
Gape earth, and take me living down to horror!
Torments! any hell! but life and shame! O!

Om. Drag her! away with her, &c.

[*They drag her by the hair.*

Tam. O cruel! cruel men! [As they are going off.

Enter Mardonius, Arantes, and their party.

Mar. What means this strange disorder, friends?
Why swarm you thus like angry bees unhiv'd,
That sting in wild revenge or friend or foe?
Is it because you want a head to lead you?
Or do you blindly serve a tyrant's will?
Why is this woman rudely drag'd along?

[*They loose her, as half afraid.*

Tam. Relieve me, heav'n!

Mar. Now, by my soul! the fair *Tamira*. Help ho!

Tam. Protect me, brave *Mardonius*. [*They raise her.*

Mar. Protect! yes, and revenge thee too—Villains!

Tam. Hold! I conjure you, hold—Good Sir, be mild,
And speak 'em fair, or that revenge
May cost me dearer than my life—my child!

Mar. Ha! forego the infant, slaves!

Or by the lifted fury of this arm——

Tam. Oh! do not fright 'em, Sir! see! they're merciful

And kind! they will not hurt the babe!

[*They set down the child, which runs into her arms.*]

Mar. Whence comes this insolence, you hounds!
You hungry yelping curs, that run at all,
Whence mischief cries halloo!

Is innocence your game? Hence! to your kennels, dogs!

Om. Fly! fly! &c. [Beats 'em off.]

Aran. Let 'em run on, they are not worth pursuit;
Their fear will soon disperse 'em.

Tam. But where's my lord, my *Artabanus*, Sir?
Why is it he's not with you?

Mar. Having expected him ere this to join us,
We sent to know th' occasion of his delay,
And every moment wait his answer.

Aran. And see, Sir, the messenger is return'd.

Enter an Officer.

Mar. Now! Have you seen the general?

Offic. My lord, I found him posted on a little hill
Without the city;

From whence, enrag'd, he saw his house in flames,
And led his men with fury down to join you:

As he was marching on,
An officer (whom just before h' had sent

To find, and bring his lady to him)
With breathless haste inform'd him, that the rabble
Were that very moment dragging her to the palace:

At this he trembled, and his lips grew pale;

But on a sudden, starting from the fit,
He march'd his numbers in disorder'd haste,

Strait on to th' palace, resolving there
To force the guards, to die, or rescue her;

And this delays him, Sir.

Mar. I'll-tim'd and dangerous error!

But haste! away again, and tell him
His *Tamira's* safe with me—If he shou'd force

The guards, he runs into the jaws of death.

Tam. O! fly before the danger meets him. [*Ex. Off.*]

Mar. Some on before to stop the fire!

Tamira be your care, *Aranthes*,
While I with these march on to his assistance.

[*Exit Tam. and Aran.*]

Enter a second Officer, wounded.

Offic. Arm! arm!

Mar. How now, foldier? What mean these wounds?

Offic. My lord, they faintly speak our general's danger.

Mar. Where is he?

Offic. This moment storming at the palace-gate;
I left him there demanding his *Tamira*,
And threat'ning, if refus'd, to bury it in ashes:
At which the king, in mad revenge, grown desperate,
Threw him an handkerchief distain'd with blood,
And cry'd, take there! there's all that's left
Of thy *Tamira* now, the rest of her is cold.
Swell'd with that fight, he flew with fury on the guards;
And now, impatient of revenge, like wildfire, throws
Destruction round him for a time;
But must at last expire, and let his curious foes
With safe amazement, view the wond'rous shell that
held it.

Alas! I fear you'll be too late: But yet
There's hope in haste, my lord, to stem this flood of ruin.

Mar. O fatal error! on to the palace! march!

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, *the Palace.*

*An alarm is heard, several run o'er the stage, and
Xerxes in disorder.*

Omn. Fly! fly! they are ent'ring! they are upon us:
Fly!

[*Exeunt.*]

Xer. Confusion! How the slaves forsake me!
'They've caught me in the snare! nor can I 'scape 'em
now.

Let 'em go all! I'll stand the shock alone!

The fearful stag at bay will fight,
Will die reveng'd upon his hunters;

And the fierce lion's wilder in the toil:

Shall danger shake a monarch's soul?
 Now by my crown's right, royal majesty,
 I will not fall! What, ho! my beaver, slaves!
 I'll put the godhead on, and destiny
 Shall tear her idle scrolls of fate decreed;
 For she has written false of me! I will not die,
 Nor shall my foes have power to face me!
 Thus with this awful front,
 I'll look the raging god within, [Shout and clashing.
 And frown 'em into fear!—Thou pale-fac'd slave!

Enter a soldier.

Sold. My lord, your guards are half destroy'd,
 The rest revolted all to *Artabanus*,
 Who, like a deluge, with his force comes rowling in:

Xer. Let him rowl on!

He meets a rock will stand unmov'd his roar,
 And dash him into dew. [Shout again.

Enter Artabanus, pressing back his followers.

Art. On pain of death, let no man follow me!

Xer. How darest thou, slave,
 With that rebellious face, confront thy king,
 Or tempt the vengeance of a waking deity?

Art. When kings are cast in moulds divine,
 We find their actions great and pitiful:
 Pity's the noblest composition of a god.
 But thou hast none! No soft compassion ever touch'd
 thee.

Tygers and wolves, to thee, are tame! See here,
 [The handkerchief.

The rueful flag proclaims thee worse than tyrant:
 Or, if a nearer name can reach thee——devil!

Xer. Traitor——

Art. From any mouth but thine, wou'd shock my
 soul.

Or, if I am a traitor,
 Ev'n those just powers that gave me virtue,
 When they behold the wrongs that rais'd my arm,
 Will sure allow, I was not prompt to ill,
 Not easily disloyal——My virtue did its part:

If held, it struggled stoutly to be tame.
 But here's a force would break the strongest hold,
 And turn ev'n pity to revenge and rage.
 If yet the horror of the deed
 Has left thee temper, speak! What had the poor
Tamira done, to merit such a death?
 Why hast thou kill'd——

The tenderest mother, and the softest wife?

Xer. But that I know to say, will gall thy heart,
 I'd spurn thee, traitor, for this bold demand;
 Daring to ask a reason of thy monarch's will:
 But, as a god, to thunder-strike thy soul,
 I tell thee, slave, I whor'd her to a disliking,
 And then she was unfit for life:
 Nor cou'd I brook to let her live for thee,
 After the stamp of royal love was on her.

Art. O savage! bloody tyrant! The horror of his
 words
 Has numb'd my senses, and drown'd my weak revenge
 in tears.

Xer. Now by my glorious brother in the skies,
 My words have more than power of common kings;
 They're something near! 'Tis second fate
 To strike this hardy soldier pale with fear!
 He weeps! he dies!—I've look'd him to a ghost!

Art. And art thou dead! Our infant-love for ever
 parted!

—No more of woman now—Farewel!

Nor need I this to dry my tears,
 The thirst of vengeance rages in my blood,
 And drinks 'em faster than they flow——
 Hear, hear me, gods! Revenge your heads prophan'd;
 And as the cause, the woeful cause, is yours, [*Kneels.*
 So from this arm (your not unwilling instrument)
 Hurl swift destruction to the tyrant's heart—

Xer. I laugh at all that fate can do! Come on, rash
 fool!

And if thy life's a pain, (as, sure, a rebel's ought,)
 Thus hand to hand oppos'd, death never took
 A nobler form to face thee——

Art. Now, by the sun's refulgent ray,

I meet thee worthy of my rage.
 Oh! I could thank thee that thy blood's so high:
 That manly fury in thy eyes transports me!
 It sets the noble front of honour in my view,
 And heightens my revenge with glory.

[*They fight; and, after passes, Xerxes speaks.*

Xer. Confusion! How he dallies with my fury!
 But thus I pour it all at once,
 And certain send thee to the shades.

Art. And thus the gods repay thee—— [Both fall.

Xer. Furies! and hell! They've struck me now indeed!

But if there be hereafter, I'll revenge it still:
 Rebellion from the lowest shades shall rise,
 And give 'em fresh alarms of war,
 More dreadful than their puny giants rage:
 The desperate fiends, by me to freedom led,
 Shall dash their chains against their crystal tow'rs,
 And shake their heav'n to horror!—Oh! I am faint!
 My gushing blood flows inward to my throat,
 And drives out life before it! Ha! 'tis false!
 I am not dying! No! I'm weary of the world,
 And now will sleep for ever!——

Art. When I behold this fight, I wish to follow thee;
 Death cannot be more terrible;
 His hand is on me, and his looks are mild.
 To be no more, is now to be most happy.
 Oh, for a friendly witness of my glory! Hark!
 My fortune's kind, I hear 'em coming! [A trumpet.

Enter Mardonius and his party.

Oh! welcome friend! My fellow-soldiers, welcome!
 See there the wounds of *Persia* cur'd, the tyrant's dead:
 By me he fell, and poor *Tamira* is reveng'd.

Mar. Horror! on horror! Thy *Tamira* lives!
 And comes with eager love to meet thy arms:
 Oh! rather had she died, than thus to meet thee!

Art. What means my friend! *Tamira* living!

Mar. Run! haste, and tell her of this bloody chance!
 If she would see her husband, she must fly. [Exit a soldier.
 Alas, my friend! That gory handkerchief

Was only by the tyrant thrown to gall thee :
 Thy poor *Tamira* lives ! This moment dragg'd along
 By the rude rabble, I redeem'd her safe.
 But hark ! *Aranthes* brings her on ! He faints !

[*A trumpet at a distance.*

O cruel ! gods ! can you not lend one hour
 To a departing lover !

Art. Grieve not for me ! Give to my wife thy tears ;
 She'll need a friend's compassion : Let not her sorrows
 (For I know she'll mourn my fall) be desperate :
 Her little infant will require some care ;
 I charge her, live for that——
 Commend me to her heart, and let her know,
 My latest dying words, and thoughts,
 Confess'd her loving, more than life belov'd——[*Dies.*

Mar. He's gone ! O freedom dearly bought,
 Unwelcome peace ! Without the life that gave it.
 But see, his frightened widow comes ! O mournful thought !
 O piteous woman !

Enter Arantes, with Tamira : She runs to the body.

Tam. Where ! where's my bleeding lord ? Stand off !
 O give him to my arms ! Ha !—Speechless and pale !
 Oh !

Aran. Help ho ; she sinks ! let's raise her from him.

Tam. Oh ! we must never part,
 But with more pain than bodies lose their souls.
 Dear Sir, for pity's sake oppose me not :
 Ev'n in your eyes I read a friend's concern ;
 But mine's a nearer tie ! a wife ! Alas !
 I was his wife, his tender wife belov'd.

Mar. Indeed, I pity thee : But yet, call reason to thy
 aid.

Tam. Ah ! do I not, my Lord ? Are not my tears
 my duty ?——

Have I not cause to tear my flesh, to bleed,
 And dash me on the ground ?——
 Oh ! cou'd my tears but fall like showers from heav'n,
 This dismal object, sure, wou'd drown the world.

Mar. Be comforted, fair creature !
 Nothing is ours : Nature but lends us life,

Since death's a debt that all must pay——

Tam. Since he is dead, is there a comfort left me ?
Oh ! I cou'd outweep the southern clouds ? Away,
And give my sorrows room : Stand off !
And let me fill my arms with woe : [*Embracing the body.*
Grudge me not this ! This ease of misery indulg'd,
Let me but talk a while, and gaze, and kifs
His cold, unfeeling lips, and you shall see me quiet ;
Hush'd as the cradle-babe,
When chidden by its angry parent to a slumber.

[*Weeps over him.*

Aran. Give her her way, my lord !
Her grief swells higher when oppos'd.

Mar. By heav'n, this stubborn heart, that has unmov'd
Walk'd by a heap of groaning foes,
At this sad sight is melted down to woman.

Tam. Hush !—Who's that weeps so loud !—You'll
wake my lord.

He is not well,——he slumbers, and a cold,
Damp sweat is on his brow ! O my poor love !
Hark ! hark ! He calls me in his sleep ! He chides ;
Says I am unkind, and fear to follow him !
As if the terror were not in life behind him ! Ha !
What means this friendly weapon at my breast ?
It looks not, sure, as if the hand of chance,
But love had laid it, to relieve my woes !
—'Tis so !—'Twas love ;—and love applies it here !

[*She stabs herself with her husband's sword.*

Aran. O fatal deed !

Mar. O rash despair !

Tam. Call it not rash, when there's such ease in death.
But death, alas ! is never wholly kind ;
For, tho' I'm pleas'd to think I had not power
T' outlive my lord ; yet, Oh ! it grieves my heart
That I have robb'd an infant of its mother.
Oh ! be a friend to that ; and teach him, Sir,
To keep the middle paths of active life.
When wild ambition, or too powerful love,
With eager heat would drive him blindly on ;
Be kind, and warn him with his parents' ruin.

[*Dies.*

Mar. There broke

The tenderest heart that ever sigh'd in love :
 But love was her undoing ; for once,
 In wild revenge, to right her love betray'd,
 She struck a poniard to the villain *Memnon's* heart.
 The gods have frown'd ; but men must pity her :
 Nay, heav'n but half resents her faults, gives her
 A kind, a not-untimely death : 'Twas then
 Too late to live, when all she lov'd was gone.
 Remove the bodies, never more to part :
 Living, one chaste bed ; now one grave shall hold 'em.

[Turning to Xerxes.

But here, the gods with terror strike mankind ;
 Let kings and jarring subjects hence be warn'd,
 Not to oppress, or drive revenge too far :
 Kings are but men, and men by nature err ;
 Subjects are but men, and cannot always bear. }
 Much shou'd be born before revenge is sought :
 Ever revenge on kings is dearly bought.
 Yet, to our woes, the gods this comfort give ;
 From those that die, the living learn to live.

END OF XERXES.



VENUS AND ADONIS.

A

M A S Q U E.

A N D

M Y R T I L L O.

A

PASTORAL INTERLUDE.



Dramatis Personæ.

Venus.

Mrs. Barbier.

Adonis.

Mrs. Marg. de L'Epine.

Mars.

Mr. Blackly.

Chorus of Huntsmen.

SCENE, in the Idalian Woods.

P R E F A C E.

*T*HE following entertainment is an attempt to give the town a little good music in a language they understand: For no theatrical performance can be absolutely good, that is not proper; and how can we judge of its propriety, when we know not one word of the voice's meaning? But perhaps this is not all that the Italian language has of late impos'd upon us; most of our Operas being (if possible) as miserably void of common sense in their original, as the translation: Nay, the tyranny is carried yet farther; for the songs are so often turn'd out of their places, to introduce some absurd favourite air of the singer, that in a few days the first book you have bought, is reduc'd to little more than the title-page of what it pretends to; and as it now stands, the whole entertainment seems to be dwindled into a concert of instruments; for a voice that is not understood, has in reality no more meaning than the fiddle that plays to it: And thus, by slavishly giving up our language to the despotic power of sound only, we are so far from establishing theatrical music in England, that the very exhibition or silence of it seems entirely to depend upon the arrival or absence of some eminent foreign performer. By this sort of conduct, the vast sums that have been levied for the support of it, have only ended in its abuse and prostitution. And (though the insolent charms of the Opera seem to be above it) why should we suppose that a little plain sense should do music any more harm, than virtue does a

beautiful woman? And 'tis but a melancholy proof of its power, that it has been so long able to keep nonsense in countenance.

It is therefore hoped, that this undertaking, if encourag'd, may in time reconcile music to the English tongue. And, to make the union more practicable, it is humbly mov'd, that it may be allow'd a less inconvenience, to hear the performer express his meaning with an imperfect accent, than in words, that (to an English audience) have no meaning at all: And at worst, it will be an easier matter to instruct two or three performers in tolerable English, than to teach a whole nation Italian.

After having said so much of its absurdities, it will be but just to allow the excellencies of the Italian composition; the manner of it being indisputably superior to all nations for a theatre: And 'tis hoped this entertainment will want nothing of the Italian, but the language.

VENUS and ADONIS.

FIRST INTERLUDE.

Adonis entering from a wood.

ADONIS.

HAIL! bright *Aurora!* blushing maid,
Life-giving goddess, hail!
What mortal would dissolve in sleep,
And lose the rising views
Which thy creating beams present!
O! how transporting 'tis, to see
Thy glories chase the shades,
And gild the globe anew?
See! how the mountains raise their heads
In purple hue before thee!
The verdant vallies and the meads
Forsake their misty beds,
And dress their beauties, to adore thee.

*How pleasant is ranging the fields,
When we mount with our hounds in the morning?
What spirit the exercise yields!
When we hollow,
And follow
The scent ever burning?
How pleasant, &c.*

Venus descends from her chariot.

But soft! What nymph is this?
Whose gaudy form and dress

Seem rather of a court,
Than of the rural sport ?

Ven. *Ah! sweet Adonis, form'd for joy!*

Ah! blooming lovely boy,

Have pity on a goddess' pain:

Since gods themselves have sigh'd for me,

Ah! let not Venus sigh for thee,

Dear charming youth, in vain.

Ah! sweet Adonis, &c.

Adon. O! bounteous goddess! you misplace

The blessings you on me bestow;

My joy is only in the chace,

I to Diana's altar bow.

With her alone I'll live and die,

But love shall ever fly:

Yet when the game is chac'd in view,

Like lightning I pursue.

With her alone, &c.

Your leave, bright goddess——

Ven. ————— [Going.
Hold!

I've more to say——

Adon. ————— The morning's cold,
Beside; the sport expects me——

Ven. ————— Where?

Adon. In yonder vale——

Ven. ————— Ah! do not fear:
Stay and improve thy pastime here.

Swain, thy foolish sports give over,

Joys immortal thou shalt find:

Sweeter pleasures you'll discover,

When the queen of beauty's kind.

Swain, &c.

Adon. In vain of love you praise the joy

To an unskilful beardless boy;

I've heard men talk of sighs and kisses,

But can't imagine where the bliss is:

Then I am too young to be deceiv'd,

And you too fair to be believ'd.

Ven. Who could deceive such blooming charms?
Or after thine, seek other arms?

Adon. Nor truth nor beauty touch my sense,
For I am all indifference.

*Cease your vain teasing,
Love is unpleasing,
No heart shall brave me,
Mine is my own:
Why should a creature,
Weaker by nature,
Think to enslave me
With smile or frown?
Cease, &c.*

Ven. Ah! *Venus* lost! thy charms no more,
Let flatt'ring gods pretend t'adore;
In vain they stile me bright, and fair,
While of a mortal I despair:
No! no! my folly soon shall cease,
Revenge or pride shall give me ease.

*Cupid! Cupid! bend thy bow,
Revenge! revenge thy mother's pain:
Let his heart my torment know,
What 'tis to love, and love in vain.*

Alas! alas! it will not be!
The more I struggle to be free,
The more I gall me with the chain,
And but increase my pain.

Hunting horns at a distance.

Adon. Hark! how the cheerful horn
Proclaims the wasting morn!
The jolly sportsmen mend their pace,
To the appointed meeting place——

Ven. Curse on those noisy sounds! O stay!

Adon. I cannot lose the sport, and must away.]

Ven. Hast thou no sense of what I bear,
My pains nor pleasures wilt thou share?

Adon. Forbear! forbear thy vain embrace,

If thou with me wilt pleasure share,
Tie up thy robes, and ringlet hair,
And follow to the chase.

*How silly's the heart of a woman,
When courted by many, to fly?
But when she is follow'd by no man,
For one she will languish and die:*

*Beguiling,
And smiling,
Now coying,
Then toying,
She'll her fancy pursue;
Designing,
Or whining,
She'll vex ye,
Perplex ye,
And all that pursue her, undo.*

How silly, &c.

Ven. Such scorn and insult can I bear?
But hold! from far
I see the jealous god of war;
Some other hour I must employ
To melt this frozen boy.
Well! cold *Adonis!* since the charms
Of rural sports
(Tho' *Venus* courts)
Must snatch thee from my arms;
Yet, ere we part,
Bid me farewell, and ease my heart.

[Air in two parts.]

Adon. Farewel, *Venus!* Welcome pleasure!
I must to the groves away.

Ven. Dear *Adonis!* O my treasure,
I could here for ever stay.

Adon. When my sporting knows no measure,
I think what joy it is to me:

Ven. When thy sporting gives thee leisure,
I think I languish here for thee. [Ex. severally.]

SECOND INTERLUDE.

SCENE, *the side of a large wood.*

MARS alone.

FROM war's alarms,
 To shady groves retir'd;
 Behold the god of arms,
 By softer charms inspir'd,
 Bids all imperial discord cease,
 To taste superior joys in peace.

*Beauty now alone shall move him,
 Mars shall know no joy but love;
 Let the wiser gods reprove him,
 Tender wishes,
 Melting kisses,
 Mutual blisses,
 Beauty charming,
 Love alarming,
 Raise the soul to joys above.*

Down to these woods descending,
Venus oft beguiles the day,
 And to be follow'd, sure, intending,
 When she sends her doves away:
 Then softly tread this pathless cover,
 And bless the hero in the lover.

[*Exit.*

Adonis from another wood, with Huntsmen.

Adon. No more! no more!
 Your fruitless toil give o'er,
 Our sport is cross:
 Was ever day so lost?

Call in the hounds that stand at gaze,
The morrow's morn may mend our chace.

[*Exeunt huntsmen.*]

Come, sweet repose, thou welcome guest,
Laborious pleasures call for rest.

[*He lays himself on a bank.*]

*Gentle slumbers life relieving,
Lull my senses, unperceiving,
Give my toils their due repose:
Wasted spirits every creature
Must supply, and weary nature
Will our drooping eyelids close.*

[*Sleeps.*]

Venus enters, not seeing him.

Ven. This way the jolly huntsmen's hollow
Bids the wand'ring *Venus* follow:
Let *Mars* the woodlands beat in vain,
While I pursue my lovely swain—
And see! ye powers! my charmer's found
In envy'd sleep's embraces bound!
O that the circling seas would ever
This grove from all approaches sever!
Since tend'rest touching may awake my boy,
Ah! softly, gently let me steal the joy.

[*Kisses him.*]

Around thee let the warbling choir
In melting notes soft dreams of love inspire.

*Chirping warblers,
Tune your voices inspiring;
All the passion of Venus desiring;
Let your music
In dreams warm a lover,
Whom awaking,
My heart must give over.*

But soft! he moves, a while retire;—
Ah! catch him, love,

And flatt'ring echo fan the kindling fire. [*She retires.*]

Adon. What soft'ning sounds my senses charm!
And with unusual joys alarm!

[*Echo.*] ————— Unusual joys alarm.

Adon. O tell me! tell me, ye melodious choir,
What gives my heart this soft unknown desire?

[*Echo.*] ————— Unknown desire.

Adon. What voice is that? Who is't o'erhears me?

[*Echo.*] ————— O! hear me?

Adon. Some fairy, fure, or phantom near me!

[*Echo.*] ————— Come near me!

Adon. I'll try, if yet again 'twill answer.

[*Echo.*] ————— 'Twill answer.

Adon. O sweet delusion! to my sense unfold thee:
If thou art real, let my eyes behold thee.

[*Venus appearing.*] ————— Behold me!

Adon. Celestial *Venus!* [*Surpriz'd.*

Ven. ————— O my love!

Once more I come my fate to prove.

Adon. Ah! goddess, you have kill'd your boy!

It must be love has touch'd my heart,

Such pain is in the joy,

Such pleasure in the smart:

Too late I now my folly see,

And ask that pity which you begg'd of me.

Ven. What heart could now refuse thee,

My dearest only soul's desire?

My passion knows no measure:

O! may the circling pleasure

But with the world expire!

Adon. What mean these fears?

Ven. Ah! ruin'd! lost!

See where the jealous *Mars* appears:

'Tis he! 'Tis he!

And this way seems to bend him!

Adon. What if it be?

Adonis never did offend him.

Ven. Here! here, my lovely boy,

Unseen, secure, repose thee,

While from his jealous eye

These bending boughs enclose thee.

[*Adonis* lies down, while she hides him with the boughs.

Enter Mars to her.

Mars. Thus the brave from war returning,
With the tend'rest passion burning,
Fly with joy to fold the fair;
Not all heroes fam'd in story,
Nor their triumphs, or their glory,
Can their joys with mine compare.

Ven. Ah! cruel *Mars*! forbear! forbear!
My yielding weakness to ensnare:
Too much of guilty love I've known,
And must for follies past atone.

Mars. What means this cold reluctance? Why
Does beauty's queen her hero fly? }

Ven. In vain you ask; for now I must deny.

Mars. No more! no more!
These female arts give o'er:
Some lurking god usurps my right;
On that, on that pretence you're coy:
Since I no more can give delight,
I will my rival's bliss destroy.

Where have you hid this minion! Where?

Ven. Ah! don't disturb the child! forbear,
'Tis poor sick *Cupid* just laid down to rest,
And his disorder has my mind oppress;
Else I with joy had met my *Mars*,
But how can beauty smile in tears?

Mars. Was that the cause then?

Ven. —————'Twas no more;
For know, I still my *Mars* adore:
In yonder crystal fountain strait,
(Where now my busy nymphs await)
I first will bathe,—then meet my love,
Kind as his wishes in yon myrtle grove.

Mars. Forgive my jealousy——

Ven. —————Away;
We soon will meet, and bless the day.

Mars. Farewel, my fair.

Ven. —————Nay haste.——

Mars. —————Farewel.

Ven. He's gone: What tongue my joy can tell?

Mars. [*Apart.*] So coy, and kind for slender reason,
Speaks my presence out of season!
Behind this cover undiscern'd,
This female secret may be learn'd. [*He retires.*]

Ven. Arise! Arise! Come forth, my love,
Our dread surprize is over;
Thy rival's shifted to the myrtle grove,
Like a believing lover.

Why droops my boy? *Mars* has not seen us:
Suff'ers thy fears.

Mars. ————O, constant *Venus*! [*Behind.*]

Adon. ————Ah! goddess! now no more thou'rt fair;
Thy charms adorn'd with truth
Might have subdu'd my youth,
But falsehood never shall my heart ensnare.

Ven. ————O, my love, more pity shew!
Is it a crime in me,
If I abandon *Mars* for thee?

Adon. ————On *Mars* alone your vows bestow.

*On love what greater curse can fall,
Than loving one that can't be true?
The wanton heart, that's kind to all,
With endless anguish we pursue.*

Horns and voices at a distance.

[*Within.*] Hark! Hark! *Adonis*, hark away!

Ven. Thus, thus in love's embraces bound. ————

[*Holding him.*]

Adon. No, no, the boar is found,
Nor will I longer stay. ———— [*Going.*]

Mars. Hold; traitor! take thy just reward!
[*Mars offering to kill Adonis.*]

Ven. Ah, me! ————This bosom is his guard.

[*Interposing.*]

Adon. [*Kneeling.*] Hold! hold, dread *Mars*! on me let all
Your furious vengeance fall;
I cannot see
A goddess bleed for me:
If blood alone
Can cure your jealousy,
Adonis is the cause of all.

Mars. O perjur'd Venus! False as fair!

Ven. O kind Adonis!—O despair!

Adon. Are these the pleasures lovers share?

[All repeat the three last lines in chorus.]

Mars. It must, it shall be so;

'Twere poor, myself to give the blow: [Apart.

Adonis, hence; but range these woods no more:

I'll leave my vengeance to the boar. [Aside.

Adon. With pleasure I obey thy power. [Ex. Adon.

Mars. O fading joy! Hard-fated love!

What pangs in thee we find?

Shall never faithful passion prove

Fair truth and beauty join'd.

Ven. O! Mars, unkind! Is this thy love?
Must this persuade me to the grove?

Mars. 'Tis poor sick Cupid:—Think on that,
And tremble for thy minion's fate.

Ven. —O! spare the boy, and to restore
Thy peace of mind,
I'll be for ever kind,
And never see Adonis more.

Mars. No! no! I'll never trust thy power.

A I R, in two parts.

Ven. —O! believe me!—

Mars. —————No, no, no!

—————You'll deceive me.

Ven. —————No, no, no!

I shall ever Mars adore.

Mars. I can never trust thee more.

Ven. Ungrateful! I have lov'd thee,
Nor hast thou lov'd in vain.

Mars. Unfaithful I have prov'd thee,
And now will break the chain.

[Ex. Mars.]

Ven. He's gone!—and in his eyes there sat
A menace of *Adonis'* fate!
O, gods! my fears are form'd too late!

Adonis supported by huntsmen, bleeding.

Adon. Ah! goddess, lend thy bounteous aid,
And heal the wounds thy eyes have made:
The jealous *Mars*, provok'd to see
Thy radiant beauty smile on me;
While at the furious beast I struck,
My lance in thousand shivers broke:
Disarm'd, I fell—when lo! the boar
With fatal tusk my bosom tore.

Ven. —O! terror to my eyes!
—O! tyrant jealousy!
Adonis bleeds and dies,
And dies, poor youth! for me.

Adon. O! welcome! welcome! gentle death!
While thus I see
The queen of beauty mourn for me,
With pleasure I resign my breath.—

[Dies.

Ven. He's gone—the fleeting soul is fled!
But leaves his wound with me;
Venus must ever mourn thee dead
In painful immortality.
Why shines the hateful sun,
When such a piteous deed is done?

A short Symphony.

Arise! black storms and tempests, rise!
Deep darkness shade the day!
Loud thunders bellow through the skies,
And forked lightning play.
[It thunders, lightens, and the stage is darken'd.

VENUS *and* ADONIS.

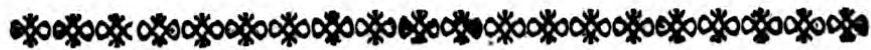
O! pleasing horror!
 O! melodious yell!
 Hark! hark!
 All nature rings with sorrow!
 Poor *Adonis'* knell.

*Let every tender passion feel
 Henceforth, like mine, the lover's bell,
 And make mankind as curst as I:
 Unpity'd sighs, deceitful tears,
 Feuds! falsehood! doubts, and groundless fears,
 For ever mingle with the joy.*
 [*Venus ascends in her chariot,*

Chorus of Huntsmen.

No more let mortal heart
 Of hapless love complain,
 Since gods could never part
 The pleasure from the pain.

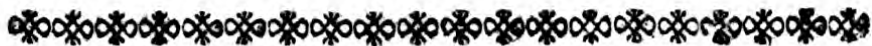
END OF VENUS AND ADONIS.



M Y R T I L L O.

A

PASTORAL INTERLUDE.



K 6

Dramatis Personæ.

Myrtillo.

Mrs. Marg. de L'Epine.

Laura

Mrs. Barbier.

Lycon.

Mr. Birkhead.

Mopsa.

Mrs. Willis.

Chorus of Shepherds.



M Y R T I L L O.

L A U R A, alone.

O LOVE! with what fantastic sway
Thou mak'st poor mortal hearts obey!
I love, and am belov'd again,
Yet treat my lover with disdain.
Whene'er' he's nigh me,
I undo him;
Yet, shou'd he fly me,
Shou'd pursue him.

*Myrtillo, wou'd you woo me?
Love less, lest I despise you:
Or I, tho' 'twou'd undo me,
Shall tantalize you.
When you with pain are dying,
I'm farthest from complying.
Wou'd you secure, or fright me,
Pretend to slight me.*

See where the fullen swain,
Reluctant, drags his chain:
Thy former peace despair to have.
Now help me, female art,
To charm and vex his heart,
And make the rebel more my slave.

Myrtillo comes forward.

Thus seeming careless to repose, *[She lies down.]*
 Uncover'd beauties shall allure him ;
 And, when he's fasten'd in the noose,
 I'll wake surpriz'd,——and not endure him.

A Symphony, with a flute.

*Myr. Help me, love ! I sigh, I die,
 Die, alas ! for one I scorn :
 Vain and fickle tho' I prove her ;
 Tho' pursuing
 Is my ruin,
 'Tis my fate to love her :
 Reason no relief can raise me,
 Love betrays me :
 She was for my torment born.*

See where the lovely tyrant lies !
 Unpointed now,
 And harmless are her eyes.
 But, oh ! what rising charms
 Swell on her breast,
 (Where gods might rest)
 And give my heart a thousand new alarms.

Lau. Myrtillo——

Myr. ——Ha ! she calls ! she dreams.

Lau. O be but thus ! thus ever kind.

Myr. O, gods ! she is not what she seems.

Her heart, her heart's to love inclin'd :
 Sleep on, soft, charming fair, for I
 Yet never knew such waking joy.

*Ne'er let a lover,
 His hope give over,
 For being deny'd ;
 The female rover,
 In pique and pride,
 Her love with scorn will cover :*

*The way to woo her,
Is to pursue her
With flames and vows;
With scorn her scorn oppose.
If she pretend you teaze her,
Seize, and please her.*

Lau. What is't, Myrtillo, turns thy brain?

[Seems surpriz'd.]

Myr. Ah, Laura, I have chang'd my strain,
Nor will I more in sighs complain.
What I have seen and heard just now,
Has taught me thus in smiles to woo.

[Offering to embrace her.]

Lau. And me with smiles to hear thee to.

[Turns away in scorn]

Myr. Laura, your heart's of softer make,
In sleep you're kind, tho' coy awake.

Lau. Know then, deluded wretch, that I
Did but pretend in sleep to lie,
And heard you say,——

For one I scorn, I die.

Myr. You must not mind a hopeless lover;
In rage we often love discover.

Lau. *Ab! no; the proof of love,
Is finding joy in pain:
A tender inclination
Will love, and love in vain.*

Myr. Nothing more wou'd make me tender
Than a hope that you'll surrender.

Lau. Nothing sooner wou'd enrage me.
Than your hoping to engage me.

Myr. The lover that can part with hope,
With ease may give the fair one up.

Lau. To ease you then of all your pain,
Despair, nor see my face again.

Myr. What have I done to merit this?

Lau. What have you done to merit less?

Myr. Oh, injur'd love! my heart relieve,
And tell this tygres, she's unfit to live.

Lau. No, *Cupid*; let him still complain,
'Till he confess the pleasure of the pain.

Myr. *Let me the torment feel
Of rolling stone, or restless wheel:
Let me the worst of tortures prove;
But ease, O ease my heart of love.
More raging pains were never born,
Than unrelenting woman's scorn.*

Lau. O poor unhappy swain——

[*Ironically.*]

Myr. What can the fyren mean?

Lau. O happy Myrtillo,
No more say I slight you;
You truly delight me
While you are in pain:
Your pain is my pleasure,
You please above measure;
The greater my pleasure,
The more you complain.

Myr. Curse on thy false, infidious air!
Is't not enough I feel despair?

Why wilt thou still my heart ensnare?

Lau. Come! come, be cheerful, bear thy fate.

Myr. No more those eyes I'll trust, false fair ingrate,
For ever from thy fatal charms I'll fly,
And the slow cure, or death of absence try:
Hence will I hasten to some dismal cave,
Dark! doleful! joyless as the grave!
Where the sad screech-owl's notes are only heard,
Whence light and comfort are for ever barr'd!
There, pining, waste my days, from insults free,
And die forgotten of the world and thee!

Lau. Oh, stay, *Myrtillo*, and I'll tell thee all.

Myr. Yet I forgive thee, cruel as thou art,

Thou hast undone the tend'rest, constant heart.
Farewel for ever——

Lau. —— Stay!

Myr. —— We must——

Lau. —— We must not part.

*Now you move me
With complaining:
Can you fly me with disdain?
Traitor! go!
You but prove me
With false vows:
Your passion feigning;
Did you love me?
Never! no!*

Myr. O love! to thee for help I fly,
Support my staggering mind:
Less danger's in her cruelty,
Than in her seeming kind.

*What shall an injur'd lover do?
Can I believe her?—No, no, no!
Will it grieve her
If I leave her?—No, no, no!
Shall I on her faith rely?
Or the fair delusion fly?*

Lau. —— O Myrtillo!

Myr. —— Laura, forbear!

Lau. Still art thou deaf?

Myr. —— I must not hear.

[In two parts.]

Lau. Oh, my anguish!

Myr. How I languish!

Lau. 'Tis more than I can bear!

Myr. Undone by hope; secure by fear.

[Rural music at a distance.]

Myr. What rural sounds are those so near?

Lau. The nymphs and jolly swains prepare

To celebrate with sports the spring :

Wilt thou not join them while they sing ?

Myr. Their sports to me no comfort bring.

Enter Lycon, Mopsa, and chorus of shepherds.

Lyc. Now all ye swains and lasses,
Put on your airs and graces ;
For this the time and place is
To pipe, and dance, and play :
All brisk and jolly,
Sporting,
Courting,
Care is a folly,
Dancing,
Prancing,
Flora commands a holiday.

Lyc. See, *Mopsa*, see ! *Myrtillo's* mute !

Mop. *Laura's* the cause——

Lyc. —— Without dispute :
Speak boldly, swain ; your grief declare.

Myr. 'Tis true, I have my grief from her.

Lyc. What tho' the nymph deny you,
She ne'er intends to fly you,
A thousand tricks she'll try you,
All but to hold you fast :
She'll pout and vex you,
Coying,
Toying,
Then perplex you,
Slighting,
Frighting ;
Follow her close,——she's right at last.

Mop. From *Laura* I shall more discover :——
Is this a time to slight your lover ?

Lau. *Myrtillo's* nice, but cannot say I'm coy,
And seems more fond of pain than joy.

Mop. *What tho' the swain abjure you,
 Protests he'll ne'er endure you;
 'Tis all but to allure you,
 To ease him of his pain.
 If once you treat him
 Kindly,
 Friendly,
 You defeat him,
 Fairly,
 Rarely;
 Ply him but home,——he's right again.*

Lau. *Myrtillo*——

Lyc. —— Shall comply.——

[Seizing Myrtillo's hand.]

Myr. —— *Laura*——

Mop. —— no longer shall deny.

[Mop. and Lyc. join Lau. and Myr. hands.]

[In two parts.]

Myr. *Kind and tender,*

Lau. *I surrender.*

Both. *All my joy's in thee alone.*

Lau. *When I deny'd you,
 I only try'd you.*

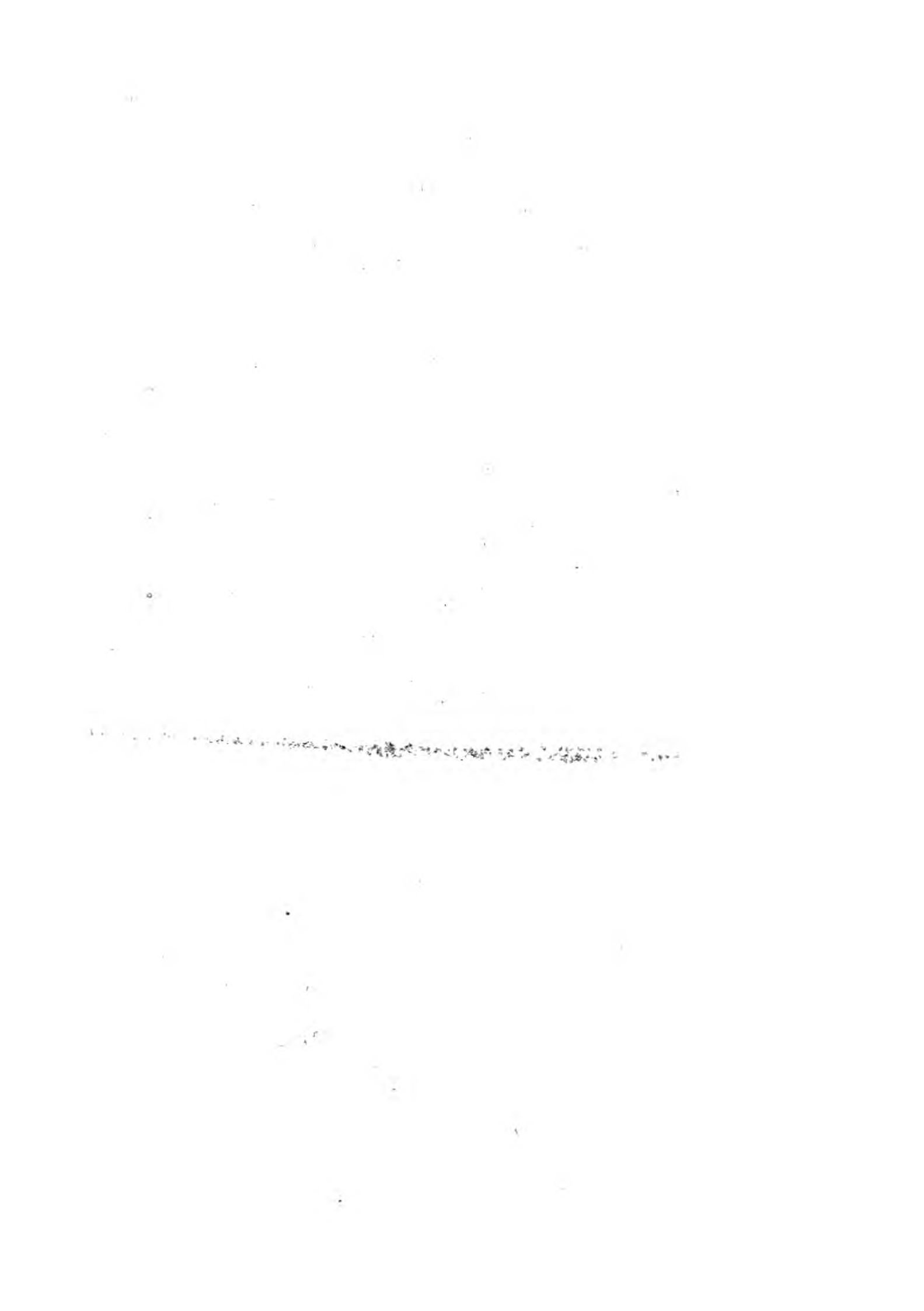
Myr. *When I forswore you,
 I did adore you.*

Both. *Despair and care's for ever flown.*

[Chorus of voices and dancers.]

Cho. *Now all ye swains and lasses, &c.*

END OF MYRTILLO.





PAPAL TYRANNY

In the REIGN of

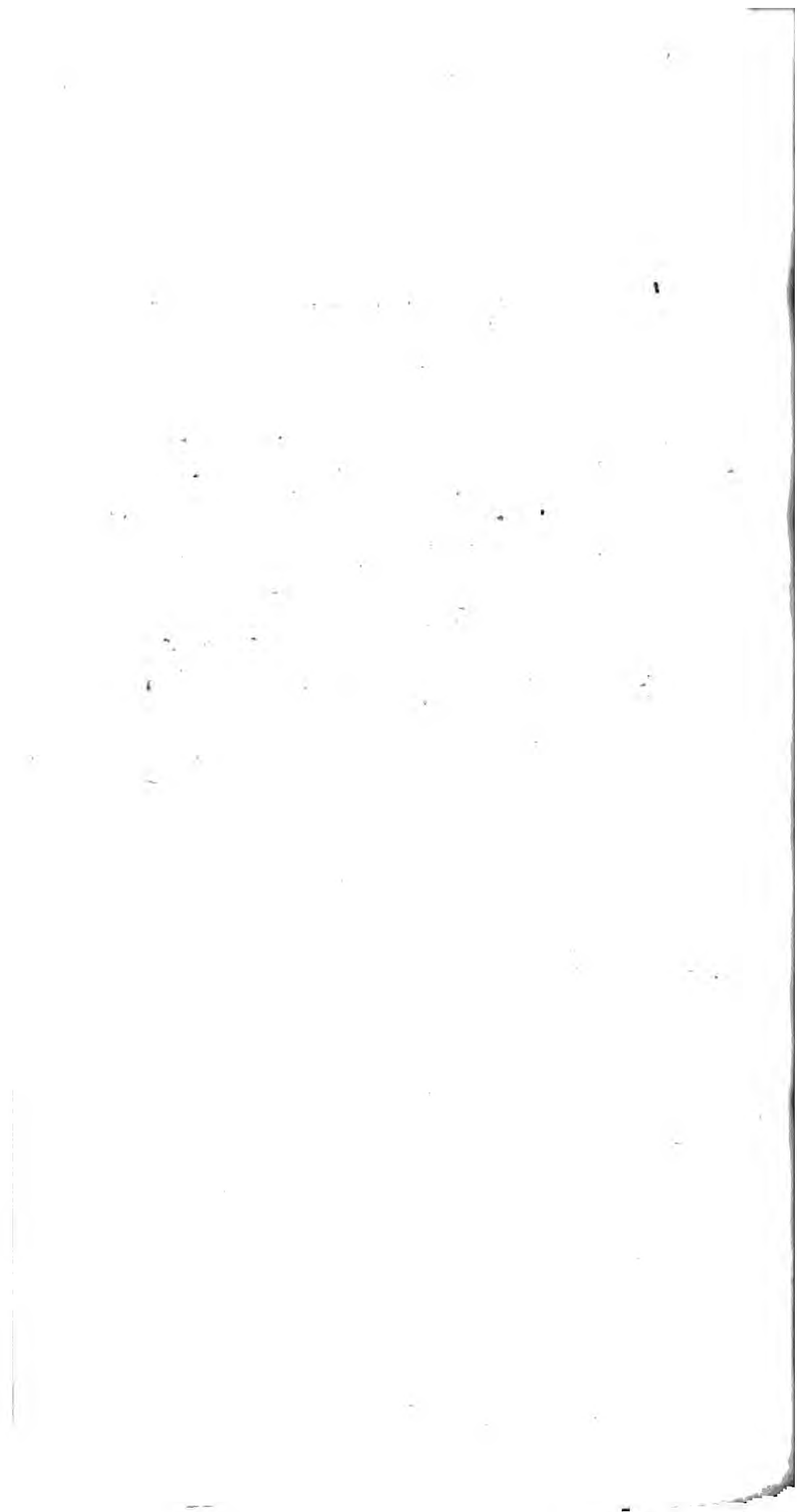
KING JOHN.

A

TRAGEDY.

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum. LUCRETIVS.





To the Right Honourable

P H I L I P,

EARL OF CHESTERFIELD,

Lord Lieutenant of *Ireland*, &c. &c. &c.

His Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary to the States-General, and Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter.

My Lord,

THIS play, which throws itself at your lordship's feet without any previous permission to approach you, begs for no farther protection than your impartial judgment would afford it, tho' the author had not the honour to be known to you. The favourable reception it has met with on the theatre, 'tis true, demands my grateful acknowledgments; but I must restrain my vanity from taking any advantage of this success, till your lordship's farther approbation has pass'd those favours into a legal act of grace. All I can say in excuse of my presumption is, that, if I could have found a judge more learned in the dramatic laws, your lordship had not been troubled with this appeal; and though I offer it at a time when your attention to causes of a quite different nature will scarce leave you leisure to look upon more than the title-page; yet am I not so impatient for fame, as to conclude I can have any right to it, till your lordship's opinion has decreed it

me. Or, if, at worst, it should fall short of that honour, even your dispraises have so uncommon a charm in them, that if my vanity could be quiet, I am not sure I should not choose, even in so tender a point, to deserve them: Your raillery on my errors has sometimes given me more pleasure than the daintiest compliments of a flat civility. But as the public is not bound to indulge me in so extravagant an excuse for my defects, I must allow they have a right to be as severe upon them as they please; reserving to myself the resolution to be still contented, if your lordship should be favourable to me.

I shall not trouble your lordship with a critical examen, or comparison, between this play and the King John of Shakespeare, any farther than just to mention the principal motive that first set me to work upon it.

In all the historical plays of Shakespeare there is scarce any fact that might better have employed his genius than the flaming contest between his insolent Holiness and King John. This is so remarkable a passage in our histories, that it seems surprizing our Shakespeare should have taken no more fire at it; especially when we find from how much less a spark of contention in his first act of Harry the Fourth, he has thrown his Hotspur into a more naturally fomented rage, than ever ancient or modern author has come up to, and has maintain'd that character throughout the play with the same inimitable spirit. How then shall we account for his being so cold upon a so much higher provocation? Shall we suppose, that in those days, almost in the

infancy of the reformation, when Shakespeare wrote, when the influence of the papal power had a stronger party left, than we have reason to believe is now subsisting among us; that this, I say, might make him cautious of offending? Or shall we go so far for an excuse, as to conclude that Shakespeare was himself a Catholic? This some critics have imagin'd to be true, from the solemn description of purgatory given us by his ghost in Hamlet; yet here, I doubt, the conjecture is too strong; that description being rather to be consider'd simply, as a poetical beauty, and critically proper to a Catholic character, than offer'd as a real point or declaration of his own faith. Had Shakespeare been a Romanist, he would scarce have let his King John have taken the following liberty with his holiness, where he contemns the credulity of Philip, the French King, that can submit to——

Purchase corrupted pardon of a man,
Who, in that sale, sells pardon from himself.

This is too sharp a truth to be suppos'd could come from the pen of a Roman Catholic. If then he was under no restraint from his religion, it will require a nicer criticism than I am master of, to excuse his being so cold upon so warm an occasion.

It was this coldness then, my lord, that first incited me to inspirit his King John with a resentment that justly might become an English monarch,

and to paint the intoxicated tyranny of Rome in its proper colours. And so far, at least, my labour has succeeded, that the additional sentiments which King John throws out upon so flagrant a provocation, were receiv'd with those honest cordial applauses, which English auditors I foresaw would be naturally warm'd to. My success in this point, which I had chiefly at heart, makes me almost unconcern'd for what may be judged of the farther mechanism of the play: I have endeavour'd to make it more like a play than what I found it in Shakespeare; and if your lordship should find it so, my ambition has no farther views.

Your taste in poetry, my lord, though naturally candid, wants not the quickest eye to imperfections; and though no man's playful muse has more beauties than your own, yet is not your fondness for them so strong as to be cool in your praises, when another makes a flight that comes near you. A poetical rival (if he could be found) might excite you to excel, but never enough disturb you to dispraise him. This being your natural disposition, from whom could I hope for equal justice or favour?

I now, my lord, take my leave without the labour'd compliments of a modern dedicator. Your many great qualities are too well known to the world to want a poetical herald to proclaim them. It is to the private man of quality then I only make this address; and 'tis an uncommon pleasure to one of my advanced age to have been thrown into a habitude, that so frequently has permitted me to have an occasional share in the delight of your un-

bending hours. But since your lately-acquired honours, which are honour'd by your wearing them, have lifted you so far above the reach of my former approaches, all I can at this distance aspire to, is to throw my cordial wishes after you. May your elevated station never lead beyond the bounds of rational happiness! That when you think fit to resign it, you may return to the private world, as you left it, the most agreeable gentleman that ever brought gladness into sensible society. I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most oblig'd,

and obedient humble servant,

Feb. 25, 1744-5.

COLLEY CIBBER.

PROLOGUE.

THE hardy wretch that gives the stage a play,
Sails in a cockboat on a tumbling sea!
Shakespeare, whose works no play-wright could excel!
Has launch'd us fleets of plays, and built them well:
Strength, beauty, greatness, were his constant care:
And all his tragedies were men of war!
Such tow'ring barks the rage of seas defy'd,
The storms of critics, adverse winds, or tide!
Yet fame nor favour ever deign'd to say,
King John was station'd as a first-rate play;
Though strong and sound the hulk, yet ev'ry part
Reach'd not the merit of his usual art!
To cure what seem'd amiss—a modern muse,
Warm'd by the subject, lets his rashness loose;
Takes on himself the errors of to-day,
And, thus refuted, trusts it to the sea!
The purpose of his voyage this—to shew
How England groan'd five hundred years ago!
When, veil'd with sanctity, the papal sway
To wolfish pastors made our folds a prey!
When Roman prelates here like princes reign'd,
Yet scarce e'er visited the land they drain'd!
And, while the bigot's neck this yoke endures,
Our souls were sav'd by foreign sinecures!
Thus while each pontiff, like the sun, from hence
Exhal'd the vapours——of his Peter-pence;
Their lock'd-up heav'n they promis'd (such the grace is!)
That popes, like box-keepers, secur'd you places:
But not as here, their laws more firm were made,
None were admitted there, before they paid.
As if the right divine of Roman pow'r
Were first to blind their flocks, and then devour!
This carnal discipline the fiery John
Determin'd to suppress, asserts his throne!
Defiance to the lordly pontiff flings,
And spurns his legâtes that would cope with kings!

*Hence! roar'd the holy thunder through the land!
Aghast! the people hear the dread command!
Terror, confusion, rage, and civil war,
At once the bowels of the nation tear;
'Till the lost monarch, vanquish'd and alone,
His subjects to regain, resigns his throne;
With vassal homage at her feet lays down,
To hold from Rome, his tributary crown!
These dire disasters, this religious rage,
That shames our annals, may become the stage:
Where the wild passions which these contests raise,
If well presented, may deserve your praise;
At least this pleasure from the view may flow,
That long! long distant were those scenes of woe!
And as such chains no more these realms annoy,
Applaud the liberty you now enjoy.*

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

King <i>John</i> .		Mr. <i>Quin</i> .
<i>Arthur</i> . His nephew, Duke of <i>Bretagne</i> .		Miss <i>J. Cibber</i> .
<i>Salisbury</i> .		Mr. <i>Ridout</i> .
<i>Pembroke</i> .		Mr. <i>Rosco</i> .
<i>Arundel</i> .		Mr. <i>Anderson</i> .
<i>Falconbridge</i> .		Mr. <i>Ryan</i> .
<i>Hubert</i> .		Mr. <i>Bridgewater</i> .
King <i>Philip</i>	} of <i>France</i> .	Mr. <i>Hale</i> .
<i>Lewis</i> the Dauphin		Mr. <i>Cibber</i> , Jun.
<i>Melun</i> , a nobleman		Mr. <i>Cashell</i> .
<i>Pandulph</i> . Legate from Pope <i>Innocent</i> .		Mr. <i>Cibber</i> .
Abbot	} of <i>Angiers</i> .	Mr. <i>Gibson</i> .
Governor		Mr. <i>Carr</i> .

W O M E N.

<i>Lady Constance</i> . Mother to <i>Arthur</i> .		Mrs. <i>Pritchard</i> .
<i>Blanch</i> . Niece to King <i>John</i> , and daughter to <i>Alphonso</i> , King of <i>Castile</i> .	}	Mrs. <i>Bellamy</i> .

The SCENE, three acts in France, the two last in
England.

PAPAL TYRANNY.

In the REIGN of

KING JOHN.

A C T I.

SCENE, *A Camp near Angiers.*

Enter king Philip, the Dauphin, Arthur, with Lady Constance, attended.

King PHILIP.

NOW, royal *Arthur*, injur'd heir of *England*!
Behold yon formidable swarm of war;
That shines, in plum'd array, to vindicate
Thy cause, and give rebuke to usurpation.
O! never, never to their native homes,
Dispers'd in peace, shall those brave bands return,
Till this bold town of *Angiers* stile thee sov'reign,
Till conquer'd *Normandy* prepare thy way,
And *England* to thy royal right recal thee.

Art. O! god-like *Philip*! now my more than father!
That I have life, was nature's gift; from you
A greater, nobler blessing I receive!
That life, with princely dignity supported!
But if hereafter gracious heav'n ordain
Your arms shall seat me on fair *England's* throne,
Then shall my thanks be worthy your acceptance;

An annual tribute shall confess the tenure.

K. Philip. Alas ! thy youthful heart melts to confessions,
Which, though 'twere laudable in thee to form,
Becomes not elder honour to receive.

Const. Then, *Philip*, give a riper parent leave to speak,
A widow'd mother, and an injur'd princess :
For this relief, this godlike aid of arms,
Receive a tribute heav'n itself accepts ;
These tears of joy that stream to *Philip's* praise,
And tears, that flow from high-born hearts oblig'd,
Are bribes, which the most glorious kings may take.

K. Philip. Fair, hapless relict of renown'd *Plantagenet* !
Compose thy heart, and rest thy care with us ;
Thy wrongs are ours, and as our own will we
Resent them : for thy infant son, our son
The *Dauphin* shall assist his youth ! at once
His guard, and his example in the field ;
And teach him, as in sport, the arts of war !
Embrace him, boy, and plant him in thy bosom !

Dauph. Thus with a brother's love my breast receives
him !

Art. So sweet a master, Sir, will make me learn
The hardest task of danger with delight.

Dauph. Young prince, if you advance as fast in war,
As you are forward in your school of honour,
I sooner shall be found your pupil than your tutor.

K. Philip. Here break we off the greetings of our love.
For see ! where brave *Melun* from *England* comes !
From his advices must we form our measures.

Enter Melun.

Now, say, *Melun*, to the demands of *France*,
Is peace, or is defiance *England's* answer ?

Melun. In full discharge of our commission, Sir,
In royal *Philip's* name and *Arthur's* right,
Roundly we warn'd him to resign, in peace,
Fair *England's* crown, with all its just dominions :
That crown which faction, favour'd by success,
From lineal blood had forcibly with-held ;
To this King *John*, after some pause of scorn,

Reply'd, What follows, on this claim refus'd?
 War! we rejoin'd, the just controul of war!
 To chace rebellion from the realms of right,
 And bind allegiance to its lawful lord.
 On this he kindled to such fiery mood,
 As might have well become a better cause!
 "Bear my defiance to your master's teeth,
 " (He cry'd!) The war's begun! nor are you here
 " In safety. Hence make all your speed to *Philip*,
 " Lest our loud trumpet's march should reach his ear
 " Before you."——

K. Philip.—Trumpets to trumpets then, and drums
 to drums

Reply, while blazing war through fields and forts
 Shall sweep her train of desolation!

Melun. Turn then your forces from this paltry siege,
 And form them to confront a mightier foe!
 For know, King *Jabu* is landed on our coast.

K. Philip. Say'st thou, *Melun*!

Melun.——My liege, too true it is:
 I saw him disembark'd, and in review
 Adjudg'd his bodies thrice ten thousand strong.

K. Philip. Present them in their best advantage!
 what!

Well chosen? Veterans, or undisciplin'd?

Melun. I dare not, Sir, deceive you by a feint,
 Or false dispraise of what my eyes were witness:
 An army more compleat, more martially
 Prepar'd, yet never trod this northern herbage!
 Their eager march comes onward straight to *Angiers*;
 All flush'd and confident, in strength and spirit;
 Not form'd of mercenaries, hinds compell'd,
 But volunteers, that sport with war, that come
 Like crested champions to a tournament;
 Jocund as huntsmen at their sun-rise meeting,
 Or playful shepherds piping o'er the lawns,
 That, having tir'd the course of idle pleasures,
 Now turn bright honour into modes more noble!
 With these along a troop of beauties pass,
 Who form the court of *Lady Blanch* of *Spain*;
 And those by martial lovers are surrounded,

All plum'd and gorgeous, wanton sons of fame,
 Who, having fell'd their grandfires' oak at home,
 Carry whole mortgag'd manors on their backs,
 To make a venture of new fortunes here :
 In brief, a braver choice of dauntless spirits
 Than *English* bottoms now have wafted o'er,
 Did never float upon the swelling tide,
 To violate the maiden peace of *Europe* !

K. Philip. So swift an expedition is amazing !
 But thou describ'st a rout of revellers !

Men that would rather bravely feast than fight——
 But be it as it may : we'll find them entertainment.

Dauph. Hark ! from yon distant northern hill I hear
 The murmuring drum give signal to the march.

[*One whispers Melun.*

Melun. My lieve, a pursuivant at arms assures us,
 King *John* is now in view, and would have parley.

K. Philip. Be our reply—Content and royal welcome.
 Now, Madam, shall you prove our friendship ?

Const. In that, alas ! tho' confident my hope,
 Yet, Sir, permit me to retire ; the fight
 Of royal treatment, paid my mortal foe,
 Is more than my afflicted heart can bear.

K. Philip. Prince *Dauphin*, you conduct the Lady
Constance

To our pavilion : *Arthur* may assist us.

[*Exeunt Dauph. and Constance.*

But see ! he comes ! and, with a martial port,
 As well befits the front of majesty.

Enter King John, attended.

K. John. Forms are the trappings of deputed pow'r ;
 The speech of kings should, like the voice of heav'n,
 Be plain : Equality destroys degree,
 And servile bendings mark inferior men :
 Thus, by our treaties personal, we wave
 Those outside, thin disguises of the heart,
 And shew, at once, the naked terms of honour.

K. Philip. Such be our parley ; brief and artless.

K. John. Thus then—If *France* shall peaceably per-
 mit

That *England* take possession of her own,
 Our *Norman* towns, and chiefly this of *Angiers* ;
 Then come we, as a friend, to *France* in peace ;
 If not, bleed *France*, and frighted peace ascend
 To heaven——

K. *Philip*.—Defiance to defiance first !
 Then thus to thy demand : Those *Norman* towns
 Thou speak'st of, *France* in *England's* right has seiz'd.

K. *John*. In *England's* right ? a seizure made by
France !

Hast thou, from *England*, ought to authorize
 This busy meddling in thy neighbour's suit ?
 Officious in a cause concerns thee not ;
 Whence is thy motive to a part so gracious ?
 Say, from what law, what treaties, or pretence ?

K. *Philip*. Must we produce our voucher then ? Be-
 hold it here ! [Taking Arthur by the hand.

Read in this face thy elder brother's feature !
 These eyes, this aspect moulded out of his ?
 In this fair copy'd volume is contain'd
 The growing abstract of thy brother's virtues !
 As *Geoffry* stood, in lineal rank, direct
 Presumptive heir to *Cæurdalion's* crown :
 So stands his son, to thwart thy crooked claim :
 Then, in the name of high-offended heaven,
 How comes it that Earl *John* is call'd a king,
 When living blood is beating in these veins,
 Of elder right, to wear the crown before thee ?

K. *John*. And whence hast thou this high commission,
 To judge the right of crowns, and summon kings,
 Like criminals impeach'd, to thy tribunal ?

K. *Philip*. From that eternal Judge who rules on high,
 Whose righteous deputies, on earth, are kings !
 From him have I receiv'd authority
 To look into the blots and stains of right :
 That Judge appoints me guardian to this infant ;
 By his commission is thy claim before me,
 And I am bound by office to reject it.

K. *John*. Presumptuous man ! talk'st thou of injur'd
 right,
 Who would'st thyself usurp the pow'r of heav'n ?

And, like fantastic *Rome*, dispose of empires?
 But, since that lordly pontiff has been gracious,
 Since his indulgence deigns to stile me king,
 Must *John* have *Philip's* sanction to his title?

K. *Philip*. What crime alledg'd has set aside young
Arthur?

Can treason, lunacy, or tainted blood,
 Be once pretended in this youth's disfavour?

K. *John*. Prevaricating claim! Is *Cæurdelion's* will,
 That gave his crown to us, of no validity?
 Are we not there his successor approv'd?
 Adopted? by the general states confirm'd?
 And is a nation's act responsible to thee?
 Did not our *Norman William* claim by conquest?
 And, by his will, a younger son succeeded?
 Our second *William*, nay, our first *Henry* too:
 Both to their elder brother *Robert's* claim preferr'd?
 Wants then our right a precedent, or whence
 Had *Cæurdelion* less a pow'r to make one?

K. *Philip*. Where kingdoms are bequeath'd, such
 wills are mockery;
 But this were impious fraud! thy spleeny mother's pro-
 ject,
 Who, to secure succession of her power,
 Seduc'd thy brother to prefer her minion,
 That, under thee, the creature of her pride,
 Her passions still might lord it o'er a people!

K. *John*. No more! thy insults tempt my patience!
 Hence!

Forth to the field! dispute our title there!
 While grappling war, the eloquence of kings,
 Shall prove the victor has his right from heaven!

K. *Philip*. Then heav'n for us! and *Angiers* be the
 umpire!

Sound our immediate summons to this town!
 A trumpet ho! for *Arthur*! *France* demands it.

[*Trumpet sounds on the French side.*]

K. *John*. Now found on our side! blow an *English*
 blast!

And let them see their king that will defend them!

[*Trumpet on the part of England.*]

Enter Governor and Soldiers on the ramparts.

Gov. Whence, and from whom, these trumpets at our walls !

K. Philip. The one from *France*, who here in *England's* right,

Demands possession of your citadel.

K. John. *England* for *England* speaks, defying *France* !
And here, in person, stands with *English* pow'rs
To enter and defend your walls from violence !

K. Philip. Right had no need to bring along such pow'rs.

Gov. Whence, then, this other army at our gates ?

K. Philip. Are you not subjects all to *Cœurdelion's* heir ?

Gov. To his successor, doubtless, are we subject :
But, if in terms confus'd of heir and king,
You now command, now interdict obedience,
Where shall obedience find her safety ?

K. John. ————— Here !

Be not deluded, warlike hearts of *Angiers* !
This pow'r of *France*, that claims in *Arthur's* right,
Like the fierce falcon, clad in turtle-plumes,
Would tempt you from your dovecot-safety forth ;
Then gorge ambition with your liberties.

Gov. How answers *France* this allegation ?

K. Philip. Behold this royal youth, your lawful lord :
In whose just cause offensive war, constrain'd
By hospitable zeal and royal honour,
Now drags her cumbrous engines to your walls !
Be therefore early warn'd ; for if you still
Dare set at nought the terror of our arms,
'Tis not this girdle of your mould'ring ramparts
Shall hide your rebel heads from chastisement !
Say then, will you set wide your gates in peace,
Or must we stalk in blood to our possession ?

K. John. When *England* shall have spoke, determine :
Whence are yon murd'rous ensigns, for a siege,
And merciless proceedings now before you ?
Has not the hunger of these *Frenchmen* brought them,
These meagre wolves, that prowl in troops by night,
Taking th' advantage of your owner's absence,

To leap your fence, and fill your folds with slaughter.
 Now! at their peril, let them stir! cry but halloo!
 And I have here a set of *English* mastiffs
 Shall worry 'em, like curs, that bark at what
 They fear—Now, know your safety and your king;
 Open your gates, and give your friends refreshment.

Gov. Princes, with patience have we heard your contest;
 Which, in the balance of our judgment, weighs but this.
France came, in *Arthur's* right, to seize this town;
 And *England*, by a speedy march, prevents it.
 Yet both alike have summon'd us as vassals;
 So that to either yielding, we to one are rebels:
 Therefore, on hazards, will we yield to neither!
 Let in yon field your troops decide the king,
 Then to our king, as subjects, will we bow:
 But, till your swords or treaties fix that right,
 Our stubborn gates are bar'd against the world.

K. John. Philip, to thee we owe this disobedience!

K. Philip. Here in the field of *Angiers* let obedience
 know

Her lord, and *English* liegemen bow to *Arthur*!

K. John. This, at the gates of *Paris*, shall thou answer!

K. Philip. Answer thyself, thy crime of injur'd right,
 Thyself a subject to the crown thou wear'it!

K. John. O! thou hast rous'd the lion in my heart,
 And all my brother's spirit burns to chase thee!
 Take to thy arms!—

K. Philip.—Mount, chevaliers! to horse!

K. John. To prayers! for pardon to those souls of *France*
 Whose unrepented sins this night shall come,
 Through *England's* vengeance, to eternal doom.

[*Exeunt French and English severally. Trumpets
 sound on each side, to horse.*]

Constance enters from the tent of Philip.

Now hangs the crown of *England* on a moment!
 Decisive war anon demands it fix'd
 Upon the brow of right, or usurpation!
 How desp'rate, how tremendous is the stake,
 Depending on this instant cast of battle!

The victor, the defeated—slave or monarch !
 The regal sceptre and the purple robe
 Against the cockled pilgrim's rug and staff !
 A prince in glory, or a high-born beggar !
 O ! miserable, wide distinction, hark !

[*Alarms, and at great distance.*

The wafting winds, in audible perception,
 Set all the terrors of the field before me !
 This jar of drums ! the lofty trumpets' ardour !
 The vaunting echoes of the neighing steed !
 This clang of armour ! these sky-rending shouts
 Of charging squadrons, speak the battle raging !
 Yet, from the wild confusion, no kind sound
 Distinguishes where victory inclines ;
 These sharp vicissitudes of hopes and fears,
 Tear me with torture insupportable !
 Conquest suspended is captivity !
 O dreadful, agonizing interval !—
 Hear, heav'n, my pray'r ! if thy dread will decrees
 Our house must fall, let not my riper sins
 On hapless *Arbur's* head be visited !
 O ! spare, protect his youthful innocence !
 That life prolong'd may propagate his virtues !
 This sudden silence in the vacant air
 Seems as if breathless conquest sought repose :
 Now is our cause successful, or abandon'd !
 Hark ! a retreat is sounded ! O ! for news,
 To quell this conflict of uncertainty !
 But see ! where one 'fore-spent with toil and haste,
 This way conducts a youth in form, my *Arthur* !
 My pray'rs are heard ! 'tis he himself preserv'd,
 And living, from the battle !—O my life !

Enter Melun with Arthur.

O ! welcome ! to thy mother's painful longings !
 To fold thee thus ! is more content than empire !
 Crowns are not worth the anxious coils they cost us !
 O say, my boy ! how could thy tender limbs
 Support the onsets of this dreadful day ?

Arth. O 'twas a gallant horse I rode ! train'd up
 To war ! Had I known fear, he wou'd have sham'd me !

He curl'd his crest, and proudly paw'd the ground,
 And from his vocal nostrils neigh'd such fire!
 To mount him seem'd the transport of a throne!

Const. My little soldier! how thy spirit charms me!

Art. But still my life to this brave lord we owe:
 For when a huge broad faulchion at my head
 Was rais'd, he threw his body in between,
 Warded the blow, and clove th' assailant down!
 And then—our horses trampled him to death!

Const. Words are too poor to give such deeds their due;
 But say, my lord, what have our arms decided?

Melun. Never was field with greater bravery fought;
 Never did *Frenchmen* better bear their spirits,
 Nor *English* courage more approve their pasture!
 While war, like justice, weigh'd out life for life,
 Pale conquest hover'd in the air amaz'd,
 Nor knew on whom to drop her chaplet down;
 Whether to grace the brow of *France* or *England*:
 And though their fainting spirits equally
 Desist, unable to renew the charge;

Yet each dispute what neither has deserv'd,
 Nor triumph, nor defeat; nor chains, nor victory
Const. What miseries are mine, that neither war
 Decides, nor long indurance can assuage!

Melun. Have better hopes; for as I left the field,
 A trumpet from the town of *Angiers* came,
 To ask an interview for terms of peace.

Const. Saidst thou of peace! what peace can *France*
 admit,

But on the lost, the ruin'd rights of *Arthur*?
 O yet return, and bring me better news!
 Back to this fatal interview; while I
 Pensive retire, and sigh my griefs to heaven!

Melun. Madam, these peaceful pow'rs are now at hand.
 Your presence may perhaps assist your cause,
 Which private sorrow would but ill defend.

Const. You counsel well; nor will I tamely lose it!

*Enter King John, leading Lady Blanch, Falconbridge,
 &c. attended. Trumpets.*

K. John. Now, fairest *Blanch*, thy terrors, from the field,

Shall cease, and, frowning war no more dismay thee :
 This happy interview shall heal our wounds ;
 Thy smiling hours henceforth be lost in pleasure ;
 To rude alarms succeed the midnight revel ;
 And thou, as queen, in *Normandy* shall reign.

Blanch. Alas ! what happiness might kings enjoy,
 Could honour mark the bounds of their ambition !

K. John. Be honour, then, our umpire——*France*
 approaches.

Enter on the opposite side King Philip and Dauphin attended.

*After them, from the gates of Angiers, enter the Abbot,
 with priests and citizens.*

K. Philip. Now restless *England!* are thy troops content,

Or would they more of us ?——

K. John.——Would *France* have more ?
 Have not these men of *Angiers*, from their walls,
 Stood witness of the havock we have made ?

K. Philip. Or have they not, with equal eyes, beheld
 The swords of *France* stain'd in the blood of *England?*

Abbot. Princes, with equal sorrow have we seen
 The fatal waste of your contending powers :
 Since then your loss is mutual in the field,
 Let in the cabinet your counsels conquer.

Kings most are kings where peace protects the subject.

K. Philip. Less of your morals, and of purpose more.

Abbot. As *Angiers*, then, can but one lord obey,
 Let to the other one resign that title,
 Contented with the due equivalent,
 Which to your royal option we shall name ;
 Then, on such compact, shall our wide-thrown gates
 Fly from their hinges to receive their master.

But if in hostile enmity's persisting——

K. Philip. Dar'st thou again defy us ? Hence——

K. John. ——Speak on !

Abbot. Glory, tho' deaf to dying groans in war,
 May lend a pitying ear to peace unsoil'd.

Const. Kings, by your leave : and ere this raven's voice
 Presume, again, to croak his bold rebellion ;

Hear once a woman's nobler sense of glory !
 If my free speech on either part found partial,
 Then both to my abandon'd fortunes leave me.
 How dare these vassals, lying at your mercy,
 Audaciously fet bounds to royal right ;
 And traitors, as they are, give laws to monarchs !
 If you are kings, resent this insolence !
 Nor let them, in one day, twice defy you :
 Both play your engines on their crumbling walls,
 Till an unhous'd and fenceless desolation
 Sweep them as level as the seas becalm'd :
 Then to your separate banners each return,
 And front to front decide the right of empire !
 Thus your coy mistress, fortune, charm'd by conquest,
 Shall from the dreadful battle choose her minion,
 And kiss him with a glorious victory !

K. Philip. Now by yon sky that hangs above our heads !

'Tis nobly thought : These insolents deserve
 This chastisement : Say, then, will *England* join
 To vindicate the cause of regal honour,
 And bury *Angiers* in immediate ruin ?

K. John. Well hast thou offer'd, *France* ! Each to his charge !

Which front lies fairest to our *English* vengeance ?

K. Philip. If *England* so approve, *France* from the South

Shall thunder——

K. John. ——*England* from the North shall echo !

Abbot. O ! hear us ! hear, you royal potentates !
 Stop this impatient rigour of your arms,
 And god-like hearken to the cries of peace !
 Be heav'n's vicegerents, and protect your subjects !
 Let us but know our king, and we obey him ;
 Then name his foe, and we oppose him ;
 But let not this resource of female spleen
 Mislead you to an act of cruelty !
 She, like the childless mother fam'd in story,
 Yielding the infant to be carv'd and mangled,
 Betrays the secret of her spurious claim.

K. John. 'Tis true ! the inference yet asks attention.

Const. How wild are the expedients of despair !
 But who, in injuries like mine, is temp'rate ?
 Rather let *Angiers* know a lawless lord,
 Than to the rightful be their lives a sacrifice. [*Apart.*
Princes, I wave my plea, and now to *France* appeal ;
 In whose firm honour is my only hope.

K. Philip. Madam, you there with safety may repose it.

Const. What heav'n wills be done ; but I fear the
 issue !

These royal parleys bode no good to me.
 Hence to some holy cell I will retire,
 And meditate, resign'd, the ills that wait me.
 Thus, while these eagles hover in the air,
 The trembling turtle, with her only young,
 Shrinks in her nest, and dreads impending wrong.
 [*Exit Constance with Arthur.*

K. John. Lord *Abbot*, now proceed : We pause to
 hear thee.

Abbot. Then, briefly, for the gen'ral welfare, thus :
 Among the wonders of your princely trains,
 Your pardon, if I see a royal pair,
 In birth, in blooming age, in virtues equal, †
 (O ! be the sight prophetic to our hopes)
 The lovely *Blanch* is near in blood to *England*,
Lewis, the royal *Dauphin*, heir to *France*.
 If courtly love in search of beauty goes,
 Where could he find it fairer than in *Blanch* ?
 If virtuous love in search of virtue goes,
 Where shall he find it purer than in *Blanch* ?
 If proud ambition seeks a bride of birth,
 What purple fountain runs through nobler veins ?
 Who then to such transcendent maiden charms
 Can lay a claim superior to this *Dauphin* ?
 What youth can equal him, what virgin her ?
 Yet, as they are, are each but half themselves :
 O ! two such fair divided excellencies
 Join'd in one love, might heal, with happier peace,
 The wounds of war, and make up full perfection !

Dauph. Had I a hermit's blood, a cause so pleaded,
 A virgin so adorn'd, with holy praise,
 Had fir'd my heart, and preach'd it into love.

Abbot. Turn then, great pow'rs, your hostile rage to
peace !

Bind up your feuds in these soft bonds of union ;
And, like indulgent heav'n, from low'ring clouds,
Pour down your blessings on your joyful people !

Dauph. My royal father, take this holy counsel ;
Give peace to *England*, and repose to me !
For never will my heart know rest, till there
A passive smile permits me to complain.

K. Philip. Those smiles, my son, are in the gift of
England.

Dauph. Thus then to *England* for the general weal,
Suppliant I bend my knee, and beg for peace :
This knee, which never could to int'rest bow,
Compell'd by love, may bend with honour.

K. John. Spoke like a royal wooer ; and if *France*
Approve this folly of thy youthful heart,
As she in beauty, education, blood,
Holds hands with any princess of the world,
Her dowry shall weigh equal with the proudest.

K. Philip. Let *England* ratify his word, and *France*
With royal sanction shall confirm this treaty.

K. John. Far, as our pow'r may warrant the consent
Of virgin modesty, which love must conquer,
We here approve this holy father's counsel ;
And, for the dowry of this high-born maid,
Yield we the provinces of *Anjou*, *Main*,
Eureux, and all those towns, that to the sea,
From hence, by due inheritance, we claim :
With thrice ten thousand marks of *English* gold,
To grace her bridal bed, and seal this peace.

K. Philip. A royal dowry, consonant to honour,
And be the virgin free, our love accepts it :
Now *England*——

Dauph. —— Pardon, royal Sir, my transport !
For now, methinks, what farther might be said,
Seems due to beauty from the lover's tongue.
O ! beauteous maid ! vouchsafe a patient ear !
If as a prince I sue, short is my plea :
These royal advocates have strongly urg'd it :
If, as a lover, how shall I approach thee ?

How in one moment can I ask for hope,
 Or how shall nations wait till I deserve thee!
 O! that thy form had sprung from humble race:
 That, then, I might have given my panting heart
 Th' advantage of degree, and ev'n on sight possess'd
 thee.

Blanch. Prince, to my birth you all advantage owe;
 Where I, like private virgins, free to love,
 Then modesty, our sex's guard and grace,
 With coldness had receiv'd your tenderest vows,
 And for your sighs, the wafting winds had caught
 them:

But princes, born to passions not their own,
 Are slaves in love, where happier subjects reign:
 The hearts of royal maids, like public treasure,
 Are to the exigents of state assign'd;
 While private comfort is referr'd to virtue.
 Of this had I been train'd in ignorance,
 Then yielding thus my hand had dy'd these cheeks
 With shame; but conscious what I owe the public,
 With the same joyful pride I seal this peace,
 As counter-signing ministers attest it.

Dauph. From heaven this joy descends.

K. John. England and France are one.

[*King John and King Philip embrace, then join the
 hands of Blanch and Dauphin.*]

Blanch. Love must from love——

Dauph. ——Love shall of love be born.

K. Philip. Your office, holy father, shall we next
 Intreat, for at St. Mary's altar straight
 This royal marriage will we solemnize.

You, Lord *Melun*, to Lady *Constance* haste,
 With whom this peace, alas! will fort but ill;
 Bid her have cheer, and tempt her to this festival.

K. John. You, cousin, on the part of *England* greet
 her. [To *Falcon*.

Tell her these times shall cure her sickly fortunes;
 All shall be heal'd: *Arthur*, her infant son,
 In honour to this peace, shall shine in dignities:
 This day we Duke of *Bretagne* will salute him,

Of *Richmond* Earl ; say such our word creates him.
Now to our solemnity————

Dauph. ——Now lovely *Blanch* !

Never had *Angiers* such a welcome guest.

Thus when, of old, the dove was sent t' explore

The long-wish'd blessings of a rising shore :

At length a distant springing grove she spies,

Crops the first branch, a sure credential prize ;

Then to the happy ark resumes her wings,

And to the world preserv'd the peaceful olive brings.

[*They all enter the town, with trumpets sounding,
acclamations, &c.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

Enter Constance, Arthur, Melun, Falconbridge.

C O N S T A N C E.

A PEACE with *England*, and by *France* concluded!
 Affianc'd too! *Blanch* to the *Dauphin* married!
 And *Arthur's* ruin made her pompous dowry!
 Thou dost abuse my ear; it cannot be!

I have a monarch's oath to right my cause,
 And 'twere to wrong thy master, to believe thee!

Mel. Madam, these words are yours! but what before,
 In plain and honest terms, I told, was true;
 'Twas his command I should at large
 Inform you of this peace, and cheer your hopes.

Const. My hopes! bid the lost wretch with broken limbs,
 Extended on the wheel, to hope for mercy!
 Hopes I have none! —————

Arth. ——— Since 'tis the will of heaven,
 I do beseech you, Madam, be content.

Const. Content! to thy vile wrongs be patient! no;
 Were thou, in temper wayward, foul in feature,
 Deform'd, that ev'n thy birth disgrac'd thy mother!
 Yet, as my child, my heart would feel thy usage!
 As thou art the pride and triumph of my bed,
 As thou art fair, and at thy birth, dear boy,
 Nature and fortune both conspir'd to grace thee;
 For not the rose or lily, from the hand of nature,
 Can boast their beauties more complete or fair!
 Nor has, among the realms of *Europe*, fortune
 Bequeath'd a crown to blood or birth superior!
 As such when I behold thee, and behold
 Thee wrong'd, betray'd, abandon'd to the world;
 Then, then, to be content were criminal!
 An indolence that virtue would disclaim;

No, no, my child! cruel, obdurate souls,
They only, who could do these wrongs, might
Bear them :

But human hearts, a helpless mother's heart,
Must yield to nature, and deplore thy fortune !

Fal. These plaintive transports, Madam, cannot help,
But may impair your state : Consider well,
How may our potent masters be offended,
That thus you slight their royal invitation ?
Yielding to neither, you lose both your friends ;
We must not, Madam, dare not part without you.

Const. You must! you dare! you shall! I will not go!
Tell them, they've taught my sorrow to be proud :
There is a dignity in suff'ring wrong,
Which mean-soul'd perfidy can never reach !
Here, on this humble earth, build we our throne ;
Here shall calamity in judgment sit,
And call oppression to her sad tribunal.
Now let injurious *France* and *England* see,
How we are rais'd in majesty above them !
This is the throne, to which, or first or last,
The greatest kings must bow—*Philip*, I thank thee ;
These are thy favours!—Such the faith of princes ?

*Enter King Philip, attended : Melun and Falconbridge
having observ'd to him the state of Constance, he, ap-
proaching, raises her.*

K. Philip. What means the mournful *Constance* on the
earth ?

Dispel thy griefs, and let the honours of
Thy infant son now blend the gen'ral joy.

Const. Philip, I fear my presence is offensive.

K. Philip. Why should thy fortunes warrant such a fear ?

Const. Perhaps I fancy'd my sad looks reproach'd thee ;
And to the noble mind reproach is painful.

K. Philip. Reproach should follow wrongs : What
cause have you—

Const. What cause! This object, *Philip*, may inform thee :
Behold this royal beggar— [Pointing to Arthur.

K. Philip. ——— Yet his fortune
Deserves not this complaint : His high promotions,

New honours, and appointments are most noble.

Const. Shall honour then compound? Has royal right
A fellowship? Is he, who loses half,
Not robb'd, because a moiety is left him?
Is *Arthur* known the lineal heir of *Cæurdalion*?
And shall he basely stoop to vassal dignities?
Is *Bretany*, that poor dependent dukedom,
That gewgaw feather, on his infant crest,
Of equal weight for *England's* diadem?

K. Philip. Your griefs conclude, as if events were ours.
Have not our arms, in *Arthur's* royal right,
Expos'd our crown to hazards in the field?
While, in the bloody contest, thousands fell,
The slaughter'd victims of our faith to thee?

Const. And to deface that glorious act of honour,
Thou hast betray'd the right of *Arthur* to his foe.

K. Philip. Betray'd! Now judge for me! Had you
been *Philip*,

What answer might this treatment have deserv'd?

Const. Then *Philip* never had deserv'd this treatment,
Had I been *Philip*; *Philip* injur'd *Constance*,
Then hadst thou seen a *Philip* firm to virtue!
A prince that had prefer'd the cause of honour
To all the temporal int'rests on earth!

But pow'r, I see, howe'er adorn'd with purple,
Shews, in the monarch, but a worldly man;
And Faith is but the merchandise of empire!

K. Philip. Temper, I see, is lost upon impatience:
When you have worn a crown, you'll better judge
How far a monarch may extend his virtue.

Const. When I have worn a crown! Injurious man;
Dost thou insult the wretch thou hast undone?

Philip, farewell: And, if thou canst, enjoy
The peace which my calamities have bought.

If kingdoms we on broken vows must found,

Oh! never may the guilty brows be crown'd!

May'st thou, with taintless honour, brave thy fate;

Nor ever dare to be ignobly great!

In conscious virtue may'st thou empire find,

And reign the happier monarch of thy mind.

[Exit with Arthur.]

K. Philip. *Melun*, attend her, and observe her passions:
 Revenge may prompt her to commute her fortune,
 And her submission to the pow'r of *England*
 Might sow, between our realms, new seeds of discord.
 [*Exit Melun.*]

Enter Dauphin and Blanch.

Dauph. My royal father, our fair Dauphiness,
 Press'd by her sex's fear, intreats your favour.

K. Philip. So fair, so gentle a petitioner,
 Needs but to name her wishes, to command them.

Blanch. Not so, my lord; but our desire is this:
 My royal uncle having from *England*
 Advice, that presses his departure hence,
 Alarms my heart with fears till now unknown:
 When he's away, and I left here a stranger,
 Young, unexperienc'd, liable to failures,
 How may simplicity, tho' well inclin'd,
 Mistake the duties of a bride or daughter?
 Without his guidance to direct my steps,
 How may my errors wander from your favour?

K. Philip. How canst thou lose what even thy fear
 secures?

Blanch. Let him not yet depart; you, Sir, might stay
 him.

Dauph. Grant her desires! —

K. Philip. ———— When fit occasion offers,
 For his fair niece's sake we will entreat him.
 But see! he comes; with business on his brow:
 Depend upon our love, and calm thy cares.

[*Exeunt Blanch and Dauphin.*]

Enter King John, with Letters, &c.

K. John. Brother of *France*, we grieve that our affairs
 In *England*, on the spur, demand our presence;
 But 'tis our glory that we part in peace.

K. Philip. What unforeseen occasion thus breaks in
 Upon the revels of our amity?

K. John. Our letters thence inform us that our subjects,
 Stirr'd by the restless policy of *Rome*,
 Meet in cabals, t' assert the papal pow'r:

Faction and tumult, in the open day,
 Stalk through the streets with folly at their heels,
 And make religious cries against allegiance;
 Warm'd by this spirit too, at *Canterbury*,
 The lordly monks dispute our regal pow'r:
 Reject our prelate to that see prefer'd,
 And, by a second choice, appeal to *Rome*:
 These growing ills must in their shell be crush'd;
 And by the injur'd majesty of kings,
 These ghostly traitors shall abjure their choice,
 Though at the hazard of our kingdom we abide it.

Enter Falconbridge.

Fal. So please your majesty, his eminence
 Of *Milan, Pandulph*, the great cardinal,
 And legate, from the holy see full charg'd
 With apostolic pow'rs, demands his audience.

K. John. Pandulph! But be it so: Cousin, conduct him:
 And, Sir, my brother, tho' his holy errand
 Reach but ourself in form, yet is his view,
 By our example to make others bow,
 And hold, in equal chains, the kings of *Europe*:
France, from this juncture, may be early warn'd;
 Yourself a witness better will advise you.

Enter Pandulph, attended.

Pand. Hail, you anointed deputies of heaven!
 Peace, health and benedictions crown your days!
 To thee, King *John*, our high commission speaks,
 From our most holy father *Innocent*,
 Servant of servants, and the lord of kings,
 I *Pandulph*, of fair *Milan* cardinal,
 And legate from the sacred chair, demand,
 Why, against his apostolic power,
 Thou stubbornly dost spurn, and with unhallow'd force
 Keep *Stephen Lancton*, now of *Canterbury*
 Archbishop duly chosen, from the lands
 Consecr'd and sacred to that holy see?
 What may these rash extremities portend?
 Why are the waters of religion troubled?
 What impious counsels have seduc'd thy love

From the maternal bosom of our church ?
 Whence are these wilful marks of disobedience ?
 Such is the contumacy thou art charg'd with,
 And this the time appointed thee to answer.

K. John. Is then assertion of our kingly right
 Term'd impious, stubborn, wilful, disobedient !
 This the proud stile of *Rome* to sov'reign princes !
 Are these the meek examples of her doctrine ?
 I tell thee, legate, as to *Lancton's* right,
 One pope's enough for *England* to endure !
 But viceroys there we never will receive,
 For such are all whom *Rome* appoints our pastors !
 Created from abroad, they know no lord at home ;
 But, when their duty's question'd, answer, *Rome* !
Rome shall support them ; for their king's her vassal !
 But, cardinal, from hence imperious *Rome*
 Shall know, in *England* we will reign !
 Nor shall, while we have life, *Italian* priests
 Have tithe or toil in our dominions !
 No, not a native brow shall there be mitred,
 That thinks not due obedience to his prince
 Consistent with his other Christian duties !

Pand. Are subjects to their prince more bound in duty,
 Than is that prince in duty bound to heav'n ?

K. John. Has heav'n depriv'd all Christian kings of
 sense ?

Or have they eyes, and yet no right to use them ?
 Shall free-born kings not choose their native pastors ?
 The lands thou speak'st of are the soil of *England* ;
 And who shall plant a crozier'd tenant there,
 That owes not to our crown his holy tenure ?

Pand. Dominion o'er the vassals on those lands,
 Is not deny'd thy right ; but on their lords' demise
 The right of heav'n resumes the vacant cure,
 And to that cure, as heav'n's vicegerent here,
 Our holy fire appoints the successor !

K. John. Blast your evasive school distinctions,
 That prove at once, I am and am not king !
 Suppose an enemy invade those lands,
 Who shall protect them ? Is't not our expence ?
 Our arms, our subjects, that must face the danger ?

Will your anathemas, your fulminations,
 Drive from our fields the ravage of a war?
 Shall *Rome* then say, those lands are ours in fee,
 And you, for our sole uses, shall defend them!
 Insatiate pride! by heav'n it mocks our senses!
 No, Sir, our *English* pastors shall be *English* subjects;
 Not aliens, independent on our crown;
 Who call the fleeces of their flocks to *Rome*,
 And when their holy avarice is curb'd,
 Then drive them at their pleasure from allegiance.
 But let thy master know, we hold our crown
 By right, as high as he his priestly diadem;
 And, where our realms extend, will be ourself supreme.

Pand. O! impious, O prophane, apostate rage!
 My Christian ears are tortur'd with the sound!

K. Philip. Brother of *England*, this avow'd contempt
 Of sacred pow'r, but ill accords that faith
 Implicit, which her royal sons profess:
 Since you have made me party to this audience,
 Let me in friendly confidence assure you
France would not, trampling on the rights of *Rome*,
 Provoke the holy censures of her chair,
 Though the attempt might double our dominions!

K. John. Though you, and all the kings of *Christendom*,
 Should bow your necks for this proud pope to tread on,
 Crawl to his throne, and like a god adore him;
 Or rather fear, as *Indians* do, the devil;
 Not for the good, but mischief he may do you!
 Shaking your purses empty in his lap,
 To purchase impious pardon of a man,
 Who, in that sale, sells pardon from himself!
 Though you and all the world like columns stand,
 To form triumphal arches to his pride;
 Yet *England* shall alone himself oppose
 This subdolous, this priestly usurpation!

Pand. Hear then, high heav'n and earth! ye saints
 above,
 And men below! Christians and angels, hear!
 Hear the tremendous doom our holy church
 On this accurst, apostate head denounces!
 Drive him, ye mighty kings and potentates,

From realm to realm a lost abandon'd exile !
 All bonds of peace, defence, alliance, commerce,
 Broken ! absolv'd ! annull'd ! O sweep him forth,
 Like the first bloody *Cain*, detestable !
 This sacrilegious parricide ! whose arm,
 Against the sacred bosom of our mother
 Has drawn the impious sword of disobedience !
 From this immediate moment be his crown
 The spoil, the right, the just reward of him,
 Whose happier hand shall rend it from his brow !
 Be all his subjects from allegiance free,
 From duty, converse, all benevolence,
 Support, or correspondence interdicted !
 On pains eternal to the soul offending !
 And meritorious shall the meanest soul
 Be deem'd, rever'd, to ages canoniz'd,
 Who shall by violence or stratagem,
 For these his crimes, deprive him of his life !

K. John. Stay ! thou imperious legate ! hear a king's
 Defiance echo to your holy thunder !
 First, for your impious arrogance of pow'r,
 We blow it mouthing to the winds contemn'd !
 But, as its vanity deserves rebuke,
 We, in substantial vengeance, will repay it
 On thy rebellious brethren's heads accumulated !

K. Philip. What may this rashness mean ! be yet ad-
 vis'd !

Nor tempt the chastisement of holy pow'r.

K. John. Unman me not with fear : The sword is
 drawn !

Rome now shall know the pow'r of *England* ! Ho !
Cornbill and *De Cantie* you, our valiant knights,
 Choose like yourselves a band of men determin'd !
 Conduct them with the utmost speed to *England* :
 There, from their hive of *Canterbury*,
 With military force of fire and sword,
 Exterminate these trait'rous monks, that have,
 In this election of their prelate, dar'd
 To send the question of our right to *Rome* :
 Seize on their goods, their moveables, and treasure !
 Confiscate to the public ! Then proclaim it death

To give them shelter through our whole dominions !
 Without remorse, enquiry, or delay,
 See this our will, with rigour, be obey'd !

[*Exeunt* Cornhill and De Cantie.

Now, legate, as thou lik'st this work, proceed !
 We yet have hecatombs of drones, thy victims ;
 For each anathema a diocese !
 Let popes confine to points of faith their sway,
 And none shall more implicitly obey :
 But when they stain that sway to temp'ral pow'r,
 And would the inborn rights of kings devour ;
 Then, by our arms, from usurpation hurl'd,
 We'll treat them as the tyrants of the world ! [Exit.

Pand. Thus then to thee, to thee ! O filial *France* !
 Our holy church commits her bleeding cause !
 O ! stop the homeward passage of this heretic !
 Rouse all the warrior in thy righteous heart,
 To stem this wild apostate's persecution,
 Think how may sad reproach afflict thy soul,
 When fame shall say that *France* in arms stood by,
 And tamely saw the impious devastation !

K. Philip. Alas ! my lord ! *France* needs not this incitement :

We see, with grief, this frantic disobedience :
 Feel too, with equal pain, our arms confin'd :
 For how may solemn oaths of amity
 And peace be broken ? Such have we sworn to *England* !
 Can we, through wrongs, cut short our way to justice ?
 Do certain evils for uncertain good,
 And offer up our perjuries to heav'n ?

Pand. Can faith to man abjure our holy duties ?
 What pow'r can bind the soul against itself ?
 What oaths absolve thee from thy vows to heav'n ?
 As heav'n has a claim superior then,
 'Tis perjury to keep thy oath with heretics !
 Or, if thy conscience yet retains a scruple,
 Thus, from our heav'nly pow'r, to bind or loose,
 Thy cancel'd oath receives its absolution !

K. Philip. Ay, now, my father, is my soul at large !
 Free and inspir'd ! our arms are sanctified !
 To be the chosen champion in a cause

So heavenly just——

Pand.———shall add more glory to
Thy sword, than wreaths of universal empire!

K. Philip. Melun! this instant let our troops be
form'd!

Then at their head will we demand of *England*,
That these his impious orders he recal,
And yield to *Rome* the right of his obedience:
Which, if refus'd, then be the signal given
For dire controul, and chastisement of war!

Pand. Myriads of saints, and angels rang'd on high,
Shall clap their sacred wings, and 'plaud thy piety.

[*Exeunt.*

Trumpets. Enter Dauphin with Blanch.

Blanch. O fatal day! are these thy promises?
Is then that sacred peace, which smiling love
And hush'd ambition hand in hand have sworn,
Like a wreck'd vessel, in a moment lost!
Become the sacrifice to ruthless war!

All the dear triumphs of my duteous heart,
Defac'd, forbidden! sunk to sounds of sorrow!

Dauph. Can sorrow have a place in hearts like thine,
Whose views are bounded with regards to glory?
The tenderest love must yield its dues to honour!
Our troops have order for immediate march;
Hard is our parting, but inevitable!
Love yet will have his hour.——

Blanch.———Is this to love,
To have our nuptial feast serv'd in by slaughter?
Shall braying trumpets and loud churlish drums
Drown the soft melody of bridal songs?
O! my lov'd lord! my husband! that dear name!
Methinks so early on my tongue might move thee:
Thus hanging on thy heart, for *England's* sake,
England to me this morn the kindest parent!
I beg thee, lend thy help to my distress!
To honour let the public good give law,
And keep this sacred peace inviolate.

Dauph. Be witness, heav'n! how thy sighs dissolve me!
But as thy virtue for the public weal,

Broke through thy sex's forms to yield thy beauties :
 So to thy charms add one perfection more,
 And let thy piety surmount thy love ;
 For now religious ties demand our sword.
 Where pow'r so sacred calls, even kings obey !
 War, now, but leads to love the nobler way !
 Not to be foremost would my flame reprove ;
 But, crown'd with conquest, I deserve thy love.

[*Exit Dauphin.*

Blanch. O *France!* O *England!* fatal both to me !
 Would I had never left my native soil,
 'To wander thus in pompous misery !
 As when the tempest-beaten bark is fir'd
 By lightning, the despairing passenger
 Sees sure destruction ev'ry way surround him :
 So in this equally-devouring war,
 My sole resource is pray'r to heav'n ; but how,
 For what, or whom can I my vows address !
 For *England?* No ! connubial bonds forbid it !
 That *France* may conquer ? Neither ! Ties of blood,
 Of education, friendship, all restrain me !
 Thus while to diff'rent hopes my vows are ty'd,
 Conflicting fears my bleeding heart divide.

[*Exit Blanch.*

An A L A R M.

After which the French forces appear retiring before the English, when a victory has been some time sounded.

Enter King John, Falconbridge, and Soldiers.

K. John. A glorious field ! and bravely was it fought !
 O ! my friends ! when in triumph we return
 To *England* through our proud metropolis,
 How will the loaded walls and windows swarm
 With clam'rous souls, to give their champions welcome ?
 How, like a torrent, will their joy o'erwhelm us,
 Making our march more toilsome through the press,
 Than here we found it through the swords of *France?*

Fal. This news will have its uses, Sir, at home ;
 Give honest *Englishmen* but blood and battle ;

They think no subsidies too dear for victory !

K. John. Now forward to our camp ! there shall our
loss

And gain be balanc'd ; what dear friends are missing,
And who are prisoners of the enemy.

Fal. Our loss counts little when compar'd to theirs ;
For all the barons of *Poictou*, I'm told,
Are taken, Sir, with *Hugh Le Brun*, their leader ;
And, as I cross'd the field, the heralds then
Had in their lists two hundred captive knights,
And mercenaries proportionable.

K. John. This day has made us debtor to thy sword.
Now shall we farther use thee : Of the barons,
Some to our *Norman* castles shall be sent ;
Others to *England*, cousin, shall pass o'er with thee :
Whose ransom shall in part repay thy service :
Ourselves, with all convenient speed, will follow ;
This night shall thy dispatches be prepar'd,
With pow'r at large, there to disgorge the bags
Of dronish monks, and pamper'd hoarding abbots.
Since *Rome* so fiercely calls our rights in question,
No mercy will we have on our dependents !
Use our commission in its utmost force.

Fal. Doubt not, my liege, their skins shall be as bare
As they have shorn their sheep, the laity.

Enter Hubert.

K. John. Now, *Hubert*, whence thy breathless haste ?
What farther news ?

Hab.———Better, I'm bold to say,
Your happier arms could never have propos'd !

K. John. Be brief———

Hab.———The head and fountain of our wars
Is stopt ! *Arthur*, your nephew, Sir, is taken.

K. John. *Arthur* ! May I believe thee ! How ? By
whom ?

Hab. After the general rout, upon advice
That in a village, to these woods adjacent,
Some remnant of the foe again were forming,
We straight march'd up, and summon'd them to yield ;
When, finding thrice their numbers we exceeded,
To our discretion instant they surrender'd ;

Among these pris'ners, Sir, was *Arthur* found,
Whom, in your royal tent, our party has secur'd,
That there your farther pleasure, Sir, might find him.

K. John. Remove him straight to *Roan*! there in the
castle

Closet be his guard! and, *Hubert*, for thy news
Receive this trifle, earnest of our love. [A ring]

No, *Hubert*, never will we see young *Arthur*!
In princes honour holds it mean, to call
Or criminal or captives to our presence,
Unless to grant them liberty or pardon.

Hub. You would not then release him, Sir?

K. John. ————— Release him!

Not for thy soul! keep him, as thou wouldst guard
The pupil of thy eye from thorns or briars!
Let not even the relief of life, unless
From thy own cautious hand, come near him.

Hub. I take you, Sir—I'll guard him to your wishes.

K. John. Do that, beyond thy wishes will I love thee.
[An Officer whispers Falconbridge.]

Fal. My liege, we're told the Lady *Blanch* is fled
In terror to *Samur* —————

K. John. ————— The chance of war!
Her fortune now is in another's care:
For look thee, *Hubert*, *France* had never found
Pretence for war, unless from *Arthur's* claim:
And therefore had the boy now died in battle,
Or heretofore by sickness any way;
That drove suspicion of his death from us:
Not only these slight wars had been abortive,
But future times, in pregnancy of cares,
Pretensions, doubts, jealousies, commotions,
Had never reach'd the hope of life or action.

Hub. Had I thought that—I could have ended him,
Which now, Sir, would infringe the laws of war.

K. John. O, thou didst well, good *Hubert*, to pre-
serve him!

Consider, he's of royal blood, and therefore ———

Fal. My liege, the governor and magistrates
Attend to offer up the keys of *Angiers*.

K. *John*. 'Tis well, we will receive them—more at
leisure;

We will convince thee, *Hubert*, of our love;
Mean while attend thy prisoner as instructed.

Fal. This *Hubert* seems a rising favourite.

K. *John*. If features err not, *Hubert* is the man:
'Tis true, he's slow, has not the courtier's quickness,
Or half the hints we gave had fir'd his brain
To've done the deed we tremble but to name!
Some fitter time shall mould him to our purpose:
Now actions, open to the day, demand us. [*Apart.*

Now, cousin, set we forward; march to *Angiers*,
Thence to *England*; there, unbound and free,
Shall full prerogative and regal power
Chace from our plunder'd realms these wolves of *Rome*.

Fal. This battle the fierce cardinal fomented,
The blund'ring insolence of priestly power,
That thought to cow you from your right, with curses
Deluding *France*, by breach of oaths absolv'd,
To make a holy cause of *Rome's* presumption.

K. *John*. Now, where's the force of his anathemas?
Thinks he that words can blow us from our throne?
No; to her cost, o'erbearing *Rome* shall find,
Whene'er her holy bulls presume to bellow,
There's yet an *English* lion that can roar;
A king that mocks the lordly *Roman* chain;
And dares, to death, the right of kings maintain.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *the French Court.**PANDULPH, alone.*

DISCOURAG'D! no; this battle, like a blow
 Upon the burning cheek of injur'd honour,
 Shall turn the holy vengeance to destroy him.
 Suc^h daring outrage, heresy so flagrant,
 Should, as a midnight fire, wake the whole Christian
 world

To quench the flame. No, never can we bear
 The glories of our papal pow'r should stoop
 To the inferior sway of temp'ral princes.
France bears but ill this fierce rebuke of fortune;
 Therefore, in him to rouse the wonted zeal,
 The fiery spirit, needful to our cause,
 Must be our work of instant policy.
 He comes with wringing discontent, reproach,
 Vexation on his brow—it will be so!
 Passions, like sudden floods, must run their course,
 Till of themselves they ebb, and straight are fordable.

Enter King Philip and Dauphin.

K. Philip. Now, rash legate, what have thy counsels
 done?

Are these thy promis'd blessings from above?
 Now see the just reward of broken peace,
 Of faith betray'd! Is not the hand of heav'n
 Against us? *Arthur* taken, *Angiers* lost!
 Our arms disgrace the talk of vulgar tongues!
 While *John*, victorious from our bleeding fields,
 With spoils of *France*, in triumph sails to *England*.

Dauph. O mournful *Blanch*! how wilt thou now re-
 ceive me! [Exit Dauphin.]

Pand. Thus heav'n, by suff'rings, forms the great to-
 virtue;

Affliction bends the soul to piety.

The heart of man, made proud by pow'r, is apt
 To swell with self-opinion, to presume,
 As fortune and success were held his vassals.
 Yet think not heav'n forsakes, but by this stroke
 Incites thee rather to pursue this heretic ;
 As chance of war has made our cause more desp'rate,
 So are we bound, with double duty to retrieve it.

K. Philip. Preach to the seas ! *France* is not now himself :
 Recal the yester fun ! make me what then
 I was, with patience then——but not till then
 With patience can I hear thee : Ha ! see there !
 Behold a sorrow that exceeds our own.

Enter Constance, led by her women.

Reproach like this, what mortal breast can bear !
 Battles hard fought the bravest sword may lose,
 But by our broken faith we choose our shame !
 O fair distress ! well are thy wrongs reveng'd !

Const. What is thy loss to my calamity ?
 Thy wounds bleed only from the pride of pow'r
 Defeated ; mine a tender mother feels :
 Ambition never knew the throes of nature.

K. Philip. If shame, disgrace, and ruin on the head
 That wrought thy sorrows, can assuage them,
 Ease then thy wounded heart on my disasters.

Const. Has then affliction taught thee this compassion
Constance yet never knew a partner in
 Her woe : I came to triumph o'er thy fate ;
 But my reproach, suppress'd by thy contrition,
 Blends with my own a sigh to thy misfortunes.

Pand. These social sorrows, streaming to a point,
 But swell the flood, and make our purposes
 Impracticable.—[*Apart.*] Lady, be advis'd ;
 Let not your ill-tim'd grief dissolve the king
 In this unprofitable softness——

Could you urge ought to animate our cause,
 That to his martial spirit might recal him,
 Then better might his sword than sighs relieve you.

K. Philip. O never will that day return ! Advice
 Is irksome now as is a twice-told tale,
 Vexing the sick man's ear that fain wou'd slumber.

Const. If kings on earth are substitutes of heav'n,
Why would'st thou warn him from its attributes?
O if thy heart be human, thou must know
That pity, though it swells our grief, relieves it.

Pand. And yet 'twere kinder to redress than to augment it.

Const. I prithee let me grieve! Is that deny'd me? No.
I will not be barr'd the right of lamentation:
O that my wailings had the thunder's voice,
That I might rive the very inmost earth,
Till from its hollow womb grim death might rise
To give my miseries their only cure.

Pand. This more is madness than the voice of sorrow.

Const. Thou art not holy to belye me so;
I am not mad, I know my wretchedness;
This breast I beat, these hairs I rend are mine;
My name is *Constance*, *Arthur* is my son,
The rightful, the imprison'd heir of *England*.
Think me not mad, or thou wilt make me so.

K. Philip. Disturb not, give her griefs the way.

Const. ————— O would
To heav'n I were, that madness might relieve me.
Preach some philosophy to make me mad,
And I will call thee charitable father:
For while thou seest me sensible, thou seest
Me wretched as the sense of woe can make me.

Pand. O fair affliction! be thy soul at peace;
I meant not to awake, but hush thy sorrows;
Yet think that resignation is a duty;
For righteous ever is the will of heav'n.

Const. O 'tis too true, too rashly has, I fear,
My murmur'ring heart complain'd—'tis I, 'tis I,
Constance has drawn these dire afflictions down;
The life of *Arthur* was too young t' offend;
Therefore to double wailings am I doom'd,
That on my poor child's head my sins are fallen!

Pand. Despair not, lady, let your patience shew,
Amidst its wrath, your trust is still in heav'n.

Const. He talks to me, that never had a son.

K. Philip. Be not more fond of grief than of your son.

Const. I have no son, grief now supplies his room,
Fills up his vacant garments with his form,

Lies in his bed, walks hand in hand along,
 Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
 Remembers me of all his gracious parts ;
 Must the dear memory of these be lost ?
 And what, but grief, can print them in my mind ?

Enter Melun, who presents a packet to King Philip.

K. Philip. To us, *Melun* ; from whence ?

Mel. ————— Express from *England*.

These to the lord cardinal are address'd ;
 And the same post brought others to the *Dauphin*.

K. Philip. What hear we of the enemy ?

Mel. ————— King *John*

This night, we are inform'd, sets out for *Calais* ;
 Prince *Arthur*, Madam, to some frontier castle is
 Confin'd, where *Hubert* has the charge of him.

Const. Tho' death in all its terrors were his guard,
 Dauntless despair from fort to fort shall seek him :
 So when the fawn the hunters toils have snar'd,
 The bounding doe forsakes the safer herd ;
 Wild o'er the fields to his vain help she flies,
 And, press'd by fear, on pointed javelins dies. [*Exit.*]

Enter Dauphin, with letters.

Dauph. Now to our cause, Sir, bring we life reviv'd !
 Howe'er proud *John* may boast his feats in *France*,
 Fortune, in *England*, will with frowns receive him :
 His murm'ring barons, ripe for a revolt,
 Recounting here at large their grievances,
 Invite our arms to give their cause assistance.

K. Philip. To the same purport our advices speak :
 Here, from the lords of *Pembroke*, *Arundel*,
Warrin, and *Salisbury*, with farther pow'rs
 Associate, and by secret oaths assur'd,
 Receive we, by their own hands attested,
 Offers of fair advantage to our crown.

Pand. Here the same nobles have our holy pow'r
 Implor'd, to aid and sanctify their arms.
 Now mark ! how secret are the ways of heaven !
 That, from this battle lost, has only mov'd
 The war to surer ground, from *France* to *England* !

O! never let dejection droop the head!
 While thus the arm of Providence supports thee!
 That, when thy hopes were sinking, raises them
 To conquest, vengeance, and extended empire!

K. Philip. To *England's* empire, what vain hope can
 raise us?

Pand. Not hope, but right, shall to thy lineal blood
 Confirm thy claim! O! royal *Philip*, hear me!
 For now prophetic spirit bids me speak!

Here, here before thee, stands the heir of *England!*

Dauph. What means your eminence? explain this
 wonder.

K. Philip. Were *John* destroy'd, yet royal *Arthur* lives;
 And while he lives, what claim steps in before him?

Pand. Think you the date of *Arthur's* days a bar?
 Is not his life in *John* of *England's* pow'r?

O! never will he count his crown secure,
 Ne'er will his fears know rest, or heart have ease,
 Till life lies cold within the veins of *Arthur!*

K. Philip. Alas! unhappy prince! I fear his fate?

Pand. Grant me then *Arthur* lost, (as sure you must,
 Unless, against his nature, *John* turn saint)

Then, in the right of *Blanch* the dauphiness,
 (*John* standing out-law'd by his crimes to *Rome*)

Your blood comes lineal to the crown of *England!*

K. Philip. Yet say that *John* intends not *Arthur's* death?

Pand. Is he not dead already were the question!

Dauph. Why in so close a prison should he guard him?

Pand. Unless to end him were a cruelty

Unprofitable—or say he dies not now:

Yet when the warlike *Dauphin's* trumpet fills

The *English* air, that instant sound destroys him!

(For *John* dreams not of yours, but *Arthur's* claim)

Thence falls the strong impress on his fears!—

And if he kills him, what can save himself?

How shall our holy vengeance then pursue him!

Tempting, like hounds, his commons from allegiance,

To snarl and scramble for the bones of majesty!

Dauph. A people so misus'd deserve a leader.

Pand. Methinks I see this hurly all on foot!

Revolt and rage in every face!

Whose prejudice and zeal so fierce shall flame,
 That not a common vapour in the air,
 Or distant thunder in the clouds shall roll,
 But shall as prodigies, and dire portent, be deem'd
 Of destin'd vengeance on his impious head!

K. Philip. I see, I see it now! The will of heav'n
 ordains it!

And warlike preparations shall obey:
Mclun, lose not an hour! collect your troops,
 Recruit the broken; be their numbers doubled!
 Our edicts o'er the land once more shall drain
 The purse of nobles, and the peasantry:
 And O! lord cardinal——

Pand. ————— We know thy wants!
 Nor shall the exempted clergy here be free:
 The sov'reign pontiff, in a cause so righteous,
 Shall suffer thee to draw from sacred coffers,
 Though, by this aid, their charities were stinted!
 No, not a mendicant, in all thy realms,
 But shall his mite contribute to the cause!

K. Philip. Go then, our eldest hope! be thine the
 glory!

Waft thee with earliest winds to head this war!
 Drive from fair *Albion's* isle this infidel!
 Assert thy right, and mount his forfeit throne!
 To thy sage counsels, father, we commend him.

Pand. Not my own life more precious in my care.

Dauph. Nor life more pleasing than this glorious
 charge!

K. Philip. Farewel, my boy! if thou speed'st well—
 for ever.

Never was breast in parting so divided!
 If thou in *England* reign'st, thy right in *France*,
 While we survive, admits not thy return.
 Thus while thy welfare we of heav'n implore,
 Our highest hope—is never to behold thee more.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE changes to a chamber in the castle of Roan.

Enter King John with Hubert.

K. *John*. This strict observance of my orders, *Hubert*,
Commends thee to a better charge : Men of
Such vigilance are scarce, and should be cherish'd.

Hub. The trouble you have taken to convince your
eyes,
Coming in person to observe my care ;
As it has made me proud to have been prov'd ;
So shews it, Sir, how near this boy concerns you !
And therefore shall it mend my vigilance.

K. *John*. Think not a doubt of thee has brought me
hither !
I came, my *Hubert*, to assist thy care !
T' inform—instruct thee—to explain my orders !
Nay to conceal them from the world beside ;
For not within my realms know I a soul,
Whose friendly bosom I would sooner make
The casket of my secret deeds, than *Hubert*.

Hub. I hope, Sir, you have many more as faithful !
Yet this I know ! had I a secret here,
Unfit for other knowledge than your own ;
If force or torture would insist to know it, this
Within my heart should hide it from the world.

[*Shows a dagger.*]

K. *John*. *Hubert*, thy hand, thou art thy master's
master !
There's scarce a joy or sorrow in my soul,
But longs to find its fellowship in thee !
I had a thing to say—I know thou'rt secret :
Yet 'tis of such a nature—now I dare not !
The sun is in the heav'ns ! and his gay beams,
Exciting mirth and pleasure thro' the world,
Are all too wanton and too full of gauds
To give me audience—No, *Hubert*, the time
For speech like mine—were when the midnight bell,
With sound of iron tongue, proclaim'd the dead
And drowsy truce of worldly cares and labour !

The place—some dark church-yard or charnel-house,
Where tombs, or bones, and sculls, might only catch
My words! There could I meet thee, swoll'n with

wrongs,

When that thy furly spirit melancholy
Had bak'd thy blood, and made it heavy, stagnate!
Which else runs trickling up and down the veins,
Making that idiot laughter fill mens eyes,
Straing their cheeks to idle merriment,
A passion hateful to my purposes.

Hub. Have you a purpose, Sir, more fell than death?
To give, or to receive it, frights not *Hubert*;
Why then this pause, this diffidence of soul?

K. John. O! *Hubert!* could'st thou without eyes be-
hold me;

Hear without ears, or make without a tongue
Reply, using conceit alone, to found my wishes;
Then, in the face of this broad beaming day,
Would I into thy bosom pour my thoughts,
With the same confidence my brain conceives them:
But to a man like thee, whose sense compleat
Might weigh against his deeds their consequence,
I dare not, *Hubert*, O, I dare not hint them.

Hub. Then, Sir, to ease your heart, I will be plain:
I guess the secret that distresses you:
Fear not to trust me, Sir, I'll do the deed.

K. John. Thou flatter'st me ———

Hub. ———I'll serve you, Sir, but yet——

K. John. What yet? hast thou a doubt of me?

Hub. ———I've none.

Howe'er, because 'tis possible I may
Mistake your full intentions, you too must
Be plain, and trust me with each circumstance:
And, Sir, to shew you how secure you are,
There's my dagger; if, when you name the deed,
You find me change, or shew confusion in
My looks, or start in my reply a doubt,
Or scruple, to alarm your jealousy,
Then, from my craven heart, rip out your trust!
When you have kill'd me, you resume the secret.

K. John. Do I not know thee faithful?—Keep thy
dagger,

It may be useful——

Hub. ——Where?

K. John. ——Must I then speak it?

Hub. Or how shall I be sure that I obey you?

K. John. And yet, methinks, in darkness I could better——

This light offends——Shut forth the sun, and hear me!

[*Hubert darkens the windows.*]

K. John. So,—so,—this gloom befits our purpose——

Hub. ——Now, Sir.

K. John. O! *Hubert!* *Hubert!* *Arthur*—is alive!

Hub. There lies your grief; and you would have him——

K. John. ——Dead!

He is a very serpent in my way!

A pain to see, and danger to my steps!

If thou'rt my friend,——remove him.

Hub. ——When?

K. John. This night.——

Hub. ——By death?——

K. John. ——A grave.——

Hub. ——He shall not live.

K. John. Enough, my fears are hush'd! and now
with joy,

I can embrace thee. O, think! think, my friend!

Howe'er I've worn my crown——Thy hand alone

Can make it easy on my brow——This night

To *England* set we forward——When 'tis done,

Bring thou the news——There full reward shall wait thee.

[*Exit King John.*]

Hub. Now to my office, let me think upon't,
As to the time—the place—the means—why not
This very hour? There, where he is—by this!

[*Drawing his dagger.*]

Yet hold—to see the dagger ere he feels

The blow, his screams may give alarm without;

That—that we must avoid—unseen prevents it.

Perhaps he sleeps—then, without noise, we end him.

Steal on him softly, and observe—he prays!

The fitter for his fate——a second thought

Determines to my wish——suppose, when dead,

Some proof were left that he destroy'd himself;

The means, kept secret, will be half the merit:
 That crowns the work; by this his beads are counted—
 List—no—he's praying still—ha—what is't I hear!
 Distraction to my sense!—he prays for me!
 For *Hubert*! who has made his chains fit easy,
 And thanks high heav'n he has so kind a keeper.
 What means this damp reluctance on my brow?
 These trembling nerves, this ague in my blood?
 Is death more cruel from a private dagger,
 Than, in the field, from murd'ring swords of thousands?
 Or does the number slain make slaughter glorious?
 Why then is conscience more restrain'd in me,
 Than in a crown'd ambition? Conscience there can sleep
 Secure by custom and impunity:
 Shall custom, then, excuse the crimes of pow'r,
 And shall the brave be baffled by a shadow?
 Let sickly conscience shake the vulgar soul,
 That brute-like plods the beaten paths of life,
 Without reflection on its slavery—no,
 Be *Hubert's* actions, like his thinking, free.

Enter Arthur.

He's here: Young prince I have to talk with thee.

Artb. O! *Hubert*, I'm glad thou art return'd;
 Thou told'st me thou would'st move my uncle for
 My liberty, and hast thou seen him? ha!
 What means that thoughtful brow? these folded arms?
 And why this noon-tide gloom? this doleful shade?
 Art thou not well? I prithee tell me, *Hubert*;
 Or has my uncle's answer made thee sad?
 For me bad news is better than suspense.

Hub. Be satisfy'd—for thou must die a prisoner.

Artb. A prisoner! Tedious life! O, cruel uncle!
 Is there no hope, dear *Hubert*? Must I pine
 Away my days within these lonesome walls?
 For life a prisoner, said'st thou?—

Hub. ————Only death
 Can end thy miseries———

Artb. ————Then death were welcome!

Hub. I take thee at thy word. This dagger shall
 Release thee.———

Arth. ————Ha! Why dost thou fright me, *Hubert*?

Hub. Thy fate is in my hand; raise not thy voice
On pain of ling'ring wounds. Now, then observe me:
Those golden tablets I have seen thee use,
Without delay produce them, quick———

Arth. ———— Here! here!

O! *Hubert*, I have a diamond on my finger too,
Take that: within I have other gems of value;
My little pray'r-book is with precious stones
Beset, and clasp'd with gold; I'll yield thee all.
Nay, more, my wretched mother (give me time
To write) I know will starve her state to save me!
Let me but live, though here in misery;
And, *Hubert*, I will find the means to make
Thy life one live-long age of happiness.

Hub. Think'st thou I came to rob thee of thy toys?

Arth. It is not robbery: Why so harsh a name?
It is thy right, good *Hubert*; am I not
Thy captive, fairly taken in the field?
Therefore whate'er was mine, by the known laws
Of war, is duly thine by glorious claim,
Thy right and purchase of superior valour.

Hub. I let him talk too much: I must be speedy——

[*Apart.*

Down, foolish quail; here, write as I shall dictate.

Arth. Most willingly. O! any thing t' appease thee.

Hub. For secret reasons we must make thy death
Seem to the world thy voluntary choice———
Nay, no reluctance, do it.———

Arth. ————Cruel *Hubert*!

Must I do more than die? O! mercy! mercy!

Hub. Suppress thy voice, or thou art days in dying.

Arth. I will; O, spare me, *Hubert*, but a moment!
But while I call once more on heav'n! Indeed,
I'd not be loud! alas! I need not, there
The softest supplicating sigh is heard to heav'n.

Hub. First, as I bid thee, write; then shalt thou pray.

Arth. What would thy rage enjoin me?

Hub. ———— Write me thus:

“From an injurious world and doleful prison,
“By my own hand this dagger set me free.”
Write.

Arth. ————O! *Hubert*, kill not my soul, nor let
Me send, in death, a falsehood up to heav'n!

Hub. Write, or thou dy'st before a pray'r can 'scape
thee.

Arth. Should I write this, what pray'r could wash away
The sin! No, *Hubert*, no, if I must die,
I dare not taint my innocence; and since
Thy heart has none—may heav'n have mercy on me!

[*Drops the tablets.*]

Hub. Wilt thou provoke my rage?

Arth. ————How can I help it!
If I refuse to write, I can at worst but die;
And should I write, next moment thou wilt kill me.
Was it for this I sent my pray'rs for *Hubert*?

Hub. ————Ha!

Arth. This very hour I pray'd. O! if an angel
Should have dropp'd from heav'n t' have told me this,
So well I thought of *Hubert*, O! I could not,
Could not have believ'd him!—

[*Hubert, after some pause of confusion, throws down
the dagger.*]

Hub. I cannot bear this innocence! ————

Arth. ————O heaven!

My pray'r is heard, *Hubert* is what he was.
In his relenting eyes his virtue lives,
And, like my guardian angel, wakes me from
This dream of death. ————

Hub. ————Short-sighted wretch
To think such cruelty was practicable! [*To himself.*]
O! raise thee from the earth, poor injur'd prince!
Thy youth, thy innocence, thy blooming virtue,
Have conquer'd, and redeem'd my soul from ruin!

Arth. Now thou hast taught my eyes to weep for thee!
O *Hubert*! wilt thou spare me? shall I live?

Hub. Not all thy uncle's treasure, nor his honours
Shall tempt me to thy harm! O sleep secure!
Hence to some fort in *England* will I bear thee:
There shall a short concealment be thy guard,
Till fate and kinder seasons may relieve thee.

Arth. O might I once behold the fields of *England*,
Tho' from a prison-tow'r, the prospect would delight me.

Hub. This night shall speed us in our voyage—Ha !
What knocking !

Arth. —————How I tremble !

Hub. —————Be compos'd.
Some officer with notice from the guard.
How now ! the news ?

Enter an Officer.

Off. —————The Lady *Constance*, Sir,
Is taken———

Arth. —————Ha ! My mother !

Hub. —————Where ? from whence ?

Off. Hearing her son was pris'ner in this castle,
Her griefs have ventur'd, with a small retinue,
To risk the mercy of an enemy,
In hope to have a sight of him : she waits
Without, and begs in tears to have an audience.

Hub. Conduct her to the council room—we attend
her. *[Exit Officer.]*

Come, prince : to dissipate thy terrors past,
We'll venture to admit this interview.
Short must it be———

Arth. —————It shall, indeed, dear *Hubert*.

I'll not misuse thy goodness.———

Hub. —————O my shame !

How will thy terrors ever be atton'd !

Arth. Despair not, *Hubert* ! let thy comfort be,
Howe'er thy soul has wander'd into error,
No virtue claims more praise than penitence ;
Has not the holy parable declar'd
That one poor soul recover'd, from astray,
Does more triumphant joy to heav'n convey,
Than flows from ninety-nine, that never lost their way. }

[Exeunt.]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE *the Dauphin's camp, near St. Edmondsbury.*

*Enter in arms, Salisbury, Pembroke, Warren, Arundel,
with other Lords, &c. attended.*

S A L I S B U R Y.

THUS far our measures for redress have prosper'd:
France, by her aid of arms, approves our cause;
 The king, too weak to face us, is retir'd;
 His people, by the bulls of *Rome*, absolv'd
 From their allegiance, throng to our support:
 Never had *English* freedom hope more sanguine!
 Let but this crisis hold our union firm;
 Now shall our charter seal'd, to ages hence
 Record our ample rights and liberties.

Pemb. Those rights obtain'd, my lords, our next
 concern

Is to dismiss in peace the arms of *France*:
 For if intelligence deceives me not,
Pandulph, since the report of *Arthur's* death,
 Has publicly avow'd, that as King *John*
 By excommunication stands abjur'd,
 His crown is to the *Dauphin's* head consign'd!
 That I must own my *English* heart—disgusts!

Salis. If *Rome*, my lord, has promis'd more to *France*
 Than *English* subjects are content to yield,
 Let, as she may, proud *Rome* acquit herself.
 No! shou'd this *Dauphin* to her crown succeed,
 Our precious isle becomes to *France* a province!
 That thought—O! it embitters all we've done!
 Let us, for shame, not lay ourselves the plan
 Of abject slavery to foreign power:
 Shall petty viceroys lord it o'er our nobles?
 Shall light-heel'd *Frenchmen* dance upon our greens,
 While we at distance sigh beneath our chains,
 Nor join the carrols of their apish triumph!

Pemb. No *English* soul but spurns against the thought;

Yet still, my lords, a medium must be kept :
 This *Dauphin*, while our friend, we must carefs,
 Holding his aid of arms in amity ;
 Though firmly fixt, that neither *Rome* nor *Paris*
 Shall ever give to *England* kings or laws.

Salif. With gentle love then, and with due regard,
 Let us attend his highness at his rising ;
 Receive, as soldiers, with our smiles his orders ;
 As chief obey him : never as our king !

Arun. But see, my lords, the *Dauphin* is at hand,
 And with a cheerful eye approaches us.

Enter Dauphin, attended.

Salif. Good health and happy morning to your highness.

Pemb. Your early stirring has prevented us.

Dauph. My lords of *England*, we are bound to you.
 Our scouts this morning brought us early word,
 That ere the setting of the yester sun,
 King *John*, but from what cause alarm'd they say not,
 Struck all his tents for sudden secret march :
 Northward he still sets on, and flies before us ;
 Yet we at last shall force him to a stand,
 Though to the hindmost *Orcades* we hunt him.
 Have we no farther news ? —————

Salif. ————— My letters, Sir,
 Inform us, that on *Tuesday* last, from *Roan*,
Hubert, who had in charge imprison'd *Arthur*,
 Was seen to land at *Dover*, all in haste ;
 Where, hearing that the king was to the North
 Retir'd, 'twas thought he posted on the spur,
 To follow him : His leaving *Roan* so soon,
 And parting in such hurry from his post,
 Gives foul suspicion that the secret charge
 Of *Hubert*, in the death of *Arthur* ————— ended.

Dauph. If this be true, it cannot long be secret ;
 But, till his death from evidence is certain,
 We must suspend the varying of our measures.

Pemb. If his ambition dares out-step our treaty,
 Those measures must have our consent to vary. [*Aside.*]

Dauph. Prepare we then to press him by pursuit :
 Is this the mighty *John*, who in the field

Of *Mirabel* mow'd down our troops like grain,
 And brought his harvest home of spoils to *England*?
 Now like the vermin fox, from earth to earth
 He flies, nor finds a citadel for safety!
 But why this wonder at his flight? since now
 These valiant barons that obey'd, oppos'd him.
 How seem the people in those parts affected?

Salif. The graver sort, that bear with grief the war,
 Religiously accuse the impious king,
 Terming his treatment of the holy chair
 A madness! Other tongues, of speech more free,
 Insist that *Rome's* more cruel than the king,
 Who, tho' his rashness urg'd offence too far,
 Yet has his punishment outweigh'd the error.
 But see! the cardinal approaches, Sir,
 To lead the people in his holy charge;
 He better may inform you of their temper.

Enter Pandulph.

Pand. 'Tis well! 'tis well! ye pious sons of war!
 This dread array becomes our holy cause!
 O! may the matchless glory of your arms,
 With the dire vengeance on this nation pour'd,
 Go hand in hand to future ages down,
 At once the praise and terror of the world!

Daupb. Never had Christian swords a cause more glorious!

Salif. As for the glory, *France* and *Rome* may share it,
 Our honest swords compound for liberty. [Apart.]

Daupb. But say, lord cardinal, how bears the land
 This driving, from our Christian fold, their king?
 What wholesome fruit has the severity
 Produc'd?—

Pand. ——— Never did sad calamity
 (The consequence of sacred pow'r oppos'd)
 Make, in one day, such havock of a people!
 No sooner was the dread *anathema* denounc'd,
 But, like the burst of thunder from the heav'ns,
 It struck the shudd'ring nation with dismay!
 Even pale devotion, at the doom, stood silent,
 Nor dar'd to lift her downcast eye for hope;

O! never was a state so terrible!
 Now all the rites of holy function cease!
 Infants unsprinkled want their Christian names!
 Lovers, in vain betroth'd, resume despair,
 Nor find a fire to sanctify their vows!
 In vain the dying sinner groans for pardon!
 Ev'n penitence depriv'd of absolution,
 In all the agonies of fear expires!
 Nor after death has at the grave a pray'r,
 Or for the parted soul one *requiem* sung.

Dauph. O dreadful state! how can this moody king
 Thus brave the vengeance of offended heav'n!

Pand. Where'er I pass, the voice of lamentation
 From crowds of wretches prostrate at my feet,
 Pierces my ear for pity of their woes!
 Pity, indeed, will from my eyes steal down;
 But further charity's restrain'd by heav'n!
 Then, like dumb ghosts, with vacant eyes they 'stalk,
 As if, ev'n here, for foul offences past,
 Their souls were in the state of their purgation!

Salif. [*Apart.*] This mouthing priest would swell the
 pow'r of *Rome*,
 And paints her bulls more frightful than they are:
 I know he wrongs the truth! for wise men smile
 At all this foam and froth of holy rage,
 That fights beneath the shield of sanctity,
 But to enlarge their bounds of carnal power.

Pemb. Let him proceed—it serves our present purpose,
 Alarms the ignorant to join our cause,
 Whom 'tis not now our part to undeceive. [*Apart.*]

Enter Melun.

Dauph. Welcome, *Melun*; I sent thee to observe
 The enemy; what fell within thy notice?

Mel. North-eastward from our camp, we are assur'd,
 A fresh supply is landed, Sir, from *France*;
 Which from his castles there King *John* has drawn,
 To serve his greater exigence at home;
 And his late movement, from the plains of *Lincoln*,
 Was but to guard those forces thro' the fens.

Dauph. Our speedier march then must oppose their passage ;

Ev'n, with the morrow's sun, this mighty host
Shall see our helmets blaze upon their faces !

Mel. But what yet more might warm us to pursue him,
Is now his sacrilegious tyranny !
For as I posted hither on my way,
My speed o'ertook a troop of hoary prelates,
The lords of *London, Ely, Worcester, Bath,*
And *Hereford*, o'ercast with venerable sadness ;
Whom, for their duteous daring to advise
Obedience to the holy chair, King *John*
Had from his presence spurn'd with menaces
Of death, if henceforth found within his kingdom :
Which heavy dreadful sentence to avoid,
Throws their distresses at the feet of *France*,
For charitable shelter and protection !

Dauph. Not only that, but on their tyrant's head,
With heav'n's high help our vengeance shall redress them :

Pand. Alas ! his fury stops not here, where'er
His pow'r extends th' inferior clergy feel it !
Proscrib'd and outed from the holy convents,
Their lands are seiz'd, tho' sacred to their function,
And to th' unhallow'd use of troops assign'd ;
Their persons, wheresoever found, misus'd,
Pillag'd, and scoff'd by martial insolence !

[*An attendant whispers Melun.*

Mel. The rev'rend prelates, Sir, are now arriv'd,
And beg your highness will vouchsafe their audience.

Dauph. Ourselves will meet them on their way : My lords
Of *England*, hold we all in readiness ;
Our army with the creeping night shall march,
That ere the foe can from his drowsy limbs
Shake off his lothness to the call of action,
Our onsets, like a torrent, may devour him :
So from the lofty mountains, snows, let loose,
Roll to the vale with inundation down,
While flocks and herds in seas of pasture drown.

[*Exeunt all but Pandulph.*

Pand. The ardour of this *Dauphin* must be watch'd ;
His headstrong youth may grow, upon success,

Intractable, as *England*, to the holy see ;
 Therefore the secret overtures of *John*,
 To which our spies inform us he inclines,
 Must we with temper cherish to submission.
 How far this fresh supply of arms may change him,
 Stands yet in doubt—A day at least resolves us :
 But hark ! from whence this trumpet ? Now, the news.

Enter an Officer.

Off. An envoy from King *John* express arriv'd,
 Desires admittance to your eminence.

Pand. This—tallies with our scheme—Now to receive him.

If he brings letters,——conduct him to our Secretary.——

Off. Letters he has, my lord, but says,
 To your own hand he must deliver them.

Pand. So absolute ! produce this insolent ! [*Ex. Off.*]
 As yet the speech of our displeasure must be warm !

Falconbridge approaching slowly, kneels to Pandulph.

Whence, and from whom thy business ? from your king ?

Fal. Most eminent, most holy lord rever'd !
 Imploring first a blessing on my charge,
 This from my contrite master makes it known.
 Let me not rise unblest'd. [*Gives a letter.*]

Pand. —— Couldst thou divide
 The legate from the man, thou shouldst not kneel
 In vain—but blessings from the realms are banish'd.

Fal. May piety and penitence restore them. [*Rising.*]

Pand. The humble bearing of this minister
 At length, I see, bespeaks an humble master.

Fal. This temper of his eminence, this form
 Of stately charity foretels success !
 He read from my humility my errand,
 And darted from his eye a conscious triumph !

[*Pand. having read the letter, proceeds.*]

Pand. 'Tis done ! once more proud heresy shall stoop !
 Triumphant *Rome* for ever now shall tread
 Upon rebellious crowns, and at her will dispose them !
 But soft ! conceal we with contempt the joy !

Suppress the pleasure, and enlarge the triumph! [*Aside.*
Well then these letters stile thee *Falconbridge*,
And give thy speech full credit from thy master;
But yet, alas! the humble penitence
He here professes, must give ample proof
Of his sincerity.——

Fal. ——Can that be doubted?
When to the holy see resign'd he bends,
To wear an humble tributary crown?

Pand. Though we are bound in charity to hope
The best, it still behoves us to be cautious;
Lest worldly views impose upon the mercy
Of an indulgent mother.——

Fal. ——How! impose!

Pand. What means that echo, Sir?——

Fal. Shall I be plain?

Pand. Observe thy distance and thy rev'rence due;
Nor, for thy soul, let ought escape thy tongue,
That unbefits our holy dignity
To hear.——

Fal. My lord, I cannot cull my phrases;
Nor came I here to purge the conscience of
King John, but to solicit peace with *Rome*.

Pand. Canst thou suppose this treatment will prevail?

Fal. I think our mutual int'rest should prevail.

Pand. Int'rest!

Fal. ——My lord, my lord, that's the plain sense,
How'er with specious terms 'tis gilded o'er:
And you, who know that princes are but men,
Must know, unless where passions intervene,
That int'rest is the spring that moves their glory!

Pand. Would'st thou give carnal views to holy pow'r?

Fal. This is no time, my lord, to silence truth!
Our masters both have been too jealous of
Their rights, and to extremities have urg'd them!
To urge them farther, might to both be fatal!
For say, your holy vengeance should prevail,
That *France* by conquest seize the crown of *England*;
Would such united empire give no fears
To *Rome* of worse encroachments on her pow'r?
Take heed, my lord, ambition is a rav'nous beast!

Feed not this *Dauphin's* hope too high ! whose strength
May, like the lion's home-bred whelp, grown up,
Devour the very hand that foster'd him.

Pand. Give me a moment's pause—to aid our mercy.
This bluntness, tho' offensive, is convincing :
And yet the sacred honour of the chair
Must have its pomp of reverence. [*Aside.*] Within an hour
Attend me at the neighbouring convent ! There
Our measures more digested shall dispatch thee.

[*Exit Pan.*

Fal. With what reluctant gravity and pride
This priest receives the wishes of his soul !
Why do I blame him ? did not I the same ?
When humbly kneeling at his rev'rend feet,
I cover'd with humility my scorn !
Yet int'rest overlooks the mutual cheat !
It must be so ! were men t' appear themselves,
Set free from customs that restrain our nature,
Nor wolves nor tigers would dispute more fiercely !
Yet all we boast above the brute is—what ?
That in our times of need we dare dissemble !
How vile is the pre-eminence we're vain of !
Yet cold sincerity could ne'er have heal'd
Our breach with *Rome* : There art was useful !
O ! could it equally at home succeed !
Tempting our barons back to their allegiance !
Let us but win their forces from the war,
Should that blest hour intestine feuds o'ercome,
Our village-curs should bark these *Frenchmen* home.

[*Exit.*

King John in his tent alone.

K. John. It must be so—the contest is in vain !
Why should I risk a kingdom for a people
That are themselves unwilling to be free ?
Whose zeal, enslav'd, not only courts the chains
Of *Rome*, but thinks in conscience kings should wear them.
The moody barons too, that head those bigots,
Take this advantage of the holy ferment,
To lop the branches of prerogative.
Then the reproachful death of *Arthur* ! There's

My jealous fears have plung'd my arm too far!
 A rash and fruitless policy! In death
 He is become more terrible than living!
 Thence have I rais'd in *France* a stronger claim;
 The guilt of *Hubert* too now dreads t' approach me!
 Or may, to save himself, make me most odious.
 These evils join'd must in their ends be fatal!
Rome! *Rome* then, that has ruin'd, must redeem me!
 The terms—'tis true are harsh and terrible
 To honour! to the vulgar meritorious!
 They think the bulls of *Rome* the voice of heav'n!
 And tremble for their king that dares contest them!
 The pride of *Becket* too subdu'd my father;
 And yet his warlike reign lives fam'd in story!
 Princes should think no price too dear for pow'r;
 And what are kings without a people? *Hubert!*

Enter Hubert.

Hub. At length, my liege, I come to bring you news—

K. John. For which thy trait'rous soul shall howl in horrors!

Slave, thou hast undone me! were not the flames,
 That *Rome* had rais'd, sufficient to consume;
 But thou must add thy brand of provocation,
 Thy damn'd officious murder, to the ruin,
 To give its cause pretence, and fortify rebellion?

Hub. Sir, you mistake the service I have done you;
 'Tis not the claim of *Arthur* to your crown,
 But his reported death provokes your people!

K. John. Villain! dar'st thou insult me on the crime,
 Thy longing to commit seduc'd me to endure!

Hub. Whate'er my inclination was—you now—

K. John. O! 'tis the curse of princes to be serv'd
 By slaves that take their wishes for a warrant;
 That on the bare inquietude of looks,
 Presume t' expound our passions into law,
 And, on the sanction of a frown, commit
 Such deeds as damns the conscience that conceives them.

Hub. Yet, Sir, be patient! when you hear my story—

K. John. Think not involving me t' excuse thyself!
 I had some cause to wish him dead; but thou

Hadst none, saving what thy nature prompted !
 How oft have evil deeds, for want of means
 To give them practice, dy'd in the conception ?
 But thou being present to the curst occasion,
 Ere scarce the thought could ripen into purpose,
 Thy stony heart made offer of the deed,
 And mock'd my fears with impious resolution !

Hub. My gracious liege ! I beg you be compos'd !

K. John. Hadst thou but shook thy head, or made a
 pause,

When I obscurely murmur'd my disquiet ;
 Hadst thou but shewn one sign of inward grace,
 With one reluctant shrug declin'd the motion,
 Pale conscience then, retreating from the guilt,
 Had smother'd in my breast the dreadful deed,
 Never to rise in my reflection more !
 But thou, like the curst fiend in Paradise,
 Laidst lurking in my paths of rumination,
 To watch the secret wishes of my soul,
 And tempt its frailty to eternal ruin !

Hub. Now, Sir, yourself be judge ! had I obey'd
 Your dread commands, how wretched had I made you ?
 For know, to give your soul its former peace,
 Young *Arthur* lives ; my coward heart has fav'd him !
 I am but half the villain you have spoke me.

K. John. Prove me this true, and thy whole soul is
 angel !

Hub. O ! when I came to practise on his life,
 I found the execution was as far
 Remov'd from what my first conceit had form'd,
 As danger from delight ! as hell from heav'n !
 His blooming form, his youth, his piety,
 His resignation, innocence, and tears,
 Rush'd as from ambush on my lifted arm,
 And seiz'd me captive to his sufferings !
 With melting eyes I dropt the poniard down,
 And, at the hazard of your rage, preserv'd him !

K. John. O ! *Hubert ! Hubert !* thou hast sav'd thy master !
 Redeem'd him from the deepest, hideous plunge,
 That ever stain'd the glories of ambition !
 The rage thou fear'dst now blushes into joy,

And crowns thy disobedience with applause !
 This deed undone shall double thy reward,
 And pay thy mercy with unbounded favour !
 But soft—our cousin is return'd : At fitter time
 My heart shall open more——mean-while,
 Be careful of my fame, and form thy fortune !

Enter Falconbridge.

Now, cousin, is yet this legate flexible ?
 Hast thou, though on his own high terms, succeeded ?

Fal. If, Sir, to have prevail'd on haughty *Rome*,
 To tread in triumph on the crown of *England*,
 Be deem'd success ; such peace has *Rome* accepted.
 The time, the terms, and solemn ceremonies
 Here more at large, the legate has appointed.

[Presents a writing.]

K. John. Seasons must be obey'd ! what from the barons ?

Fal. What makes our peace with *Rome* more needful now ;
 The strong report of *Arthur's* death has worse
 Effect on them than on the common sort !
 The vulgar only shake their cautious heads,
 Or whisper in the ear, wisely suspicious,
 Gripping the hearer's wrist—who starts—and stops
 With wrinkled brows—and shrugs—and rolling eyes !
 As if his life depended on his secrecy !
 I saw a smith stand with his hammer thus !
 Who, while his iron on the anvil cool'd,
 With open mouth swallow'd a taylor's news !
 Of thousands more of *Frenchmen* pouring on
 Our coasts, in dreadful march of fire and sword !
 Another lean, unwash'd artificer
 Cuts off his tale, and talks of *Arthur's* death !

K. John. Were this the worst, the freezing vulgar yet
 Might, by our holy peace with *Rome*, be thaw'd
 To their allegiance : But the barons ! There !
 How such a needful peace may weigh with them——

Fal. There stand we yet in fear ! for *Arthur's* death
 Has so inflam'd the spleen of their complaints,
 That never shall their swords in peace be sheath'd,
 Or to allegiance civil arms return,
 Till the full manner of his death be question'd,

And *Hubert*, whom their strong suspicions charge,
Be duly render'd to the public justice.

K. John. Now say that *Arthur* lives, who then shall right
A monarch's fame, and punish his revilers?

Hub. Will they believe their eyes, if I produce him?

Fal. Ha! is it possible! produce him! *Arthur*!
Does he then live to shame this calumny?

Hub. Hearing the malecontents had thrown such vile
Aspersions on the head of majesty,
Unbidden have I dar'd to bring from *Roan*
The living *Arthur* to confound the falsehood.

K. John. Now judge, how all their other griefs are
grounded.

Fal. Lies and rebellion have been ancient friends!

Hub. Here in the castle, to this camp adjacent,
He now is plac'd, and the king commands——

Fal. O Sir! I beg that *Hubert* and myself
May to the barons instantly produce him;
On such conviction, with my life I'll answer,
Their temper, tho' misguided, shall return,
And fall from *France* before her force can face us!

K. John. Fly then this moment, haste to undeceive them,
That due allegiance may defend her pastures!

No more let jealousies, immers'd in rage,
Hazard those liberties, which civil swords
Falsly maintaining might to foes betray!
Tell them their ancient rights shall be confirm'd
In great and ample characters fam'd to ages:

Thus shall obedience fortify our throne,
And mutual love all errors past atone.

[*Exeunt*.]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

Arthur on the walls of a Castle.

ARTHUR.

O *Hubert! Hubert!* are my hopes at last
 Confin'd within these lonely, ragged walls!
 Was it for this thy fruitless mercy spar'd me?
 Ah! what is life, depriv'd of liberty?
 It shall be so, these walls no more shall hide me:
 The moat beneath I've fathom'd with a line,
 And find its depth proportion'd to my stature;
 At worst, the danger's less attempting to escape,
 Than pining here in hourly fear of death:
 Take courage, heart! whatever chance befall thee
 Cannot be sorer than my suff'ring here.
 Eternal providence, to thee I bow,
 Extend thy gracious arm to save my fall!
 But, if thy sacred pleasure has decreed,
 Thy sinful creature must untimely bleed;
 For a repentant soul, ye saints, make room,
 Who seeks his happiness in worlds to come.

*[He leaps from the walls, and is covered by a parapet
 between his body and the audience.]*

*Enter Falconbridge, Hubert, Salisbury, Pembroke and
 Arundel*

Salis. Prove him but living, and the terms are welcome:

Nor think our bodies have been cas'd in steel,
 To wrong the native cause of royal pow'r:
 But to assert our liberties and rights,
 As in the laws of *Edward* they are cited.
 Which, if the king by charter shall confirm,
 And give enfranchisement to royal *Arthur*,
 Nor mew him up to choke his days
 With barb'rous ignorance, or deny his youth

The princely helps of graceful exercise ;
Then shall appear'd resistance sheath her sword,
Or henceforth turn it on the foes of *England* !

Fal. Spoke with the spirit of an *English* noble !
Nought then remains, but that your eyes have proof
Of *Arthur's* health and princely liberty.

Hubert, conduct us——

[*As they are passing to the castle, Salisbury sees the body of Arthur in the ditch.*

Salif.———Ha ! what body's this,
That in the water, 'midst the weeds and rushes,
Mischance or malice has depriv'd of life !

[*They bring the body forward.*

Ha ! 'tis he ! 'tis *Arthur* ! royal *Arthur* breathless !
Pale, cold, and lost beyond recovery !

Hub. O fatal chance——

Fal.———*Hubert* ! if thou hast done
This deed, or but in thought consented to it,
Thou art more deeply damn'd than *Lucifer* !

Hub. By heav'n ! within this hour I left him living !

Salif. This sure is the most savage act of power,
The deadliest wound that ever wall-ey'd rage
Or malice gave the heart of innocence !

Fal. Villain ! I do suspect thee grievously !

Hub. Then, on my soul, most grievously you wrong
me !

Salif. Wrong thee, traitor ! what proof so palpable !

Hub. If I in act, direction, or consent,
Have done, conspir'd, or compass'd ought
That has bereft this hapless youth of life,
Let hell want pains to punish me !

Salif. Since murder thus defies the pains of hell,
Down then to hell's wide horrors that attend thee.

[*Stabs him.*

Fal. What has your rashness done, my lord !

Salif.———A deed

That dries the tears of pity with revenge !

Fal. *Hubert*, look up, and ere thy breath forsakes thee,
Now, as thou hop'st to find eternal mercy !
Inform us truly how this youth was murder'd.

Hub. Then by those last dear hopes I'm ignorant !

But 'tis the fate of those who once are guilty,
Never to be believ'd when innocent.

Thus having once consented to destroy him,
The bare intention was a crime too great
To pass unheeded by eternal justice ;
Yet, let me say——so may my soul reach heav'n,
As of this prince's death I'm innocent. [Dies.

Fal. You hear, my lords, a dying man's report.

Salif. We hear enough to charge his death on tyranny,
Whether by that vile hand, or by mischance,
It matters not, his prison has destroy'd him !
Now back, Sir, to the king ; tell him how ill
His proofs of *Arthur* living have succeeded ;
But how he dy'd our swords shall have in question ;
Our battles are at hand, if he thinks fit
To answer us in arms, our arms shall make
Reply—This tell him, Sir—Our parley's ended.

Fal. But this, and I have done. I know the king
Is still inclin'd to give your griefs redress :
Consider, therefore, if you prosecute
This war, how far more dangerous is the cure
Your swords apply, than what his scepter offers.

Salif. The danger be on us.

Fal.———Farewel, my lords. [Exit Fal.

Salif. Now bear we to our camp this injur'd object,
Which, like the wounds of *Cæsar*, when expos'd,
Shall raise the common pity to revenge,
And warm the neutral coward to our cause ;
But to his mournful mother, O ! what heart,
What tongue the dismal tidings shall impart !

[Excunt with the body of Arthur.]

S C E N E, a room of state.

*Enter in procession (to solemn music) Pandulph, preceded
by clergy, &c. of several orders. Then the nobles and
officers of state before King John, (supported by two abbots)
wearing his crown and robes. Pandulph being seated,
the king, with the abbots, kneel to him.*

Abbot. Thus bending to the throne of *Innocent*,
Our holy sov'reign Sire, whose heav'n-born pow'r
All Christian crowns implicitly obey ;

Thus come we humble supplicants in sighs
 And sorrow for a sinful son ; whose rash
 Ambition in his pride of pow'r has dar'd————
 O ! spare us to repeat the dreadful crime,
 Too black and terrible for Christian ears !
 But if the pangs of penitence may plead————

K. John. Behold him prostrate, contrite, 'whelm'd
 with shame !

Off'ring this sacrifice of temp'ral glory,
 His crown surrender'd to the holy see,
 To mitigate the wrath of heavenly vengeance.

[Lays his crown at the feet of Pandulph.]

Pand. Thy penitence, thy contrite heart, O son,
 Gives joy and transport to our holy mother :
 Not human nature is more prone t'offend,
 Than, on sincere repentance, she to pardon !
 Yet think not crowns or sceptres could alone
 Prevail, or tempt her, in the pride of nature,
 T'accept these offerings of thy mortal pow'r,
 Which, as the human world esteems them——Thus
 Beneath her foot she spurns their carnal glory.

[He treads upon the crown.]

But, as in social life, mankind requires
 Controlling kings to rule their headstrong passions,
 To curb injustice by coercive laws ;
 Thus from the sacred apostolic grace,
 As tributary lord, dependent ever
 On our holy father, supreme on earth,
 Receive this circle of imperial sway
 Once more, to keep these temp'ral realms in awe,
 And fight the sacred battles of the chair.

[Returns the crown.]

K. John. With lowly reverence and humble heart,
 Vowing obedience to our sov'reign pontiff,
 Unworthy I receive this temp'ral crown ;
 But now must kneel for an afflicted people,
 Pierc'd with the pains of errors not their own !
 O ! never must these guilty eyes look up !
 Till holy mercy shall restore their peace,
 By revocation of her dreadful censures !

Pand. Arise, repentant son, thy sweet conversion

Shall chase these clouds of vengeance from thy land,
 Of souls unheal'd will we resume the cure :
 Nor foreign or domestic foe shall now
 Presume to give thy fertile fields annoyance :
 Now shalt thou find the holy breath, that blew
 This tempest up, shall make the storm subside.
 This *Dauphin's* thunder at our word shall cease,
 And hush'd ambition leave thy realms in peace. [*Exeunt.*]

The scene a field.

Enter Dauphin, Melun, Salisbury, Pembroke, and
 Barons, &c.

Dauph. Why not to night, my lords? Are not his
 late
 Supplies from *France* in the deep marshes lost?
 Arms, horses, ammunition, treasure, all
 Immers'd and bury'd in the floods of *Welland*?
 And shall we now stand pausing o'er our prey?
 And by our cold debates retard our conquest?

Salif. Consider, Sir, our shadows lengthen with
 Our march! the sun scarce lending light to lead us!
 Let us at least take day enough for slaughter;
 Nor let their fears, behind the shield of night,
 Skulk from the sword of blinded victory.

Pemb. And for the succours they have lost, 'tis not
 A day or moon's duration can recruit them.

Salif. That load will lie as heavy on their hopes
 To-morrow——

Pemb.——— Should we now engage them, Sir,
 While the long march that hangs upon our troops,
 Brings down the spirit to a drooping eye,
 How might the enemy, tho' less in numbers,
 Hail with repose, and, confident in vigour,
 With more than equal strength sustain the battle?

Salif. Let us then take th' advantage of the night
 For rest, and of the morn for stronger action.

Dauph. O! if your spirits were inflam'd like mine,
 To rest this night would be a harder toil,
 Than all the labours of immediate battle!
 See, *Pandulph* too, the holy legate comes,

With eager pace and triumph in his eye,
As if a band of angels on our part
Stood rank'd in arms to stimulate our action.

Enter Pandulph and Falconbridge.

Pand. Joy, peace, and bloodless conquest crowns our
arms,

Our wars are done : The triumphs of this day
Shall, in the annals of revolving empire,
Stand eminently high on hills of fame,
While praise and wonder, to a transport rais'd,
Shall read this record of religious glory.

Dauph. What means your eminence ? Our wars are
done !

Pand. Furl up thy colours, and unbrace thy drums,
King *John* is now no more an enemy.
His crown this hour surrender'd at our feet,
Which now in tributary vassalage
He holds of *Rome*, has cancell'd all his crimes.
His contrite penitence has revok'd our censures,
Paternal pardon has confirm'd his throne,
And now, e'en *France* shall honour and embrace him.

Dauph. Eternal vengeance ! *France* ! shall *France* em-
brace him ?

His crown surrender'd ! Ha ! what crown has *John*,
That is not claim'd by *France* ? Or how comes *Rome*,
In wrong to us, t'accept that resignation ?
Are thus your champions of the chair rewarded ?
Is this the kingdom which her bulls decreed me ?
Has *John's* repentance thrown his crimes on us,
That *France* must like a vassal wave her right,
Because the holy pride of *Rome's* appeas'd ?

Pand. Is't possible ? —————

Dauph. ————— Was it not you that first
Inflam'd this war ? and to my father's doubts
Clear'd up my title to fair *England's* crown ?
Is not the bar of *Arthur's* right, as thou
Foretoldst, remov'd ? Is he not dead ? Nay murder'd ?
(Is that too pardon'd by your juggling mercy ?)
Is there a life before me now, that stays
My right, or makes it, at your will, precarious ?

Pand. Beware, rash youth, nor tempt our holy vengeance,
 Unknowing as thou art ! I tell thee, prince,
 This *England* is *St. Peter's* fee, and kings
 Hereafter in that holy right shall rule it.

Dauph. Cardinal, 'tis false, I do deny th' assertion.
England was never yet, nor ever shall,
 While arms or life can urge my claim, become
 The papal patrimony. No, nor shall
 This subterfuge, this farce of *John* distress'd,
 Laugh me to peace, or save him from my vengeance.

Pand. O mortal sin ! abandon'd imputation !

Dauph. Thinkst thou, fond man, I brought my arms
 so far,

Only to slake *Rome's* holy thirst of sway ?
 If you want kingdoms, buy them with the danger ;
 Indure the toils, and fight yourselves your battles ;
 Nor hope to make my youthful sword and honour
 The tool and property of priestly po'wr.

Pand. Hear me, and tremble ! while I tell thee, boy,
 As well thou mightst provoke the serpent's sting,
 Or seize upon the feeding lion's paw,
 As safely mightst oppose thy naked eye
 Against the level of a bearded arrow,
 As tempt the vengeance of our holy pow'r :
 This instant quit thy hostile purpose, and depart
 This land—or woe on thy rebellious head. [Exit.

Dauph. Now by the royal rage that swells my heart,
 Here will I leave these lifeless bones,
 To kites and ravens an inglorious prey,
 Than e'er hold friendship with this recreant *John*,
 Or yield an *English* pasture to the pride of *Rome*.

Fal. And by that royal blood thou hast defam'd,
 I plaud thy treatment of this priestly tyrant ;
 Yet think not, that, in fear of thee, our king
 Has bow'd to this insatiate pontiff. No,
 But to conciliate to his love his people,
 Whose blaze of zeal has blinded their obedience :
 For know, the warlike monarch is at hand,
 Not trusting to this deep-mouth'd legate's thunder,
 But to his pow'rs prepar'd ; whose rods of war

Shall whip this dwarfish rout, these pigmy-arms
From out the circle of his territories.

Dauph. Take to thy safety ; hence, our drums shall
answer thee.

Fal. O that the sun could hold his drooping head
One hour above the earth to grace this battle.

Dauph. Reserve thy vauntings for the dawning morrow,
Nor at the night repine, whole shades may save thee.

[*Exit Dauphin with his train.*]

Fal. Now, noble lords, what think you of your cause?
The holy sword of *Rome*, you see, forsakes you ;
Her politics, like other mortal motives,
Begin their wiser charities at home ;
Let but her pious views be gorg'd with pow'r,
Her full contentment slumbers in her chair,
And leaves devotion for the vulgar comfort !
For shame resume your sense ! see for yourselves !
And be no more the ladders of ambition !

Salis. Well hast thou warn'd us to oppose ambition,
A passion oft so ignorant of glory,
By its own nature so corruptible,
That it shall stoop to be a tyrant's slave,
To play the greater tyrant o'er its people.
This———in the shame of his surrender'd crown,
Our servile king has prov'd a truth notorious.

Fal. To you, to you, rash lords, we owe that stain,
Had your weak cause alone supported you,
His crown unblemish'd had maintain'd his right !
Obedience to prerogative had bow'd,
And in the monarch's grandeur both been glorious !
Can you then think the perfidy is worse,
That stoops below itself to save a kingdom,
Than is the mad resistance that would sell it :
For such must be the consequence, if *France*
Prevail ; *France* then becomes your purchaser.
Rome might, indeed, plead custom for her claim,
But *France* had none, save what your fears have found,
Or to your foreign masters may have granted.
Would you, then, change the lion for the fox ?
Be rather slaves to grinding viceroys here,
Than bear the errors of your native king ?

Salif. Perdition on the abject soul that thinks it?
No, Falconbridge, whate'er has drawn our swords,
 However under grievances we groan,
 Think not but *English* spirits would as soon
 Admit the devil, as a viceroy here.
 No, not to lord it o'er a village in
 The fens of *England*:——

Fal.——— I hen I ask no more!
 Howe'er our civil discord may divide us,
 Let not our enemy enjoy the breach.

Salif. Against invasion let us close unite. [*Embracing.*]
 If vows or sacred oaths can hold our faith,
 Already have we sworn, that no success
 Shall lead obedience to the claims of *France*.

Fal. This news has hush'd my fears. This to the king
 Will I recount, in hopes we yet may save,
 By peace, those streams of blood that boil for battle;
 If not,——tho' now to diff'rent sides we part,
 Let each opposer shew an *English* heart.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

King John from his tent, supported by two attendants.

K. John. O feeble frame! is this a time to fail me!
 When my collected spirits should inflame
 The eye to lead and animate the war!
 Why has the monarch so much use for life?
 Yet in his health is levell'd with the peasant!
 O painful majesty! unequal state!
 Not all the gorgeous pomp, thy flags of pow'r,
 Thy dignities, dominions, ceremonies,
 The crown, the scepter, and the royal ball,
 The purple robe, nor princely crowds, whose press
 Of duty intercepts the wholesome air;
 Not all these glories, for one precious hour,
 Can buy the beggar's health or appetite.

Enter Falconbridge.

Fal. To arms, my liege, th' embattl'd foe comes on-
 ward;
 Their armour, gilded by the blazing sun,
 Reflects another day. Defend me, heav'n!

How fares your majesty?—

K. John.—Disorder'd still!

This autumn fever hangs upon my limbs;
But in the field we'll sweat it from the blood!
Prepare my lighter helmet and my litter:
Cousin, on thee the conduct and the care
Of this day's action may devolve,—be watchful.

Fal. With my best blood will I account for it!
But go not, Sir, I beg you, to the field.

K. John. If life is done, let me with honour end it.
Lead forth my horse, and let the trumpet sound
The warning blast to victory or death.

Fal. Would you repose, it might relieve you.—

K. John.—No!
This tumult of the spirits shall have action.
My fierce, though mortal, flames within shall glow,
Refulgent on my brow—and burn against the foe.

[*Exeunt leading off the king.*]

The SCENE opening, discovers the funeral ceremony of Arthur moving towards Swinstead Abbey to a dead march; Lady Constance with the abbot and mourners attending.

Const. Down, down, thou rolling sun, to darkness
down,
Lose in eternal shades thy hateful beams,
Never to give these eyes more painful day!
See there an object stains thy conscious lustre!
Not all thy promises of blooming springs,
Or autumn fruit, can this dead flow'r supply!
Thus mercilessly cropp'd by fell ambition!
O since the birth of *Cain*, the first male child,
To him that did but yesterday suspire,
There was not such a gracious creature born.

Abbot. Repine not at the will of heav'n, and this
Thy comfort be, that in the world to come
The dearest friends shall meet and know each other.

Const. O didst thou see his chang'd and ghastly semblance,
Thy frightened sense would not remember him;
That canker, death, has so devour'd his beauties,
So blanch'd the damask bloom upon his cheek;

All the soft smiles that wanton'd in his eye,
 The sweet and graceful spirit of his features
 So sunk, so faded from their native hue,
 That, e'en in heav'n, my soul must pause to know him.

Abbot. O yet retire! part from this feast of death,
 Where solemn rites and forms on forms succeeding,
 Feed but the fatal appetite of grief!

Hark, the last bell now calls us to the grave. [*Bell tolls.*]

Const. O piercing sound! O agonizing knell!

Stay your officious haste! one moment's pause!

[*To the bearers.*]

And the same service shall be sung for both
 Our parted souls! Inexorable death!
 I ask thee not for mercy! No, be cruel still!
 Behold in me the wretch that dares thy rage!
 A grieving mother, whose distress defies thee!
 That thus arrests thy triumph o'er her child,
 And will not let it pass. The grave shall not devour him;
 O! we must never part, one earth shall hold us;
 Now seize me, strike me, and compleat the tyrant!

Abbot. Be watchful o'er her health, gently support her,
 Till grief subsiding may admit repose:

[*To her attendants, who lead her off.*]

But hark! the terrors of the field are ended!

The hostile wounds of *France* and *England* now

Are, by the trumpet's loud retreat, proclaim'd.

Behold the harrass'd barons from the toil retiring.

[*Exit after Constance.*]

Enter Pembroke, Salisbury, &c. *at a distance.*

Pemb. We were deceiv'd, the king was stronger than
 we thought him.

Salis. I fear'd his late submission to the pope,
 Would draw the commons thronging to his side:
 Had not the timely night stept in between
 Our swords, I tremble to conceive what fate
 Had follow'd us.—

Pemb. But see the corps of *Arthur*!

Salis. Alas! poor injur'd youth, but for thy death
 Our private griefs had spar'd this fruitless battle,
 And due redress had hush'd us into peace.

Enter Melun, wounded, led by soldiers.

Mel. O lead me, lead to the revolted barons !

Salif. When we were happy we had other names.

Mel. I come, my lords, to warn you of your danger ;
When you have serv'd the *Dauphin's* ends, you die.

Salif. Die for our services ? explain this riddle.

Mel. Know then, this *Dauphin* hearing you had bound
Your swords, by private oaths, never to yield
Your crown, or e'en a province of your *England*, to
The claims of *France*. This so inflam'd his rage,
That on the altar at *St. Edmondsbury*,
Where, to your firm alliance, first he swore
Determin'd faith and lasting amity ;
There did he secretly make after-oath,
That when his arms should have subdu'd King *John*,
Your heads should be the victims of his right
Refus'd.——

Pemb. ——Perfidious *France!*——

Salif. ——Can this be true ?

Mel. What in this world should make me now deceive
you ?

Have I not hideous death within my view ?
See you not life like a mere form of wax
Dissolving to the fire : When life is done,
Useless were all deceit ; but needful is remorse,
When oaths so ill devis'd require atonement ;
Repentance, then, has mov'd me to reveal
This oath, which in my rashness I had taken :
If you can pardon it——Your charity
Will hence appoint me to some safe repose,
Where I may breathe my latest hour in peace,
And pass my dire account with heaven's inquiry.

Salif. Gently conduct him to relief and rest.

Dauphin, we thank thee for this treachery,
That now so timely warns us to repay it.
What a strange mixture had this *Frenchman's* heart,
Tainted with falsehood, yet inclin'd to honour !

Pemb. That mystery, my lord, explains itself ;
His grandfire was, you know, of *English* blood ;
Perhaps from him he had his honesty.

Salif. Let us then make our profit of his virtue,
Protect ourselves, and while occasion serves,
March to the king, accept his offer'd peace,
With old allegiance heal our civil wounds,
And on this *Dauphin's* head revenge his falsehood.

[*As they go off, Constance re-enters to the funeral,
with the Abbot, &c.*

Const. Thy holy counsels, father, have reliev'd me;
Misfortunes now, familiar to my sense,
Abate their terror. Now my peaceful heart,
With tearless eyes, shall wait him to the grave.

Enter Falconbridge.

Fal. O reverend father, haste, the dying king
Implores thy holy aid.——

Abbot. —— Saidst thou the king?

Fal. Dying he seems, or cannot long survive:
Whether by heat of action in the field,
His latent fever is inflam'd to danger,
Or, as suspicion strongly has avouch'd,
The gloomy monk, who serv'd him with the cup,
Might impiously infuse some bane of life,
We know not; but his interval of sense
In groans calls earnest for his confessor.

Const. In his accounted sins be this * remember'd.

[* *Pointing to the corps of Arthur.*

Fal. If grief or prejudice could bear to hear me,
I could a truth unfold would calm thy sorrows.

Const. Lies not my child there murder'd?

Fal. —— Hear my story.

[*He seems to talk apart with Constance.*

Enter Salisbury with Arundel, &c.

Salif. How fortunate the hour! that he had sense
To ratify our rights and seal the charter.

Abbot. What news, my lords? How fares the king?

Salif. I fear me, poison'd! his whole mass of blood
Is touch'd corruptibly; and his frail brain,
Which some suppose the mansion of the soul,
By the disjointed comments that it makes,
Foretells its mortal office is expiring.

Fal. And *Hubert* dying difavow'd the deed.

[*Apart to Constance.*

Const. Admitting this, that mere mischance destroy'd him,

What but his wrongs expos'd him to mischance?
Nor therefore are my sorrows more reliev'd,
But as oppression may be less than murder.

Enter Pembroke.

Pemb. The king seems more at ease; and holds belief,
That were he brought into the open air
It might assuage the ferment that consumes him.

Salis. Behold the sad remains of royalty!

Fal. Let those who lov'd him not endure the fight.
When he is gone, my hopes in life are friendless.

[*Exit.*

King John is brought in.

Abbot. How fares your majesty? —————

K. John. ——— The air's too hot.

It steams, it scalds; I cannot bear this furnace!
Stand off,—and let the northern wind have way!
Blow, blow, ye freezing blasts from *Iceland* skies!
O blissful region, that I there were king!
To range and roll me in eternal snow,
Where crowns of icicles might cool my brain,
And comfort me with cold. —————

Abbot. ——— O gracious heav'n!

Relieve his senses from these mortal pangs,
That his reflecting soul may yet look back
On his offences past with penitence!

K. John. Why am I tortur'd thus? I kill'd him not;
Was it so criminal to wish him dead!
If wishes were effectual, O, my crown,
My crown should from the grave with joy redeem him!

Abbot. If penitence, not frenzy, prompts thy tongue,
Behold this object of calamity,
Whom thy severities have sunk with sorrow.
O carry not beyond the grave your enmity!

K. John. *Constance*, the mournful relict of my brother,
How do thy wrongs sit heavy on my soul!

But who was ever just in his ambition !
 Thou see'st me now an object of thy triumph,
 The vital cordage of my heart burnt up !
 All to a single thread on which it hangs
 Consum'd ; now may the fearless lamb approach,
 Now close the lion eye of enmity.
 Hence but a moment all this royalty,
 This pride of pow'r will crumble into ashes.

Abbot. In his extremities heav'n help the king.

Const. And may his contrite soul receive its mercy.

K. John. The lamp of life is dry—Thy pray'rs, O
 father !

At *Worcester* let these mortal bones have rest.
 My eyes refuse the light—the stroke is giv'n.
 O, I am call'd—I wander—Mercy, heav'n ! [Dies.

Const. He's gone.

The turbulent oppressor is no more.
 The hour of heav'nly justice has at last
 Demanded his account of *England's* empire ;
 But since he seem'd to pass in penitence,
 Let all his crimes be bury'd in his grave.
 Thou pow'r ador'd, what thanks shall I repay thee,
 That my afflictions have subdu'd my soul,
 T' extend its charity ev'n to my enemies ?
 Now, life, I have no farther use for thee ;
 Defer a while the obsequies of *Arthur*,
 Pass but some hours and I shall soon o'ertake him,
 Then lay us in one peaceful grave together.
 [Exit, led off.

Enter Falconbridge, who, seeing the king, starts back.

Fal. My fears are true, good news comes now too
 late ;

Deaf is the ear which best might give it hearing.

Salis. O *Falconbridge* ! if thou hast ought that may
 Dispel our gen'ral consternation, speak it.

Fal. Something I bring to cheer this sudden sadness :
 From *France* the Lady *Blanch*, arriv'd, has wrought
 Her consort *Dauphin* to such peaceful temper,
 That hearing you, the barons, had disclaim'd him,

He now accepts the legate's mediation,
And, on such terms as honour may accord,
He and his forces leave our land in peace.

Salif. Lose not a moment then to close this treaty;
Build we a bridge of gold for his retreat!
And may the recent dangers we have pass'd,
Never by civil discord be recall'd.

Fal. There only lives the error can mislead us.
Let not self-wounds our native strength impair,
What rash invader can have hope to shake us?
Come the three corners of the world in arms,

England no foreign force shall e'er subdue,
While prince and subject to themselves are true.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF KING JOHN.

EPILOGUE.

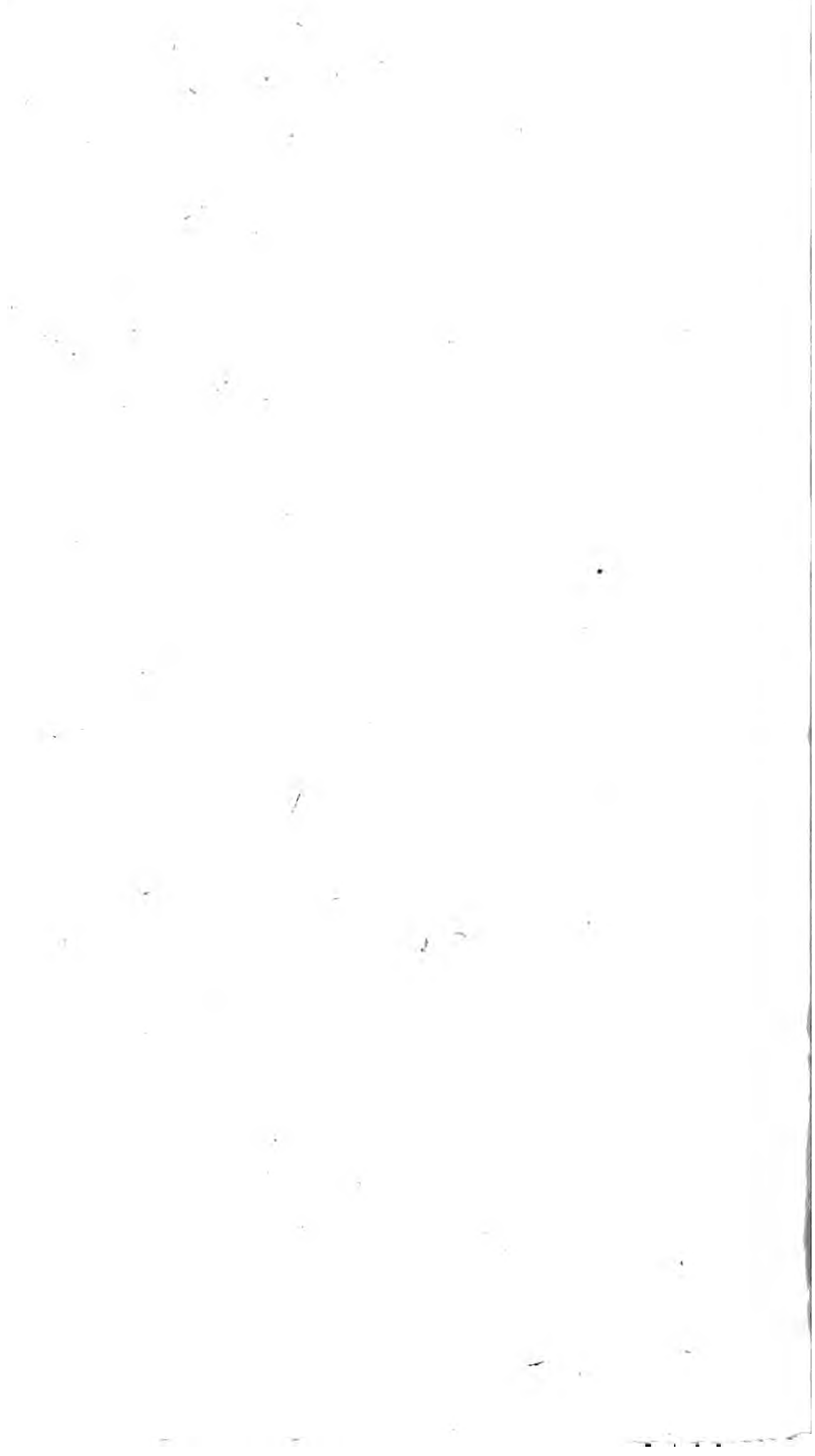
Spoken by Mrs. CLIVE.

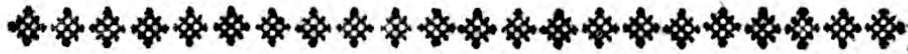
OF all the helps for wit so much in vogue,
This play has scarce one hint for Epilogue!
Now, after tragedy, you know, the way
Is to come forward, with an air so gay,
Not to support,—no, no,—to ridicule the play.
With flirting fan, and pointed wit, so jolly
Crack jokes on virtue, as an unbred folly.
How often has the Grecian dame, distress'd,
Been dismal company—till made a jest?
And when her prudish pride warm love has slighted,
How lascivously her Epilogue delighted!
O! what enjoyment to a modern sinner,
To have it prov'd at last—she'd nothing in her!
Then is the proof of wit's commanding pow'r,
When double entendres make an aud'ence roar!
When chuckling rakes, and wittlings void of grace,
Stare all the blushing boxes in the face!
And when the luscious stroke has kept them under,
Crack! goes the joyous laugh, in claps of thunder.

Since arts like these have charm'd a merry nation,
Why could not Colley play the wag in fashion?
Shall he pretend to give the stage new modes?
Would he have plays as chaste as annual odes?
Shall he suppose there can be any sin in
Th' warmest meaning—wrap'd in decent linen?
Something—he ought to have for ev'ry taste;
John Trott's an honest, tho' a vulgar ghost:
His strong digest'on thinks fat food the best.
And when his full meal's made, cries,—“After all,
“That Epilogue was dev'lish comical!
“Better by half than all their hum-drum sorrow!
“I'cod I'll come and bear't again to-morrow!”

E P I L O G U E.

*What could, in nature, our fool's reason be,
To strike away his prop from tragedy?
O'ho! I've found it now—'twas modesty!
Yes! modest as the jay—when he presumes,
To deck his dowdy muse—with peacock plumes!
Yet hold!—that flier too hard a censure flings;
He's but the wren, that mounts on Shakespeare's wings;
Where, while the eagle soars,—he safely sings.
Let then the modern scenes on Shakespeare live,
And what you cannot praise, like friends, forgive.*





D A M O N

A N D

P H I L L I D A.

A

B A L L A D O P E R A.



Dramatis Personæ.

<i>Arcas.</i> A nobleman of great possessions in <i>Arcadia</i> .	}	Mr. <i>Winstone</i> .
<i>Ægon.</i> His friend.		Mr. <i>Cole</i> .
<i>Corydon.</i> An old shepherd.		Mr. <i>Turbutt</i> .
<i>Cimon,</i> and	} Simple brothers, in love with <i>Phillida</i> .	Mr. <i>Miller</i> .
<i>Mopsus.</i>		Mr. <i>Oates</i> .
<i>Damon.</i> An inconstant.		Mr. <i>Stoppelaer</i> .
<i>Phillida.</i> Daughter to <i>Corydon</i> .		Mrs. <i>Clive</i> .

S C E N E, *The Arcadian Fields.*

D A M O N
A N D
P H I L L I D A.

S C E N E I.

Arcas, *Ægon*.

ÆGON.

THIS way I see old *Corydon* advancing :
He comes, by my appointment, to complain
Of some abuse that's offer'd to his daughter ;
And hopes that your authority will right him.

Arc. 'Tis true ! somewhat of this *Pastora* told me.

Æg. He's there, with all the parties, to attend you.

S C E N E II.

*Enter Corydon, Phillida, Cimon, Mopfus, Damon,
and other Shepherds.*

Cor. May all our gods preserve the noble *Arcas*,
Lord of our lands and flocks. —————

Arc. ————— Good neighbours, welcome !
What seems amiss, that may concern your welfare ?

Cor. My good lord, I have no skill to speech it ;
But grief at heart will always find a tongue.
My lord, this home-bred maid I call my daughter,

She's all I have, and all my hope; now I
 Would gladly see her well dispos'd in marriage:
 And that she might not die a maid, unask'd,
 I have declar'd one half of what I have
 Her dow'r, in present; at my death, the rest.
 'Tis true, 'tis little; but still, the half is half!
 Now here, so please you, I have found her out
 A pair of wholesome youths, to take her choice of:
 Brothers they be, sons of my neighbour *Dorus*,
 This is call'd *Cimon*, and the younger *Mopsus*!
 Their means, and manners, suit her breeding well,
 And both profess their hearts are set upon her.

Cim. Yes, and please you, both cruelly in love.

[*Half crying.*]

Cor. Nay, prithee, *Cimon*, let me tell my story.

Arc. A little patience, friend——

Mop. —— Hoh! hoh! hoh! hoh!

That fool my brother's always in the wrong!

Cor. Fy! fy! *Mopsus*! now thou art worse than he.

Arc. On with thy tale——

Cor. —— Now, Sir, these lads, I say,
 Were nothing in the way to cross their courtship,
 Might one or t' other make her a good husband.
 But here, here, an't please you, lies our grief!
 The wilful girl is scornful to them both.
 And why? because, forsooth! she loves another!
 But how! how is her love dispos'd? Why thus!
 This pranking gamesome boy, this *Damon* here!
 With songs, and gambols, has, I think, bewitch'd her.
 His pipe, it seems, has play'd her sweeter sounds,
 And all the idle day they toy and sing together.

Cim. Ay, so they do, and please you——

Cor. —— Nay, nay, *Cimon*!

Cim. Well, well! I've done: but I'm sure it's true
 though.——

Cor. So nothing now will down with her but *Damon*.
 And what will *Damon* do? Why, ruin her!
 The lamb that's in the hungry fox's mouth,
 Has little hope to scape being made his breakfast:
 For he declares he ne'er intends to marry,
 And openly defies my power to force him.

A hard defiance to a tender father! [Weeps.]
 Now, good my lord! 'tis true you're not our king,
 And therefore none are bound, by law, to obey you:
 But you've a stronger tie o'er us, our hearts.
 And the great good you do us every day
 Will make your word go farther than a law:
 So if your pity think my case is hard,
 I leave the manner how, to your great wisdom;
 And hope your goodness will prevent a father's sorrow.

Arc. Thy grief, good *Corydon*, I take to heart,
 And to my poor extent of power will serve thee.
 But hear me now, what others may reply.

Damon, thou'lt heard this good old man's complaint;
 Why hast thou dallied with the maid's affection?
 What shall I say I've done to right his daughter?

Dam. Why, let the damsel please herself, my lord;
 If she's dispos'd to marry, there's her choice.
 If to make her life a frolic—Here's her man.

Cor. You see, Sir, I have not accus'd her falsely.

Arc. 'Tis true.

Well, my good friends, I hope what you propose
[To Cim. and Mops.]

Will shew your hearts are of an honest mould;
 There stands the maid; if you have ought to urge,
 That may prefer your hops to *Damon's*,
 Take this occasion to avow your love:
 You have her father's wish, and my protection.

Cim. Ah! Sir, an' like you, I have no heart to speak;
 She flouts, and glowts at me, from morn to night.
 See how she looks now! 'cause she can't avoid me.

Arc. Take courage, man; 'tis but her maiden shyness.

Cim. D'ye think so, Sir? Why then I will take heart!
 If an old song will do the thing, have at her.

A I R I.

*There's not a swain,
 On the plain,
 Wou'd be blest as I,*

Ⓞ *could you but, could you but on me smile:*

But you appear
 So severe,
 That trembling with fear,
 My heart goes pit-a-pat! pit-a-pat! all the while!

When I cry,
 Must I die?
 You make no reply,
 But look shy,
 And with a scornful eye;
 Kill me with your cruelty:
 How can you be, can you be,
 How can you be so hard to me?

Ah! poor *Cimon*, thou art ne'er the nearer;
 Nor all thy sighs, nor songs, nor sobs can move her!

Cor. You see, my lord, the lad, tho' fearful, in
 His heart is honestly dispos'd, however. [Crying.]

Arc. Perhaps she may be more inclin'd to *Mopsus*.

Æg. Come, *Mopsus*, now for thee; thy heart seems
 cheerful.

Mop. Ay! 'twas always so: I love to laugh,
 Let things go how they will: Why let her frown!
 As long as *Cimon*'s us'd as ill as I,
 It gives one's mind a little ease however!
 Happen as 'twill, I shall have him to laugh at.

Cor. Ah! Sir, we poor swains have but homely words
 To speak our minds; but what we say, we stand to.

Arc. An honest principle. Now, my good friend,
 Let us inquire into thy daughter's heart;
 For that must guide us——

Cor. ————— *Phillida*, come near!

Arc. Well, my fair maid! is there within my power
 Ought that may contribute to thy happiness?
 Of all these youths, for thou art free to choose,
 Which is the swain comes nearest to thy heart?

Phil. Since I am forc'd to speak the truth, my lord,
 I own my heart has play'd a simple game;
 I know my father's kindness means me well,
 And I could wish I had the power to please him;

But I am loth to lead a savage life :

And sure these lads were woful company.

Cim. O scornful maid ! my heart will burst with grief !

[Crying.

Mop. Hoh ! hoh ! poor *Cimon's* in a bitter taking !

[Laughs.

Phil. 'Twere hard to choose from such extremes of
folly !

Damon, with all his infidelities,

Seems not to me, Sir, half so terrible !

And I am more than much afraid I love him !

'Tis true, I know him fickle, false, and faithless !

And I have try'd a thousand, thousand times,

To shut him from my thoughts, but 'twill not do !

Whene'er my heart is open, in he comes !

Again submits, and is again forgiven !

Again I love, and am again forsaken !

Yet still he fools me on ; and when he's absent,

With sighs, and songs, I thus relieve my folly.

A I R II. O mother ! a hoop.

I.

What woman could do, I have try'd to be free ;

Yet do all I can,

I find I love him ; and tho' he flies me,

Still—still he's the man.

They tell me, at once he to twenty will swear :

When vows are so sweet, who the falsehood can fear ?

So, when you have said all you can,

Still—still he's the man.

II.

I caught him once making love to a maid ;

When to him I ran,

He turn'd, and he kiss'd me ; then who could upbraid

So civil a man ?

The next day I found to a third he was kind !

I rated him soundly ; he swore I was blind ;

So let me do what I can,

Still—still he's the man.

III.

All the world bids me beware of his art :

I do what I can ;

But he has taken such hold of my heart,

I doubt he's the man !

So sweet are his kisses, his looks are so kind ;

He may have his faults, but if I none can find,

Who can do more than they can ?

He—still is the man.

Arc. Take comfort, *Corydon* ; all yet may mend :

Thy daughter's frank confession of her love

Perfuades me of her guarded innocence !

And tho' licentious *Damon* may deserve

Severe reproof ; yet, for the maiden's sake,

(For what he suffers, her fond heart will feel)

We will not harden him, by punishment,

But rather tempt him, by reward, to virtue.

Of this bad matter make we then the best.

If therefore, *Damon*, thou, or any swain,

By suit, or service of his love, can woo,

And win this gentle maid to be his bride,

The dow'r which her kind father has declar'd,

Myself will double on her marriage-day,

And give him, with her hand, my farther favour.

Cor. May all the gods preserve the bounteous *Arcas*.

A double portion ! Now, my honest lads,

There's brave encouragement to warm your hearts !

Now shew your skill, and who's the featest fellow !

Now sing and dance her down to your desires !

Now, *Phillida*, let faithless *Damon* see

What love and honesty have gain'd by truth ;

And what his pranks have lost by wickedness.

Phil. Dishonesty shall never gain on me.

Mop. A double dowry, *Cimon* ; now's our time !

Cim. Ay, but I'm tender-hearted ; my poor hopes
Will never blossom, while she looks so frosty !

Cor. Learn of thy brother, lad ; thou seest he knows
No fear, nor grief : Up with thy heart, and at her.

Cim. Well then, since you encourage me, I will.

Cor. Well said, my boy!

Arc. ————— Come, *Corydon*.

Now let us leave these lovers free to woo,
And he that first subduing, and subdued,
Comes hand in hand, to ask her bridal dow'r,
In farther token of my love, myself
Will crown him with a chaplet worth his wearing.

Æg. Now for the gay land! —————

Mop. ————— Live the noble *Arcas*!
[*Exeunt Arcas and Ægon.*]

Cor. — Let me but live to see that knave,
That graceless *Damon* bobb'd! let him but wear
The willow, I'll jump into my grave
With joy. ————— [Exit Cor.]

S C E N E III.

Dam. ————— So! now have I probably
All my whole work to do over again!
This double dow'r, no doubt, will turn her brain,
And set the wind-mill of her sex a going. [Aside.]

Mop. Now, *Cimon*, now!

Cim. ————— I'd rather you'd speak first.

Mop. No, you are the elder —————

Cim. ————— But my heart misgives me.

Phil. Still silent! no kind offer yet from *Damon*?
Has fortune no effect upon his heart? [Aside.]

Cim. No, no, I tell you, I shall never hit
The tune alone.

Mop. ————— Well then, be sure you back me.

A I R III, and IV. Tell me, *Jenny*, &c.

Tell me, *Philly*, tell me roundly,
When you will your heart surrender?

Cim. Faith and troth! I love thee woundly,
And I was the first pretender.

Mop. Of us boys,
 Cim. Take thy choice :
 Mop. Here's a heart——
 Cim. —— And here's a hand too.
 Mop. His or mine,
 Cim. All is thine :
 Both. Body and goods at thy command too.

Phil. How harsh and tedious is the voice
 Of love, from any but the voice desir'd !

A I R IV.

*While you both pretend a passion,
 'T would be cruel to choose either ;
 To preserve your inclination,
 I must kindly fix on neither.
 To be just,
 I now must,
 Make yours, and yours be equal cases ;
 Therefore pray,
 From this day,
 I never may behold your faces.*

Now be silent—if *Damon* is inclin'd
 To speak, his turn is next ; you've had your answer.

Mop. Well, let him speak ! mayhap your face
 May get as little good from him, as ours
 From you ; 't isn't every man will marry you.
 Don't cry, *Cimon* ; it only makes her prouder.

Cim. She has given me such a kick o'the heart,
 I shall never recover it——

Phil. —— Hark thee, *Cimon* !
 I like thee better than thy brother far.

Cim. O the gracious ! do you truly, and truly ?

Phil. I'll give thee proof this instant ! take him hence,
 And keep him from my sight, an hour at least :
 And when thou see'st me next, come thou without him.

Cim. Give me thy hand on't——

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Phil. ————Hush! not now, they'll see us.
Away with him———

Cim. A word's enough—I'll do't.
Come, *Mopsus*, come away—for I have a thing,
And such a thing to tell thee, boy———

Mop. ————What ails
The fool? thou'rt mad!

Cim. ————Mad! Ay, and so would you
Be too, were my case yours; but come away.

Mop. Nay, not so fast, good *Cimon*———

Cim. ————Faster, *Mopsus*, faster.

[*Cimon hurries off Mopsus.*]

S C E N E IV.

Dam. My charming creature! this was kindly done!
Never was favour, to a fool, so well
Dissembled.———

Phil. Yes, I have learn'd from you, dissembling.
And you'll again dissemble to reward me.

Dam. Why so suspicious, *Phyllida*? Don't I love thee?
Why all this bustle at my heart, when thus
I touch thy hand, or gaze upon thy eyes?
Give me thy lips, and see how thou'rt mistaken.

Phil. No, *Damon*; lips are but liquorish proofs
Of love; and thine too often have deceiv'd me.

A I R V. *Handel's minuet.*

Dam. *Away with suspicion,*
 That bane to desire;
 The heart that loves truly, all danger defies;
 The rules of discretion
 But stifle the fire;
 On its merit alone true beauty relies.

*What a folly to tremble,
Lest the lover dissemble
His fire?
Turtles that woo,
Bill and coo:
While we enjoy
We must be true!
And to repeat it, is all,
All! we can desire.*

Phil. 'Tis thus thou always hast decoy'd my heart!
Thou knowst I love, and therefore wouldst undo me.

Dam. I know thou lov'st, and therefore would secure thee.

A I R VI.

Phil. *While you pursue me,
Thus to undo me,
Sure ruin lies in all you say.
To bring your toying
Up to enjoying,
Call first the priest, and name the day;
Then, then name the day.*

*Lasses are willing
As lads, for billing,
When marriage vows are kindly prest.
Let holy father,
Tie us together
Then bill your fill, and bill your best.
Then, then bill your best.*

Dam. What not a hand, a lip, for old acquaintance!
Not one poor sample of the grain my dear,
Unless I make a purchase of the whole?

Phil. No, Damon; now 'tis time to end our fooling.
Consent to wed me, or forbear to love.

Dam. What! dost thou think to starve me into marriage?

Phil. I'll starve myself, but I'll avoid thy falsehood!
Graze where thou wilt, I'll feed no ranging lovers.

Dam. No—nor I won't be pounded while I can leap
A hedge; so keep your grafs for calves to graze on.
I need not go a mile for pasture, dame,
And good as any meal that you can make me.

Phil. Do, leave me, do, and prove thyself a traitor!
Faithless, inhuman *Damon!*——

Dam. ——Mighty well!
This double dow'r, I find, has turn'd thy brain!
And thou wouldst make me madder than thyself.
A husband! death! a mill-horse, what to grind,
And grind, in one poor hopeless round of life!
To-day, to-morrow, and to-morrow still
To plod the path I trod the day before!
O! methinks I feel the collar on my shoulders!

Phil. Abandon'd *Damon!* now I begin to hate thee.

Dam. I'm glad, my mistress, that you'll speak your
mind!

Some girls will fool you on till one's heart akes.
But since I know your play, forsooth, hang lag,
Say I, and so farewell, fair *Phillida*.

A I R VII. I'll range around the shady bow'rs.

Dam. *I'll range the world, where freedom reigns,
And scatter love around the plains.*

Phil. *I'll starve my love, and rather part,
Than yield my hand to fool my heart.*

Dam. *The frowns of this, I ne'er take ill:
Where one denies, there's two that will.*

Phil. *Since maids by kindness are undone,
Adieu mankind; I'll sigh for none.*

Dam. *No frozen lass shall hold me long.*

Phil. *No swain, that's false, my love shall wrong.*

Dam. *Farewel! farewel——'tis time to part.*

Phil. *Thus from thy hold I tear my heart.*

Both. *Farewel! farewel, &c.* [Exit *Phil.*

Dam. How could the gipsy muster such a spirit?
The pertness of her pride has so provok'd me,

I shall never rest in my bed, till she
Lies by me

A I R VIII. At noon, in a fultry, &c.

Dam. *Around the plains my heart has rov'd;
The brown, the fair, my flames approv'd:
The pert, the proud, by turns have lov'd,
And kindly fill'd my arms.
I danc'd, I sung, I talk'd, I toy'd;
While this I woo'd, I that enjoy'd;
And ere the kind, with kindness cloy'd,
The coy resign'd her charms.*

*But now, alas! these days are done:
The wrong'd are all reveng'd by one,
Who, like a frighted bird, is flown,
Yet leaves her image here.
O! could I yet her heart recal,
Before her feet my pride would fall,
And, for her sake, forsaking all,
Would fix for ever there.*

Here she comes again, and with her——ha——
Her father! soft——I'm out of favour there!
Lie close a while, and mark what nail's a driving.

[Retires]

S C E N E V.

Enter Corydon, with Phillida.

Cor. And I say, think no more of him——

Phil. ——— That's hard!

Is't not enough I see him not?

Cor. ——— I say,

Avoid him as the wildest beast of prey!
He uses girls like carrion: Not the wolf
In a sheepfold, or hungry fox on poultry,

Can make more havock than that wicked rogue
Among the wenches' hearts.—

Dam. ——— That must be me! [*Behind.*

But what says *Phillida*!

Phil. ——— Suppose this true!

Yet could he, still, be wrought to marry me!

Cor. My patience! has he not refus'd to marry?

Phil. And therefore I've declar'd against his love.

Cor. Ay, ay, but still he lurks within your heart!

And till you drive him thence——

Phil. ——— I strive to do it;

And if you knew the pain, you'd pity me.

A I R IX. Bush o' Boon Traquair.

*A thousand ways to wean my heart
I've try'd, yet can't remove him:
And tho' for life I've sworn to part,
For life I find I love him.
Still should the dear false man return,
And with new vows pursue me,
His flatt'ring tongue would kill my scorn,
And still, I fear, undo me.*

Cor. Consider, *Philly*, if thou'rt fairly married,
(And thou hast choice of *Cimon*, or of *Mopsus*,)
How happy will thy double dowry make thee!

Phil. I do consider, father; so should you!

As a low fortune, with the man I love,
Can't make me rich; so riches with the man
I hate, can't make me happy.—

Dam. ——— Gallant girl!

O! I could eat thy very lips that spoke it. [*Behind.*

Cor. See! yonder's *Cimon* coming! For my sake,

Dear *Phillida*, give him at least a smile:

A little love endur'd, may teach the boy,

In time, to please thee——

Phil. ——— Well! since you desire it.

But *Mopsus* has the same pretensions too.

Send him to make his equal claim,
And, till he's found, I'll hear what *Cimon* says.

Cor. Ah! *Phillida*, thou gainst my heart. I'll fend
him. [Exit.

Dam. Now shall I measure by their hopes, my own.

S C E N E VI.

To her *Cimon*, *singing*.

A I R X.

Cim. Behold, and see thy wounded lover!
Whose truth from thee will ne'er depart!
O let my tears, at length discover
One gentle smile to heal my heart!

Phil. Were in the world, no man but *Cimon*,
None of the female kind but I;
With me should end the name of woman,
With thee the race of man should die.

Cim. O cruel sound! false-hearted *Phillida*!
Didst thou not say, thou lov'st me better than
My brother *Mopsus*?—

Phil. ———Yes, but 'twas,
As of two evils, I would choose the least;
Stay, 'till I'm bound to choose, and then reproach me.
Thy crying makes me laugh, his laughing makes
Me sleep.—There's all the hopeful difference.

A I R XI. *Phillida* flouts me.

Cim. O what a plague is love!
I cannot bear it:
What life so curst can prove,
Or pain come near it!

*When I would tell my mind,
My heart misdoubts me;
Or when I speak, I find
With scorn she routs me.
In vain is all I say,
Her answer still is nay:
O dismal, doleful day!
Phillida flouts me.*

Enter Mopfus, singing.

A I R XII. One long *Whitson* holiday.

- Mop. *Ab! poor Cimon! Dud a cry!
Well-a-day! wipe an eye! O fy, Phillida!
To treat him so scornfully,
Shamefully, mournfully!
Phillida, fy!*
- Phil. *No, no, no, Sir pert, and dull!
Simpleton, paper-skull! I for ever shall
Think thee far the greater fool!
Therefore will give thee cause
With him to cry.*
- Cim. *Toll! loll! loll! doll!—Now I pray,
Who has cause most to cry, ah! well-a-day?*
- Mop. *What care I! why let her scoff,
I can laugh; play her off, better than you.*
- Cim. *Ab! poor Mopfus, thou'rt a fool!*
- Mop. *I say, you're a greater owl.*
- Cim. *Nay, now I'm sure that's a lye.*
- Mop. *What's a lye?—*
- Cim. *—That's a lye!*
- Mop. *I say, 'tis true.*

A I R XIII. Cruel, cruel, tyrannizing.

- Phil. *Give over your love, you great loobies,
I hate you both, you Sir, and you too:
Did ever a brace of such boobies
The lasfs that detests them pursue?*

Mop. *How! ———*

Phil. *———Go!*

Cim. *———Ob! I'm ready to faint!*

How are you?

[To Mopsus.

Mop. *Why truly, she treats us but so, so.*

For my part, I think she's a devil.

A woman would scorn for to do so.

Cim. *O fy! fy! such words are uncivil.*

Phil. *Prepare then, to bear my last sentence.*

Before I'd wed either, much rather

I'd stand on the stool of repentance,

And want for my bantling a father.

Go! ———

Cim. *———Ob! Woe! I'm ready to faint;*

Mop. *And I too.*

Was ever a slut so inhuman!

Odfooks! let us take down her mettle!

Cim. *I dare not——*

Mop. *———Let me come! psbah waw, man,*

She only has water'd a nettle.

In short, this won't do, Mrs. Vixen!

For one of us two you must now choose.

Phil. *Then you are the man that I fix on;*

And you——are the fool I refuse.

[Strikes each a box on the ear.

Cim. *Waunds!*

Cim. } *Go! The devil would fly such a spouse.*
and }
Mop. }

Phil. If there's a joy comes near recovering those
We love, sure 'tis to silence those we hate.

When Cimon and Mopfus are gone, Damon presents himself to Phillida, singing.

A I R XIV. *Dutch Skipper.*

Dam. *See! behold, and see!
With an eye kind and relenting,
Damon, now, repenting,
Only true to thee;
Content to love, and love for life!*

Phil. *If you, now sincere,
With an honest declaration
Mean to prove your passion,
To the purpose swear;
And make, at once, a maid a wife.*

Dam. *Thus, for life, I take thee,
Never to forsake thee;
Soon, or late,
I find our fate,
To hearts astray,
Directs the way,
And brings, to lasting joys, the rover home.*

Phil. *Ever kind, and tender,
Conquer'd, I surrender:
Prove but true,
As I to you,
Each kindling kiss
Shall add a bliss,
That only, from the constant lip, can move.*

A I R XV. *Second part of the Dutch Skipper.*

Dam. *To the priest away, to bind our vows,
With our hands and hearts united.*

Phil. *To reduce the rover to lawful spouse,
Is a triumph, my heart has delighted.*

Dam. *If I never could fix,
 'Twas the fault of the sex,
 Who, easily yielding, were easy to cloy,
 But in love we still find,
 When the heart's well inclin'd,*

Both. *In one, only one, is the joy.
 But in love, &c.*

F I N I S.

