

THE
GOOSE WITH THE GOLDEN EGGS

A Farce

IN

ONE ACT,

BY MESSRS.

AUGUSTUS MAYHEW

AND

SUTHERLAND EDWARDS

AUTHORS OF

Christmas Boxes, &c. &c.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,
89, STRAND,
(Opposite Southampton Street, Covent Garden Market,)
LONDON.

913610

2000 VILLAGE LIFE WITH GOLDEN EGGS

GOOSE WITH THE GOLDEN EGGS.

*First performed at the Strand Theatre,
(Under the Management of Miss Swanborough,)
On Monday, September 1st, 1859.*

CHARACTERS.

TURBY, a Country Lawyer	Mr. JAMES ROGERS.
FLICKSTER, a Country Lawyer	Mr. CLARKE.
BONSER, Clerk to Turby	Mr. MOWBRAY.
1ST MAN	Mr. EDGE.
2ND MAN	Mr. CHATER.
MRS. TURBY	Mrs. CHARLES MELVILLE.
CLARA, her Daughter	Miss IDA WILTON.
MAID	Miss TURTLE.
Villagers, &c.	

TIME—The present day.

COSTUMES.

- MR. TURBY.—An eccentric suit of black.
MR. FLICKSTER.—Blue coat, light trousers, and waistcoat.
MR. BOUSER.—A walking suit.
1st MAN.—Shooting coat, gaiters, &c.
2nd MAN.—Smock frock, corduroy trousers, &c.
MRS. TURBY.—Modern silk dress, and cap.
CLARA.—Muslin morning dress.
MAID.—Cotton dress, apron, cap.

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SCENE.—*A Room in Turby's House.* Against the wall are deed boxes, and a library, R.—centre door—doors R. and L.—on the L. of C. D. a high lawyer's desk, with deeds and papers, pens, ink, &c.—on R. a round table, with deeds, papers, pens, ink, &c.

BONSER discovered at desk, writing.

BONSER. (*throwing down pen*) I shall never have finished this confounded bill of costs! Ugh! I hate this lawyer's business! To think that all this cheating should only bring in a pound a week! It's impossible to gain even a dishonest living in this office! (*reading*) "To attending plaintiff at his own house, and discussing the matter with him, engaged four hours." (*speaking*) That's the day the governor dined with his client! (*reading*) "To attending plaintiff the next morning, when I assured him I agreed in all I had said over night." (*speaking*) Old Turby had forgotten his umbrella, and went back to fetch it! (*reading*) "To advising plaintiff to go to law, and convincing him that defendant was in the wrong, engaged two days." (*speaking*) That's the most insulting charge of all; especially as the defendant has won. If I stop much longer at this work, I shall be ashamed to look a policeman in the face! If it were not for that dear girl, Clara, I would be off to-morrow. If ever there was an angel—(*running to desk*) I hear some one coming! (*begins to write violently—suddenly throwing down pen*) Why this fear? I know that footprint—it is she!

CLARA puts her head in at door, R.

CLARA. Is he here—dear?

BONSER. (*whispering*) No, my love! he's gone to serve a

writ upon Captain Jones—I saw him running down the lane after that gallant officer.

CLARA. (*whispering*) Then he'll be away some time?

BONSER. (*whispering*) Yes, my angel—the captain is long-winded, and runs like a young stag.

CLARA. (*entering, and shutting the door*) If he comes, I'll say I wanted one of the books out of the library. How it pains me to be obliged to resort to these excuses! heigho!

BONSER. (L. c.) It is disgusting—frightful! But what are we to do? You see, I would get a week's salary in advance, and entreat you to elope, only I know he would bring an action for abduction.

CLARA. But you forget, dearest—I was twenty-one, four days ago!

BONSER. Poor girl! then you are now answerable for your own debts?

CLARA. But I am also answerable for my own conduct—for now I may marry whom I please—so it is no good papa's bothering me about Mr. Flickster, I'll have nothing to say to him!

BONSER. That's right—do not even speak to him, or he's sure to commence an action for breach of promise.

CLARA. But what are your plans? What are our future prospects?

BONSER. Alas, my love, I know not. If I were to marry you, and Turby found it out, he would discharge me, and then what should we do? You see this village is so uncivilized, that it does not contain a single loan office.

CLARA. Yet he would not allow his own child to starve.

BONSER. We must not be too venturesome. It would be a dangerous experiment for us to try!

(TURBY coughs outside, L.)

CLARA. (*alarmed*) Hush! my father has come back—I can hear him panting in the passage. Quick, give me a book. (*he gives her one*) Now to your place. (CLARA sits L. of R. table, reading)

BONSER. (*jumps on his seat at desk—writing*) Mind and speak as if you weren't nervous.

Enter TURBY, C. D. from L., out of breath.

TURBY. I never saw a man go at such a rate as that Captain Jones! there was no serving him! They may well say he went the pace. No wonder he outran the constable! (*suddenly sees CLARA*) What are you doing here, miss?

CLARA. I just stepped in to get a book from the library.

TURBY. (c.) Now, once for all, mind, I won't have you reading books—I'll lock up the book-case.

CLARA. (r.) Not read the books?

TURBY. No—you dogsear them, and cut the leaves—I never read them myself. What book have you taken?

CLARA. The most interesting one I could find—it is called—
(hesitating, and trying to conceal it.)

TURBY. Give it here. (*takes it*) "Petersdorff on Special Remainders." Ah, it's a very nice, interesting work! and if it wasn't mine, I'd lend it to you. But women have nothing to do with the laws of their country! There, you can go—you've made me lose five minutes, and I might have issued an execution in that time!

Exit CLARA, r. d.—BONSER lays down his pen.
Why ain't you working, sir? Do you think I've retired from business?

BONSER. (l.) I was going to dinner, sir.

TURBY. (r.) Dinner! hang me if you're not always wasting your time!

BONSER. Why, sir, I haven't been away from the desk for more than five minutes all the morning.

TURBY. Then I've a great mind to deduct that five minutes from your salary. (*goes to table, r.*) Go and sign judgment against the butcher opposite. (*gives paper*) I saw him drinking with the baker as I came along—and I'm afraid they'll arrange matters amicably. And when you go out, tell the barmaid at the Nag's Head that I want to see her—she shall serve Captain Jones—he'd never be such a villain as to suspect a girl of seventeen!

BONSER. I will, sir, as I come back from dinner.

TURBY. Dinner! What, are you going to dinner again?

BONSER. I was going, sir, as you came in.

TURBY. Stuff and nonsense! you could have dined twice over whilst you've been talking about it. (*looking at watch*) It's too late now—take two or three shrimps with your tea.

BONSER. Two or three shrimps with my tea! I wish to dine, sir! I am accustomed to have my five meals a day, sir.

TURBY. (r.) Then you'll not suit me very long. Do you fancy I give you a pound a week merely to eat five meals a day? I can get plenty of clerks to do it cheaper!

BONSER. I must eat, sir!

TURBY. The cant of the day. Do you know what eating leads to? Why, drinking.

BONSER. (l.) But I don't drink, sir.

TURBY. You do!

BONSER. No, sir!

TURBY. How dare you tell me such a falsehood, when I saw you at the pump the other day.

BONSER. But there's no brandy there, sir!

TURBY. That's not your fault! you'd drink it all the same if there were.

BONSER. You appear to wish to pick a quarrel with me, sir.

TURBY. That's slander! that's slander! I don't want to quarrel, you scoundrel—I won't quarrel! Get out of the house—leave the house—I discharge you. Go, and starve!

BONSER. As you please, sir.

TURBY. A scoundrel! I believe you only came here to make love to my daughter.

BONSER. Since you mention it, sir, that was my only motive.

TURBY. (*crossing to L., and taking up Bonser's hat*) Ah, here's a villain! (*crossing back to R.*) attempting to carry off a gentleman's daughter, when he can't afford to pay even forty shillings damages. Oh, you precious villain! There's the door—be off with you! (*goes to C. D.—opens it*)

BONSER. (L.) Let me take my hat, sir. I suppose I may take my hat, unless you want to steal it. (*TURBY throws hat at him*) I'll call round for the salary that is due to me. (*going*)

TURBY. (*aside*) That reminds me I never took any receipts from him, and he might recover two or three weeks from me. If he goes to Smith's office over the way, I'm lost! I shouldn't mind taking such a case myself. (*to BONSER*) You ask for money as if you had a bill to take on Friday! You can call again.

BONSER. I shall not forget it.

Exit, C. D. to L.

TURBY. If you do, I shan't be offended. Upon my word, I do really believe that if I could only get a young partner, who would put five hundred pounds into the business, and do all the work, I'd never, as long as I live, take a clerk again!

Enter MRS. TURBY at door, R. 2 E.

MRS. T. What on earth is all this noise about, Mr. Turby?

TURBY. (*seated L. of R. table*) That villain, Bonser, has dared to answer me.

MRS. T. What do you mean?

TURBY. Why, I simply said he was a scoundrel, and he had the impudence to contradict me.

MRS. T. What then?

TURBY. What then! Why, of course, I turned him into the street.

MRS. T. Of course, you know your own business best, Mr. Turby—but my opinion is, that you will never get such a good clerk again. I am sure he was most attentive to me—used to

go out shopping with me—and never once objected to carry a brown paper parcel!

TURBY. That's just his cunning! It was done to deceive you. I tell you he was making love to Clara all the time!

MRS. T. May be, my dear—but I never saw anything wrong in his conduct.

TURBY. Nothing wrong! (*striking the table with his fist in a passion*)

MRS. T. (*starting*) Dear me, Mr. Turby!

TURBY. Nothing wrong! Don't tell me, madam! when, with my own eyes, I've seen him endeavour to tempt the girl from the path of duty with a whole stick of Spanish liquorice!

(*rising, and going down L. C.*)

MRS. T. (R.) You know she had a cold, my dear. And what to goodness will you do until you get another clerk?

TURBY. I shall take Mr. Flickster in as a partner, and let him marry Clara—he has five hundred pounds, and is a very clever fellow—he won a goose of me in a bet the other day—and the way in which he cheated me in the transaction, proves he'd be an ornament to the profession.

MRS. T. Stuff, Mr. Turby, stuff! Now what do you want with a partner?—if it is for the sake of the five hundred pounds, you had much better write to your rich sister, and borrow that amount.

TURBY. Hem! that's not a bad idea, my love! my memory is going, or else I shouls have remembered that the poor afflicted girl is crazy. Leave me to my thoughts, my poppet.

Exit MRS. TURBY, D. R. 2 E.

Really I am half sorry Bonser has gone! he was a decent fellow, and not dear; but then his appetite was too large, and he was far too particular about professional trifles. The fact is, I want a sharp fellow like Flickster—he has great talent—great talent—would arrest his own father in the way of business.

Enter MARY, C. D. from L.

MARY. (L.) A parcel, sir—a shilling to pay.

TURBY. (*sitting at table, R.*) Don't take it in—don't take it in. I shouldn't wonder if my rival, Smith, has sent a hamper of stones in revenge for my having won that case from him.

MARY. It comes by railway, sir! man's in a hurry.

TURBY. Oh, very well, then, pay it. (*rising, feeling in his pocket*) Confound the thing, where did I put that bad shilling to? perhaps as the man's in a hurry he might take it. Bless

my soul, I shall forget my own name next. Why, of course, I gave it at the Charity sermon on Sunday. (*gives MARY a shilling*) Here's the money. *Exit MARY, c. to l.* I don't half like the idea of that hamper—it can't be any client who is grateful. However, if it be a stone, I shall know **at** whose door to lay it.

Enter MRS. TURBY and CLARA, R. D., as MARY comes on, c. d. from l., with hamper, putting it down c.

MRS. T. (R. C.) A present from London, my dear—a present from London. Didn't I see it in the candle last night, when you called me an old fool?

TURBY. (L. C.) Come, make haste—are you going to be all day unpacking?

CLARA. (R.) Who can have sent sent it? I'd give anything to know. Perhaps it its wine!

MRS. T. (R. C.) Wine! how on earth has wine got into your head? Bless the girl, she'll be all day fiddling with the basket. (*helping to unpack*)

TURBY. Stop, I can see a feather. (*sits on basket*) They never could have had the cunning to cover the stone. (*getting up*) Pull out the straw.

CLARA. It's sherry, I think!

MRS. T. Port, I hope!

TURBY. (taking out a goose by the neck, an address card to the leg) A goose, by Jove!

MRS. T. What a beauty! addressed to Clara from her aunt.

TURBY. What—what? addressed to Clara! no matter, I always carve, (*a pause-sniffing as if he smelt something—looks at MRS. TURBY, who in her turn sniffs and puts her handkerchief to her nose—CLARA does the same—MARY uses her apron—TURBY holds his nose*) Mrs. Turby, do you detect a very powerful odour?

MARY. (holding her nose, c.) It smells like a partridge.

CLARA. (after looking at address) Oh, lud! I declare it's shameful. It's been a week coming.

MRS. T. Nonsense—nonsense! (*smells and shudders*) What a pity it is not venison! it would be delicious!

TURBY. (smelling it) Ugh—ugh! what a fool my sister must be—she knew it was coming by railway, why didn't she embalm it? we don't want any fishing bait.

MRS. T. Ugh! a dog wouldn't touch it, I think we had better give it to some deserving pauper.

TURBY. Nonsense! hang me if you wouldn't give everything

away if I'd let you. How do you know, as Clara is of age, but that the servants would like to eat it for a treat?

Hands it to MARY, who turns away in disgust, and exits indignantly, C. D. to L.

There's daintiness! really what's come to servants, I don't know. (*knocking is heard outside, L.*)—CLARA helps to put basket L., near the desk—TURBY wraps goose up in his pocket handkerchief) Come in!

FLICKSTER appears at C. D. from L.

Oh, here's Flickster—what does he want.

FLICK. (down c.) Good day to you, ladies! (MRS. TURBY, R.) Will you, Miss Turby, (to CLARA, L. c.) allow me to offer you one of the most wonderful curiosities of modern invention. (*presents knife*)

TURBY. (R.) What a beautiful knife. (*whisper CLARA*) Did Bonser ever give you anything like that.

FLICK. They are very scarce, and it was with great difficulty that I procured this one. It contains fourteen blades—a cork-screw, and an instrument for taking stones out of horses' shoes. (*affectionately*) But you must buy it of me, or it may cut our loves.

CLARA. (L. C.) I cannot, for I have nothing less than half-a-crown, Mr. Flickster. (*shows money—TURBY pulls her sleeves*)

FLICK. (R. C., *taking the money*) Pray make no excuses, that will do. (*aside*) I only paid two shillings for it at an omnibus window.

CLARA. (*taking the knife and crossing to R.*) Mr. Flickster shows his taste by offering such a present to a lady. Good morning.

Exit R.

MRS. TURBY makes a formal curtsey, following her.

TURBY. (*aside*) By Jove, that's a capital thought of mine. I owe Fitckster a goose for the last bet he won. I'll give him Clara's! ah, never throw anything away—it's sure to turn in useful some day. Flickster, my boy, (*aloud*) I want to get out of debt with you. You won a bet of a goose from me. I've got a beauty for you here. (*holding the goose in his right hand, and turning his head away*)

FLICK. (R.) Thank you, Turby, I always said you were a gentleman. Now mind, you must come and dine with me when I have it cooked—I insist upon it.

TURBY. Thank you—it's very kind of you, but I am sure to be engaged on that day. Here's your goose. (*gives it to FLICKSTER*)

FLICK. (*takes goose—a pause—FLICKSTER makes a face—*

turning up his nose two or three times—TURBY laughing aside)
 I say, what's this? none of this, Turby! who do you think is going to eat a goose that died months ago? I should have to stew it in chloride of lime, and serve it up with disinfecting fluid.

TURBY. I can't help it—that's your look out. You've *won* your goose, and you've *got* your goose. What more do you expect?

FLICK. It won't do, Turby—I'm not going to take a bad goose. (*gives it back*)

TURBY. Now I appeal to you. Did we say what sort of a goose it was to be? Besides, don't you talk about generosity? what did you give Clara that Jew's penknife for?

FLICK. Oh, ah! I know what you're after. You'd like a fellow to go spending half a sovereign in giving her presents, when perhaps, she won't have me at all. When we are married it'll be different.

TURBY. Dear, dear! the meanness of the world—because, of course, then all her property will be yours. Well, are you going to take the goose?

FLICK. Never, sir, never! but take notice, I shall summons you for the bet—it was a legal one.

TURBY. As you please, sir—then I shall pay the goose into court. (*goes up and puts goose into basket*)

FLICK. (R., aside) If I quarrel with Turby, I shall have to break off with Clara! Confound the goose—I must give it away to some one. (*aloud*) Hand it over, Turby. (TURBY gives goose to him)

TURBY. If you hash it with plenty of onions and cayenne pepper you won't taste it. (*goes to fireplace, L., and sits down*)

FLICK. (aside) Let me see, did I ever give young Bonser anything for saving my life? really I don't think I ever have. It seems d——d ungrateful. Poor fellow! I'll send him the goose—it will look attentive. *Exit with goose, C. to L.*

TURBY. I advise you to cook it as soon as possible—it won't keep much longer. Confound that maid! is she going to leave this hamper here all day? (*calling at door C.*) Now, then, are you going to clear this mess away, or perhaps you'd like me to do it. (*kicks hamper*) Holloa, what's that? (*takes a letter out*) A letter for Clara from her aunt. Clara—Clara!

Enter CLARA and MRS. TURBY, R. D.

Why don't you use your eyes? here's a letter for you. Wait a moment—I'll be back soon. *Exit TURBY, C. to L.*

MRS. T. What can your aunt have to say?

CLARA. (*opening letter and reading*) "The day after tomorrow you are twenty-one." Why, this was written a week ago. (*reading*) "I wish to show your father that I am grateful to him for having won my suit."

MRS. T. Poor creature! she was quite in the wrong; but your father is such a clever man.

CLARA. (*reading*) "So I send you a goose as a Michaelmas present; you will find it remarkably well stuffed." (*speaking*) What can the poor old lady mean?

MRS. T. Give me the letter. (*opens it*) Ah! here's a post script written by your cousin on the other side. (*reading*) "My aunt remains as eccentric as ever, she has forgotten to tell you that she has placed a pocket-book containing five hundred pounds in notes within the goose."

CLARA. Five hundred pounds! my goose stuffed with five hundred pounds in notes, within the goose.

MRS. T. The darling old lady! I'd give my best gown merely to kiss her. Bless her good heart. Five hundred pounds. Why, it's a fortune. Clara, my love, you're an heiress. Let's tell your dear father. Where is he? He'll go crazy with joy. (*runs to the door at back and calls*) Mr. Turby—Turby, life. (*to CLARA*) Look after that dear old goose.

CLARA. How I long to see Mr. Bonser. Now I can, without fear, give him my hand.

Enter TURBY, c. from L.

TURBY. Once for all, Mrs. Turby, and don't let me have to repeat it, I won't have you calling my name all over the town, as if I was a witness afraid to appear. What's the matter?

MRS. T. (R.) Oh, that dear, dear sister of yours—such a surprise—run across the road and pay the goose into the bank.

TURBY. (C.) Pay the goose into the bank? what does the woman mean—are you mad?

CLARA. (L.) Yes, yes—we are almost crazy with joy. I can't speak for happiness—read this letter! (*gives letter*)

MRS. T. (R.) Oh, that dear woman! I'll send her at Christmas the fattest turkey in the county.

TURBY. (*looks at letter, then seems bewildered—they lead him to a chair*) Oh, lud—oh, lud—oh, lud! Is there any brandy in the house?—and I have paid away that goose to Flickster.

MRS. T. Paid the goose away to Flickster!

CLARA. But he will return it?

TURBY. Let us hope for the best. As he is ignorant of the contents, he may act honestly. (*passionately*) Don't stand staring about in that manner, but send the servant after him.

He has to pass two public-houses on his way home, and if he's not at the first, he's sure to be at the second.

MRS. TURBY crosses and exits, C. to L.

CLARA. Oh, oh, oh! my five hundred pounds all gone—gone—gone!

TURBY. Listen to me, Clara. If Flickster won't give up the goose, you must marry him directly, or he may cut the family.

CLARA. Marry him? no, sir! I'd sooner make him a present of the money. (*crosses to R.*)

TURBY. What, what! not marry him? let him spend your five hundred pounds by himself? Would you drive your old father to drinking? (*FLICKSTER speaks outside, L.*) Here he comes—not a word about the money. Keep your mouth shut, or we are ruined. (*CLARA sits in chair L. of R., table*)

FLICKSTER C. from L., followed by MAID, who takes up hamper, and exits, R. D.

FLICK. (L.) It is really a most singular fact that I can't take a glass of ale without some of your people spying me. I don't like it, sir!

TURBY. (*approaching him, R. c., and sniffing*) It was not ale, Flickster, its brandy. (*aside*) By this extravagance, I know he's found the money.

FLICK. (L. c.) I'm in a hurry—what do you want now?

TURBY. (*coaxingly*) Won't you step in and rest a little, Flickster. It's so seldom we can catch hold of you now-a-days. Why don't you come and drink here, instead of going to nasty public-houses. Clara, my dear, go and fetch some wine—half a bottle, and mind you don't shake it. *Exit CLARA, R. D.*

FLICK. (L., *aside*) What is old Turby up to? he never gives wine for nothing. He can't want me to accept a bill.

TURBY. (*aside*) I must be diplomatic. (*aloud, blandly*) How is your poor old mother, Flickster, my boy.

Enter MARY, R. D. with wine, places it on table, and exits C. to L.

Ah! there's a fine woman, if you like. What eyes—what eyes—what eyes! big as eggs. They are come. Flickster, sit down, my boy, and take a glass of wine. (*FLICKSTER sits L. of table, TURBY R., pulling the tray and wine to his side*) Flickster, allow me to assist you. (*fills one glass, sips, smacks his lips*) Ah, that is wine—wine of the right sort. You don't get such wine every day.

FLICK. (*annoyed*) And you see determined I shall have none now.

TURBY. Eh? what, dear me, why that girl has put the glasses on this side of the table. (*gives glass—FLICKSTER seizes the decanter, fills a glass and drinks it off—about to fill another, TURBY stops him.*) You drink too fast, Flickster—if you drink so fast you don't get the right flavour. (*taking decanter and drinking himself*) Your health, jolly old Flickster, I never saw you looking so nice. You don't know how nice you're looking.

FLICK. (*uneasy*) The same to you—you're looking pretty tidy. I'd better go—I know it's a sell. (*rising*) Good bye, Turby.

TURBY. (*stopping him*) Nonsense, old boy, I won't hear of it. Stop and take another glass. (*fills his own glass—FLICKSTER seizes the decanter, fills his own glass, and is about to drink, when TURBY takes hold of his arm and brings him down*) You're a very easy fellow to do, Flickster, my boy. Now, did you really fancy I meant you to keep that goose? ha, ha, ha! Now, I'll be bound to say you did.

FLICK. (L. C.) It did look like it.

TURBY. (R. C.) Ha, ha, ha! I've sold you—I'll tell 'em all at the club, I will. What an opinion you must have of me. Of course I was only joking. Here, you stupid fellow, send it me back, and you shall have a beauty.

FLICK. You may give me another if you like, Turby, but it's no use sending back the old one.

TURBY. No, no, I shan't give you another, unless you return the one you have. I wouldn't have it said in earnest, that I ever gave you such a thing.

FLICK. But I haven't got it.

TURBY. (*aside*) I knew he had found the money. (*aloud*) Come, send me back that goose, and you shall have the finest in the market!

FLICK. (*aside*) What is he up to? (*aloud*) What does a fine goose cost, Turby?

TURBY. Oh. a tremendous price—an awful sum—ten or twelve shillings, Flickster; but I owe you a goose, and hang money—it shan't stand in the way.

FLICK. It won't do, Turby, you've said too much. If you offer me twelve shillings for that seedy goose, it must be worth a great deal more. You're just the fellow who'd like to get five hundred pounds worth of goods for half-a-sovereign.

TURBY. (*aside*) Five hundred pounds! it's all over—he knows about it.

FLICK. (*aside*) What a fool I was not to have examined the goose!

TURBY. (*very seriously*) On your honour, Flickster, did you examine the bird?

FLICK. (*knowingly winks*) Ah, didn't I just!

TURBY. And—now, no equivocation—what did you find in it?

FLICK. You know as well as I do.

TURBY. Did you find anything?

FLICK. I should think so.

TURBY. What, under the right wing?

FLICK. (*aside*) He's dodging me. (*aloud*) No, it wasn't under the right wing. (*aside*) That goose had clearly got valuables concealed about its person.

TURBY. Mr. Flickster, I insist upon a straightforward answer. On your oath, sir, did you find a pocket-book in that goose?

FLICK. A pocket-book! (*aside*) There's my luck! hang it, what a fool I was to give it to Bonser! By heaven, I'll never make another present as long as I live.

TURBY. (*in anger*) Flickster, listen to me. Give me back that pocket-book, or I'll give you in charge for stealing the five hundred pounds contained in it.

FLICK. Five hundred pounds! (*aside*) I must rush to Bonser. (*aloud, and making for door*) I shall not stop to be insulted in this manner.

Exit in a hurry, c. to L.

TURBY. He's off—he's off! and the railway station close by. I must give that fellow in charge.

Rushes to door, meets BONSER, who enters, c. from R.

Get out of the way, sir! Do you hear, sir? get out of the way!

BONSER. Where's Mr. Flickster? I insist upon seeing him, Mr. Turby!

TURBY. D——n it, get out of the way, sir, or I shall never catch him. Let me go.

BONSER. I insist upon seeing Mr. Flickster! where is he? he has insulted me! he has given me a goose.

TURBY. (*becoming very polite*) A goose! pray step in, Mr. Bonser, I beg of you. Very fine weather for the time of year, isn't it? What is the goose like?

BONSER. Like, sir! why, like to breed a pestilence.

TURBY. That's the one—that's the one! and old Flickster dared to send it to you—to you, my dear worthy young man! but he shall apologise for it, or—

BONSER. Sir, he had that amount of impudence.

FLICKSTER appears at door, c. from L., listening.

TURBY. (R.) If you yourself hadn't told me of it, I never should have believed it. Disgusting! and what did you do with that goose, may I ask?

BONSER. (c.) Do with it! I ordered it to be thrown away.

FLICK. (down L.) Thrown away—where?

TURBY. You here, Mr. Flickster—I insist upon—

FLICK. Don't speak! (to BONSER) Then you refuse to accept my present?

BONSER. (indignantly) I hurl that goose at your head, Mr. Flickster!

FLICK. Thank goodness! then the goose still belongs to me!

TURBY. Don't mind him, Bonser, only answer me. And where was it thrown to, my good young man?

FLICK. (pulling BONSER to him, L.) As you refuse my present, where can I find it?

TURBY. (pulling BONSER to him, R.) Don't tell him—don't tell him! tell me quietly, and you shall come back again and have thirty shillings a week!

FLICK. (pulling again) Hang it, sir, I want my goose back. Where is it?

BONSER. (indignantly) Where it ought to be! go to the house where I live, (TURBY and FLICKSTER make a start up stage) and if you want to find the dusthole, (they turn back again) go down the garden, (another false start) turn to the left, where you'll see (back again) a hedge! jump over the hedge, and at the back you will see (another start) an enormous Newfoundland dog.

TURBY. (back again) Does he bark?

BONSER. No, he only bites. At his side you will see your goose rotting in the sun.

TURBY. He only bites--no matter—to the dusthole—to the dusthole!

(turns up stage, sees FLICKSTER at door—they struggle, each endeavouring to get first, shouting, "To the dusthole—to the dusthole!" Exeunt, c. to L.

BONSER. What can all this mean? I must see Clara and get her to explain this mystery.

Enter CLARA, R. D.

CLARA. (R.) Ah! William, I am the most unfortunate girl living. I shall go crazy, like poor aunt, I know I shall.

BONSER. (L.) What do you mean, Clara? tell me what has caused this excitement.

CLARA. If I speak, I shall burst into tears. Read this letter—it is from my aunt—poor eccentric old lady. I have had five hundred pounds sent me, and it is lost. (*gives letter*)

BONSER. (*having read it*) Poor girl! you may well feel unhappy. Why did not your father trust me? did he fancy that I would have taken a mean advantage of a mistake?

CLARA. Hurry after Mr. Flickster! the money is as much yours as mine. Force that man to give it up to you.

BONSER. If he does not, he shall not live to spend your fortune.

CLARA. Quick, quick! and let me know the result immediately. I shall be in agony until your return. *Exit, R. D.*

(BONSER is going out, when FLICKSTER and TURBY are heard quarrelling outside, and PEOPLE laughing.)

Enter FLICKSTER and TURBY, their clothes torn and their faces dirty, c. from L.

TURBY. (*falls into chair, R.—to BONSER, who comes down, c.*) You scoundrel! how dared you say that dog only bit—he gnaws dreadfully!

FLICK. (R.) I hereby give you notice, Mr. Turby, that I shall bring an action for assault. You threw me on to the dustheap.

BONSER. (c., to TURBY) Oh, sir, why did you suspect me?

TURBY. You who have been in a lawyer's office to ask me such a question! But the goose has gone.

FLICK. I'll swear there was no goose there.

BONSER. Not there! then somebody must have carried it off within the last ten minutes. Let me go and look for it myself.

FLICK. (*stops him*) No! if he finds it he will keep it.

TURBY. Dear me! dear me! what shall I do? I'll send the town crier about and offer to buy all the bad geese in the neighbourhood.

BONSER. Tell me, sir. Should you know the goose if you saw it?

TURBY. Should I—should I know it? Ah, Bonser, know it! I shall never forget the expression of that animal's face. Rush, my worthy young man—you are the only one I can trust, and offer five shillings a-piece for all the geese in the neighbourhood which are not fit to be eaten.

BONSER. I will do all I can, sir. *Runs off, c. to L.*

(*a pause—FLICKSTER seats himself on the office chair—TURBY turns and sees him.*

TURBY. Now, sir! what are you stopping here for?

FLICK. Turby, I'm waiting the arrival of the goose.

TURBY. You shan't wait here, sir. I'll give you in charge.

FLICK. Turby, you can't give me in charge—you may bring an action for trespass, but that is all.

TURBY. (aside) What a partner he would have made.

(aloud) If you stop here, I shall go outside and lock the door.

FLICK. Then I shall proceed against you for false imprisonment.

TURBY. (aside) Heavens, what genius! I cannot hate such a man. (aloud) I shall ask you three times, as required by law. Will you go, Mr. Flickster? (FLICKSTER whistles) Flickster, I inform you, without prejudice, mind—that I shall have to knock you down. Will you leave the room? (FLICKSTER begins singing) This is the third time of asking! are you going out of the house? (FLICKSTER deliberately leaves chair and goes to fireplace, L., and begins stirring the fire—TURBY rushing at him) You shan't stir my fire, sir—put that poker down.

(they struggle, knock books and ornaments off mantel-piece—in the meantime)

Enter MEN and WOMEN, c. d. from L., with geese in their hands.

(going to them) Come along, my good people. (FLICKSTER does the same) You shan't have one of them, Flickster—they were all ordered by me. (goes to WOMAN, R.) Show me your goose! (smells it) I'll give you five shillings for it.

FLICK. I'll give you six!

TURBY. (who has examined the goose) Let him have it—it isn't the right one. If he won't pay you, come to me, and I will sue him. (a MAN comes down, L., TURBY goes to him) Why, confound you, sir, this goose is fit to eat.

1st MAN. Yes, it's a beauty, sir.

TURBY. Take it away directly, sir! do you think I want good wholesome geese like that? (throws it at him)

FLICK. (to a MAN down L.) Here, I'll buy yours.

TURBY. (R. of MAN) No, I'll buy it!

FLICK. (L. of MAN) I'll give you ten shillings for it!

TURBY. I'll give you a pound.

FLICK. Let him have it—it isn't the right one. (laughs)

2nd MAN. (to TURBY) You'd better have my goose—it's the worst here!

TURBY. Let me see it.

2nd MAN. No, I shan't do that—I never thought it would fetch anything when I picked it up.

FLICK. Picked it up! that must be the one. (whispers to MAN, L.)

TURBY. (aside) Flickster shan't have it. (whispers to MAN, R.)

2nd MAN. (to TURBY) Pooh! why it's the worst in the village—nearly old enough to walk alone. (FLICKSTER whispers again) Done! you shall have it. (gives goose) I know it will suit, for it has been in my shop these three weeks.

FLICK. (groaning) I shan't have any more of these geese!

ALL. (advancing) Here's my goose—and mine—and mine!

TURBY. Get out of the place, all of you—get out.

(squabbling, all go off, c. to L., but the 2nd MAN, who remains expostulating with FLICKSTER—TURBY turns and sees him.)

What are you doing here? get out!

Turns MAN out—FLICKSTER throws goose, which hits TURBY on the back.

Why did you throw that goose at me?

FLICK. (R.) Why did you stand in the way, when you knew I was going to throw the goose? I say, old Turby, my boy, you've been done.

Enter BONSER, C. D. from L.

TURBY. (R.) I say, Flickster, my fine fellow—you've made a good thing of it!

FLICK. (L.) A sovereign for an unpleasant goose.

TURBY. You were let in for thirty shillings. The geese were a little too high, weren't they, Flickster?

BONSER. (coming down, c.) It's no good quarrelling about it—the notes are lost for ever now. The goose has been taken away by the dustman.

TURBY. (R.) Good ready money chucked into the gutter. I shall swear we never received it. (Dustman's bell outside, L.) I am the most unfortunate man alive. What business had I to go paying the bird away? Whenever I am liberal, I always lose by it. I'll never pay another bet as long as I live.

FLICK. (L., aside) What does that bell mean? (going on tiptoe towards door)

TURBY. Such a lump of money too—how can I repair the loss—I must keep on Brown's Chancery suit for two years longer, (dustman's bell again—TURBY turns and sees FLICKSTER stealing off, c.) What the deuce is Flickster up to?

BONSER. Quick! quick! it is the dustman's cart passing!

DUSTMAN. (without—bell) Dust ho! dust ho!

BONSER. That cart must contain the goose!

(TURBY rushes after FLICKSTER, pulls him back by the tails of his coat—FLICKSTER escapes—TURBY follows—FLICKSTER turns, drops his head against TURBY's chest, which knocks his hat over his eyes—they struggle off, c. d. to L.)

TURBY. Villain, you shall not have it !

BONSER. (*looking out at door*) How they rush across the market place—now Turby dashes to the front—now Flickster nears him—he leads him by a nose—what do I see? Turby has seized Flickster by the coat tail—Heaven grant that it may not give way—I plainly perceive the neck of the goose hanging over the cart-side! (*cry of "Dust ho!"—bell*) Turby throws the dustman a coin and seizes it! (*shouts without, "Ha, ha, ha!"*) Flickster grasps at the prize, but in vain—(*shouts again—bell*) Now they are returning—Turby bounds over the stones like a rabbit—Flickster does not lose ground—Flickster has seized the goose—Heavens! here they are.

Shouts, "Ha, ha, ha!"—Dustman's bell until TURBY and FLICKSTER are on the stage, c. from L., with the goose between them, TURBY the neck and FLICKSTER the hind parts.

TURBY. (R.) Let go, you villain!

FLICK. (L.) Let go, you scoundrel!

TURBY. By heavens, Flickster, I'll kick you if you don't let go!

FLICK. Let go directly, or I swear I'll bite your fingers!

(*they fall backwards and forwards, until the goose comes in two—they both fall, TURBY R., FLICKSTER L.*

TURBY. (*examining his half*) Confound him—he has the money in *his* half!

FLICK. (*examining his half*) Hang it, I'm done—Turby has the notes after all!

TURBY. In this crisis, sir, we may as well speak the truth—have you the money?

FLICK. Sir, further deception is useless, I have!

BONSER. (*c., seizing FLICKSTER's half*) False to the last—the pocket book is not here!

FLICK. I was not bound to criminate myself.

TURBY. But where can the money have got to then—what are we to do now?

FLICK. (*crawling across to TURBY*) Will you go halves if I find the money? (*aside*) I'll promise him half as a blind.

TURBY. Yes, I will! (*aside*) Likely I should give him any, isn't it?

FLICK. (*looking at BONSER*) Well! guess who has it?

TURBY. The dustman!

FLICK. No—guess again! The dustman knows nothing about it.

TURBY. Well then—(*hesitates*)—he can't have concealed the pocket book about me! (*feels in his pockets*)

FLICK. (*pointing to BONSER*) Do you know now?

TURBY. Bonser!

BONSER. (L.) Mr. Flickster, how dare you—I defy you to step outside with me!

FLICK. There, I said nothing, did I? (*crosses to R. D.—aside*) I had better bear false witness against my young neighbour, or else he'll be marrying Clara.

TURBY. (R. C.) Mr. Bonser, have you the money? (*aside*) He has managed it with more talent than ever I gave him credit.

BONSER. (L.) Do you fancy, sir, that I should take advantage of a mistake to swindle you out of five hundred pounds—do you imagine such a thing, Mr. Turby?

TURBY. (*in chair, at table, R.*) Human nature is weak, Mr. Bonser, and five hundred pounds is five hundred pounds—come, give up the money!

FLICK. (R.) Bless you, if he hadn't found the pocket book, do you think that a man with his appetite would have thrown away a goose because it was a little high?

BONSER. After this insult I shall quit the house! (*going*)

FLICK. (*whispering to TURBY*) Stop him—he wants to bolt! (*TURBY rises, rushes to door, puts himself in a fighting attitude*)

BONSER. Mr. Turby, if any other but yourself opposed me I would pull his nose! But my love for Clara protects you. I will speak a few words to her, and leave this town for ever!

TURBY. How dare you love my daughter? (*calling at R.*) Clara! Clara! keep in your own room.

Enter CLARA, R. D.

CLARA. What do you want?

TURBY. Why, I want you to keep away—Mr. Bonser has the money—if he has any affection for you, tell him to give it up, and leave you for ever!

CLARA. I would not insult Mr. Bonser by suspecting him of such a thing.

FLICK. (L.) Look, he has a new hat on! Besides, I remember perfectly seeing him with a red pocket book in his hand.

(*BONSER rushes at FLICKSTER, who seizes a chair—they struggle into L. corner, BONSER stand over FLICKSTER with chair*)

TURBY. (R.) Soothe him, Clara! soothe him! or they'll be breaking my chairs.

FLICK. I apologise; it was only your pocket handkerchief. (*crosses to R.*)

BONSER. (L.) Clara, do you believe this accusation? Tell me—can you imagine me capable of such meanness?

CLARA. Do I believe it! of course not—and to prove it to you I give you my hand. (TURBY sinks into chair, R. C.)

FLICK. (R.) Never mind, Turby, they'll be separated before the week's out.

BONSER. What do you mean, sir?

FLICK. Why, you'll be in the workhouse!

(BONSER rushes at him, but is stopped by CLARA.)

TURBY. Heavens! that I should live to see my own child marry a man with such an appetite, and not even credit at a baker's!

CLARA. Father, you have driven me away from your house—adieu!

As they are going up, enter MAID with letter c. from L.

MAID. A letter from London, for Miss Clara.

TURBY. For my daughter! give it me instantly! (takes letter)

Exit MAID, C., to L.

CLARA. Give me the letter! (takes it) I am twenty-one, and mistress of my own actions.

TURBY. This comes of letting girls read a lot of stupid law books! I can't complain—I can't complain—it's my own fault.

CLARA. (c.) What do I see? (reads)—“I was dissuaded by your cousin from sending the five hundred pounds inside the goose, as I had wished. I am sorry the delicate surprise I intended has not been carried out, as I have not another goose, I would have sent the money to you in a plum pudding, but your cousin tells me that the notes would have suffered in the boiling, so pray excuse my apparent want of delicacy in sending you the money in the form a cheque, payable at sight.”

TURBY. Heavens! payable at sight—I hope her banker is not blind. (aside) As she is sure to marry Bonser, I had better make friends with him. (crosses to L., between BONSER and CLARA) Bonser, my boy, of all men in the world I would select to guide my child on the stormy paths of life, you are, I say you are—(putting his handkerchief to his eyes, and crossing to L.—CLARA and BONSER retire up)

FLICK. (R.) Don't cry, Mr. Turby! But I must beg of you to understand, Mr. Turby, that you still owe me a goose!

TURBY. Why, how many geese do you want, glutton? You've had one more than you could eat already.

FLICK. (indignantly) I refuse that seedy goose.

TURBY. Very well—very well! that's it, is it? (picking up the two halves of the goose) Now, then, you are all witness that I tender him a goose. (offers the halves)

FLICK. Turby, I, without prejudice mind, give you notice

that I shall pull your nose. I refuse these dividends, and refer the matter to arbitration.

TURBY. As you please, sir. (*advances to AUDIENCE*) Hem, hem ! my lord, and gentlemen of the jury—

FLICK. How dare you speak first ? how dare you ? I shall begin !

TURBY. You shan't, sir—you shan't.

TURBY. } The { plaintiff } in this case is a—
FLICK. } The { defendant }

TURBY. (*to FLICKSTER*) Villain !

FLICK. (*to TURBY*) Scoundrel !

TURBY. That's unprofessional, Flickster. For heaven's sake let's be professional ! I suppose I may put in my pleas—you wouldn't rob me of my pleas ? (*FLICKSTER nods*) These are my pleas. Firstly—that I never owed you a goose. Secondly—that I have paid you the goose I owe you. Thirdly—that though the goose was a bad one, I had a right to give it to you. Fourthly—that the goose was not a bad one. Fifthly—that you have had the goose and eaten it.

FLICK. Mr. Turby, I deny everything—everything !

TURBY. Then, sir, I leave the case with the arbitrators—I am not afraid. (*to AUDIENCE*) You've heard all the facts of the case—you have seen how Mr. Flickster has acted—how I have acted—how we have all acted in the matter, and—

FLICK. But Mr. Turby, sir !

TURBY. And Mr. Flickster, sir !

(*they commence squabbling and fighting—CLARA and BONSER trying to separate them, as the curtain descends quickly*)

R.

L.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means *Right of the Stage, facing the Audience* ; L. *Left* ; C. *Centre* ; R. C. *Right of Centre* ; L. C. *Left of Centre* ; D. F. *Door in the Flat, or Scene running across the back of the Stage* ; C. D. F. *Centre Door in the Flat* ; D. R. C. *Right Door in the Flat* ; L. C. F. *Left Door in the Flat* ; R. D. *Right Door* ; L. D. *Left Door* ; 2E. *Second Entrance* ; U. E. *Upper Entrance*.