

G L I T T E R.

An Original Comedy,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY

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AUTHOR OF

Lending a Hand, Ali Baba, The Brigand, Terrible Hymen,

Diamonds and Hearts, The Babes in the Wood, The Two

Harlequins, Red Hands, Face to Face, &c., &c.

THOMAS HAILES LACY.
89, STRAND, LONDON.

G L I T T E R.

*As first performed at the St. James's Theatre, on the
26th December, 1868.*

CHARACTERS.

EDWARD TREVLYN (<i>a banker</i>)	.	Mr. Gaston Murray.
REDCLIFFE (<i>his partner</i>)	.	Mr. George Jordan.
HOLDSWORTH (<i>uncle to Trevlyn</i>)	.	Mr. Flockton.
CECIL MITFORD	.	Mr. Charles Coghlan.
MR. JULIUS CRAWDUST	.	Mr. Arthur Williams.
SPINKS	.	Mr. Allen.
O'SHANTY	.	Mr. Speedy.
LUCY TREVLYN	.	Miss Lucy Rushton.
MRS. TREVLYN (<i>her sister-in-law</i>)	.	Miss Maria Simpson.
LADY OLIVIA CRAWDUST	.	Mrs. Poynter.

Time in representation—One hour and twenty-five minutes.

PERIOD AND COSTUMES.—Modern.

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GLITTER.



ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.—*Garden of an old fashioned country house. Elizabethan and ivy-clad porch of door, practicable, R. At back, shrubberies and flower-beds, gravel paths from which sweep up to porch. A sundial at back, c., garden seats R. of L., statuary L.*

Enter O'SHANTY, R., preceding LADY OLIVIA and MR. CRAWDUST.

O'SHANTY. A minute, ma'am, and I'll fetch the master—it's just as likely he's in the garden with Miss Lucy, but I'll take a look at his study first. (*looks at card—makes it out with difficulty*) Mr.—Mr.—ah, Mr. Sawdust.

LADY O. (*with dignity*) Crawdust!

O'SHANTY. Ah, sure—there's the R, and I never saw him at all. (*reads*) "Mr. and—"

LADY O. Lady Olivia Crawdust!

O'SHANTY. Yes, my lady; I'll fetch the master, my lady, if you'll just amuse yourself half a minute—you'll find the sundial mighty interesting, my lady. (*she gives him a look which sends him into the house, R.*)

LADY O. Crawdust!

CRAW. Your ladyship? (*places paletot on seat, L.*)

LADY O. I ought never to have married you, Crawdust.

CRAW. Yes, so you've been in the habit of observing.

LADY O. Often—I can't observe it too often. (*looks about*) Dear me—this place, with its baronial, though unpolished aspect, recalls—as indeed does everything about me but you—the lamented Sir Peter. Oh, to think that I should have united myself to —

CRAW. A parvenu!—that's the word, isn't it? Fire away, old lady; I didn't make £80,000 by carrying my feelings in a silver paper bag, I can tell you. Trample on me! That's it—if it don't exactly amuse you, it certainly don't hurt me, and I think it gives me an appetite.

LADY O. There again—his appetite!

CRAW. And why not? (*looks at watch*) No, I must be slow—it can't want four hours to dinner! (*goes to dial*) Not a blessed line on its face!

LADY O. Were you expecting to find one there—in the shade?

CRAW. (*marked*) Time's not a bad hand at lining faces—in the shade, too!

LADY O. Brute! (*aside, then changing tone*) What did you say this house was worth?

CRAW. Well, I should think old Holdsworth must touch pretty well on—(*thinks*)—I'd give him £6,000 a-year.

LADY O. No doubt they know an excellent set.

Enter O'SHANTY, door, R.

O'SHANTY. The master's nowhere in the house, so he must be in the grounds somewhere. It's as likely as not he's feeding the pigs.

CRAW. Funny, ain't it?

LADY O. The pigs! A man with £6,000 a-year feeding the pigs!

CRAW. Bless you, I've known people with twice the money do dirtier things than that.

O'SHANTY. Have you really, sir?

LADY O. Have the goodness to conduct me to the drawing-room, and inform your master that Lady Olivia Crawdust is here.

CRAW. And Mr. Crawdust. Tell him Tom Crawdust—he'll remember me—Crawdust's blacking.

LADY O. (*waiting for CRAWDUST up R.*) Mr. Crawdust! (*exit CRAWDUST.*)

O'SHANTY. An old friend, are you, sir? Sure he'll be as pleased to see you as the pigs themselves. To the right, ma'am, the first door, and there you are.

LADY O. The blacking, too! Oh, Sir Peter! (*exit, R.*)

O'SHANTY. Some of your fine town people, them; it's not my taste, anyways—all that kind of regulation step! (*imitates LADY OLIVIA*) Ah, I wish Mr. Edward had been contented with the old place and not taken that big thing of a house in the town yonder. Such doings—balls, dinners, parties, dances, picnics—doing the fashionable, they calls it. I expect it will wind up by their doing everybody—(*looks off, L.*) There's the master. (*feels in pocket*) Where's the letter? (*produces it*) And now the advertisement. (*looks at card*) Hi! master—(*calls*) you're wanted—hi!

Enter HOLDSWORTH, in gardening suit and carrying a rake, L.

HOLDS. A letter? (*takes it*.)

O'SHANTY. Yes, sir, and them—(*gives card*) they're in the drawing-room. The gentleman said you knew all about him, and something about his boots.

HOLDS. Ah, Crawdust and my lady—Isabel's new friend. (*gives him rake*) There, John—go and send Miss Lucy here—you'll find her and Mr. Mitford at the bottom of the lawn.

O'SHANTY. All right, sir.

(*exit, L.*)

HOLDS. (*examining letter*) From Tarrant. Ah, Edward again. Bother the boy, he'll be in some scrape before long. Well, perhaps it's as well he should buy his experience as speedily as possible, for the rascal's determined to have it, and pay for it into the bargain. (*reads*) What! as bad as that, eh! Hollo, this is a serious piece of business—"Failure of the Mexican Company, possibly a heavy run on the bank to-morrow—lots of paper in the market, to say nothing of that confounded Redcliffe, with his turf engagements." I've a shrewd suspicion that fellow's a scoundrel. But Edward, my boy—Edward, it's too bad of you. I did not think, when I tacked your name to that of the proud old house, you would have hit it so hard as this. (*stands lost in the letter.*)

LUCY. (*without, L.*) Gently, Mr. Mitford, gently. Oh, you'll never make a gardener—yes, that's better.

Enter LUCY, L.—she has on a garden dress, gloves, &c., and carries a broken plant in her hand.

Ah, uncle, you wicked old runaway, I shan't give you any more work—and you were to have done such wonders, and then stepped on and broke my pet dahlia! Look at it. (*noticing his abstraction*) But uncle, dear—you're not well—what is it? (*sees letter*) Ah, that letter! (*taking it*) No, you shan't be grieved and worried with these things. I know the writing—you've had three in the last fortnight, and they always take the dear smile from your face. (*tears it*) There, that's what I'd do to the writer—there!

HOLDS. (*tenderly*) But, my dear, that's not at all business-like.

LUCY. Business or not, you shan't be fretted. I say, uncle dear, can't you tell Lucy what it is, and let her fight these horrid people for you? Do let her.

HOLDS. My darling, there's no one to fight, and that's

the worst of it; but never mind, we must hope for the best.

LUCY. Won't you tell me? Well, let me guess, do.

HOLDS. Guess?

LUCY. I'm sure I can. It's—Edward—isn't it?

HOLDS. Who told you that?

LUCY. You did, of course. Do you think I haven't noticed how anxiously you ask first one little question, then another about him, how every postman's knock startles you, and how when his name is mentioned, your dear face falls, and then do you think there has not been something here that has whispered very softly to me, "Lucy, you must be more gentle and loving than ever to your dear old uncle, and prove to him there is one heart, at least, that holds him very, very dear!" (embraces him.)

HOLDS. Your advice is taken already, darling, I won't keep all my trouble to myself.

LUCY. That's right; you'll give me half. You dear, selfish thing, not to have given it me long ago! Let's hear all about it!

HOLDS. Well then—(*sees card in his hand*) Good gracious! we've forgotten them altogether! The Crawdusts!

LUCY. (*laughs*) So we have! What a catastrophe! Suppose they should have run away!

HOLDS. Quick, Lucy, into the drawing-room, and say I'm coming in a minute.

LUCY. (*taking off gloves, apron, &c.*) Oh, I'm so untidy, quite unpresentable! Dear me!

Enter CECIL MITFORD, L., with a freshly dug-up geranium plant in his hands—the plant has a large ball of earth to it.

CECIL. Here it is, Miss Trevlyn, I think I've got the roots! I couldn't find any more in the hole.

LUCY. Oh, that's capital! You're getting on.

CECIL. Rather slowly—never knew flowers were so heavy. Where shall I put it? (*looks about*.)

LUCY. Anywhere you like—flower-pot—bed—

CECIL. But I can't see a flower-pot—and, dear me, this is more substantial than it looks.

LUCY. (*absently*) Can't see one, never mind, hold it till I come back—and here, just hold these, there. (*puts gloves, &c., under his arm*) Have you got them? That's right—now mind, don't drop the flowers, I'll be back in five minutes. (*exit into house, R.*)

CECIL. (*looking about, bewildered*) Five minutes with this? a fellow can't do it! One might as well turn coal heaver at once!

HOLDS. And get the sack? You wouldn't care about that, eh?

CECIL. Well, no, I shouldn't. (*aside*) What does the old fellow mean about getting the sack? A sort of joke, I suppose—it's more than this is! Dear me, where shall I put it? (*sees coat on chair*) By Jove, the very thing! (*puts plant on coat*) There, 'pon my word, I don't think gardening's such fun as it looks. (*to HOLDSWORTH, who is adding up memorandums in a note-book*) Do you, Mr. Holdsworth? Making up a book, eh? I gave that kind of thing up when I was fourteen.

HOLDS. And very wise, too. No, I'm not weighing the odds—at least, the odds you allude to.

CECIL. Dear me, that thing of yours is so like a book, you know. (*takes out cigar, offers case to HOLDSWORTH*) Have a weed? (*lights cigar*.)

HOLDS. No, thank you. Talking of odds, haphazards, and dangerous games generally, can you give me a bit of information, I wonder?

CECIL. I should think so. But its some time since I've given serious attention to blind hookey, and —

HOLDS. Well, you needn't rub up your reminiscences, but just answer me one question. You're an old friend of Edward's—come now, is there any truth in what they say about—well, about the "pace" he's been going at lately?

CECIL. Well, as an old friend of Ted's, you know, I should say, well —— (*hesitates*.)

HOLDS. I understand—there is.

CECIL. You see Ted's such a careless fellow, so fond of driving four-in-hand, and that style of thing. We used to call him "*Tandem Teddy*" up at Oxford, I started the idea, wasn't bad, was it?

HOLDS. I'm afraid it was only too appropriate—he's been driving at a pretty pace ever since! Well, what's the worst they say of him? Out with it!

CECIL. Well, they say he's a confounded ass, that's the worst thing I've heard said of him. I once said, when I was in a rage, that he didn't know how to dress, but I didn't mean it, you know, I didn't mean it.

HOLDS. Well, now, not a word of this to anyone—to tell you the truth, things have come to a crisis.

CECIL. Have they, really—by Jove, you don't say so?

HOLDS. And I want the help of a third person. You are the kind of man to suit my purpose, and I'm sure you'll lend me a hand, eh?

CECIL. Charmed, quite charmed! With the greatest

pleasure, 'pon my word! I have a profound respect for the family, and—oh, I'm charmed, quite charmed! (aside) I wonder what's become of Miss Trevlyn? (looks about.)

HOLDS. Well, then, I shall count upon you, and I'll tell you all about it later; you'll excuse me now, I'm wanted in the drawing-room. Don't you go, I'll be back before you've finished your cigar. (exit, R.)

CECIL. Um! So I'm going to be of some use to the family. By Jove, I don't dislike the idea! Befriending any relative of that charming girl is quite a pleasant sensation! (sits, R.) The worst part of the business is the partner—his friend, Redcliffe—friend, yes, he shows very friendly cards, generally—always hanging about Ted's wife, for instance. I wouldn't mind interfering there, if I could get a chance—platonic attachment, I think they call it—I wonder if any one ever horsewhipped Plato? (rises) I should think so. 'Pon my word, if he happened to be my personal friend, I should feel inclined to kick him out of my house!

Enter MRS. TREVLYN and REDCLIFFE at back, L. On seeing CECIL, MRS. TREVLYN leaves REDCLIFFE's arm, with a bow as they advance.

MRS. T. Good morning, Mr. Mitford; do you know where I can find Lucy? I want to speak to her particularly. I hope we shall see you to-night.

CECIL. Oh, charmed, Mrs. Trevlyn. Glad to see you looking so well, it's rather an exertion this walk, with your duties of hostess looming before you.

MRS. T. Oh, I shall survive them. (laughs.)

CECIL. And Ted? I hope he's got over that cold he caught at the races?

MRS. T. I suppose so—but I see so little of him, I really forgot to ask. Hasn't he been here this morning?

CECIL. No; I'm the only goods from town.

REDCLIFFE. I saw him half an hour ago, at the club, in the billiard-room.

CECIL. (not heeding the remark) I think you'll find Miss Trevlyn in the house, knocking a call on the head.

MRS. T. Ah then, *au revoir*. (to REDCLIFFE) Only ten minutes, if you think you can kill them.

REDCLIFFE. (bows) *Toujours à vous!* (exit MRS. TREVLYN, into house—after a pause) Delightful old place, this!

CECIL. I beg your pardon.

REDCLIFFE. I remarked that this was a delightful old place.

CECIL. Oh, yes, delightful! yes! (*looks at REDCLIFFE, hesitates, and exits, R. U. E.*)

REDCLIFFE. (*watching him*) So, people are gossiping, are they? And that hare-brained ass has heard the buzz! (*leans against sun-dial, regarding the house*) And she, does she quite understand me? Bah! the whole world is more awake than she! This fool—even *he* has picked up the talk! (*takes note book out—opens it*) I thank him for the hint—the time has come for action. (*adds up memorandums*) Five and five are ten—twenty—thirty—forty—um—sixty-five thousand pounds gone! A run upon the cash, to-morrow—about eight thousand to meet all pretty calls. Business is business—and as that trifl will be safer in my pocket-book, we must transfer it quietly—to-night. And she—the Atlantic's broad enough—I wonder if she'd cross it—ruin if she stays—I'll try her.

Enter LUCY, MRS. TREVLYN, LADY OLIVIA, and CRAWDUST, from house, R.

LADY O. No, my dear, salmon colour and hollyhocks! When I first captivated Sir Peter, it was with salmon colour and hollyhocks; and our styles are precisely similar.

MRS. T. No, white, dear, plain white and a blush rose, or perhaps two, if you like, and my Lucy will look lovely!

LUCY. You'll drive your Lucy wild between you. There, I'll settle the matter—I believe in gentlemen's tastes, so what do you say, Mr. Crawdust?

CRAW. Oh, fight shy of the salmon and sunflower, by all means!

LADY O. Hollyhock, sir!

CRAW. Hollyhock, then! It's my opinion in *some cases* they'd both be equally charming.

LADY O. Mr. Crawdust, dear, is not capable of giving an opinion; from his childhood upwards, his favourite colour has been a ditch-green! Ah, Sir Peter's was damson! What do you say, Mr. Redcliffe?

REDCLIFFE. Mrs. Trevlyn's taste is mine; the pure white—the blush rose—no combination could speak more eloquently of this charming country spot!

LUCY. Then the white and roses are carried without a division. And you, Isabel, (*to MRS. TREVLYN*) what new wonder have you got from London? (*LADY OLIVIA, CRAWDUST, and REDCLIFFE retire up*) Now tell me all about it.

MRS. T. I've nothing to tell, dear, I leave it all to Masham; she chooses what she likes, and I'm only too

happy to submit. When one is out night after night these things weary to a degree !

LUCY. What ! you don't really care about dress ?

MRS. T. No.

LUCY. Don't rave about the newest shade of magenta ?

MRS. T. No.

LUCY. Nor go into hysterics with envy after every ball ? Giving it all up ? Oh, this will be news for Uncle Richard. Why, Isabel, how tired, how pale you look !

MRS. T. Tired ! pale ! I feel as if this life would wear me out in time ! Look at me, Lucy dear, do I look as merry as I used to, once ?

LUCY. No, darling.

MRS. F. I am not happy—and sometimes I almost wish—

LUCY. Hush, darling ! Why there are tears in your eyes ! Come, come, you know I get all the secrets, and (*tenderly*) I'm a wonderful doctor. You came here with Mr. Redcliffe, he is very amiable, very obliging, I dare say. (*watching MRS. TREVLYN*) He's a great favourite of yours ?

MRS. T. Oh, yes, he is so kind, and so devoted to Edward—he manages the bank for him, and everything ; and he says Edward's his best friend.

LUCY. He says that ? And Edward's best friend must be yours, that's logic, isn't it, dear ?

REDCLIFFE. (*advances, looking at watch*) I hope I'm not spoiling a pleasant tête-à-tête, but it's ten minutes to one.

MRS. T. So late ? And I promised to be at the Derwents for lunch ; I am afraid, dear, I must run away at once. (*about to take REDCLIFFE'S arm.*)

LUCY. Oh, no, no, not until you have seen what we done to the pigs. And Ponto, oh, you must see Ponto !

CRAW. Who's Ponto ?

LUCY. My great big dog, of course ! Oh, you must see him. You like dogs, I can see it, Mr. Crawdust.

CRAW. Well, I can't say I do—is he chained up ?

LUCY. Oh, yes ; the dear fellow, he's so lively ! I think that's the air down here, you know—one can't help it.

CRAW. Depends on situation ; I fancy the air at our end isn't quite so exhilarating. (*REDCLIFFE offers his arm to MRS. TREVLYN.*)

LUCY. Come, Lady Olivia, Mr. Redcliffe will escort you if Mr. Crawdust won't. (*LADY OLIVIA advances delightedly to REDCLIFFE, who reluctantly offers her his arm.*)

REDCLIFFE. (*annoyed*) With pleasure !

(*exit, R. U. E., with LADY OLIVIA.*)

CRAW. (*aside*) Simpering and smirking with anybody but me! Blowed if I won't see the dog, too! Dear me, I wish I'd stuck to the blacking! (*exit, R. U. E.*)

LUCY. Isabel, darling, do me a little favour, will you?

MRS. T. What is it?

LUCY. Don't walk back with that Mr. Redcliffe.

MRS. T. Why not?

LUCY. I don't like him.

MRS. T. Don't like him? Why not?

LUCY. Don't know.

MRS. T. But it would be so rude, without any excuse, too; besides, it's such an absurd request.

LUCY. Is it? (*pointedly*)

MRS. T. Yes, dear. And I must say I think it a little beyond your province to ——

LUCY. (*stopping her*) Love you? like my own dear sister that you are! (*kisses her*.)

MRS. T. But why do you wish this so particularly?

LUCY. Didn't you tell me just now you were unhappy? Does not everything about you tell me of it? All these balls, parties, dinners, nights turned into days, days useless as nights, don't tell me they are your pleasure! They weary you, distress you, wear you out.

MRS. T. Heaven knows they do! But anything is better than the miserable solitude my life would be without them!

LUCY. I know, dear, Edward has been thoughtless—foolish, very foolish, but he loves you dearly! (*Mrs. Trevlyn smiles derisively*) Oh, but he does though, dearly, and you would not wound him, would you?

MRS. T. What do you mean, Lucy? What do you imply?

LUCY. Nothing, dear, nothing; but your way is difficult and hard just now; and you have need of hope and courage; oh, darling, I know how much!

Enter Trevlyn, with bills, papers, &c., hurriedly, L. U. E.

TREVLYN. Ah, Lucy, good morning! Where's Uncle Richard? Is he at home? (*not noticing Isabel*.)

LUCY. Yes, but what a hurry you're in! Ah, of course business, that horrid "business." I have half a mind to take all those papers away from you! (*playfully*.)

TREVLYN. Did you say he was in? (*to himself*) Curses on this fellow! Oh, what a fool I've been to neglect this! (*to her*) Where is uncle?

LUCY. How cross you are? Where is he? In the house

of course. But there, never mind, Ted, I'm not angry; but you needn't speak so sharply, about nothing, too!

TREVLYN. (*pre-occupied*) I wish to heaven it were nothing. In the house, is he? I must see him at once! (*exit, R.*

MRS. T. You see, Lucy, not a word, not a look!

LUCY. I do; but, never mind, darling, it will all come right in time! There, kiss me; you know I love you, dear, but you do not know how devotedly!

MRS. T. Dear girl! (*kisses her—shouting without, and barking of dog heard.*)

CRAW. (*without*) Here! hi! hi! call him off, call him off! (*enters, his coat torn and dirty, hat broken, &c.*) I knew it! I felt it! The brute! I hate dogs! This sort of thing always happens whenever I go to look at a dog!

LUCY. (*laughs*) Why, Mr. Crawdust, I'm afraid you've been making friends with Ponto!

CRAW. Friends! War to the knife! Look at me! The idea of keeping such a savage, ill-tempered brute of a dog —

LUCY. Chained up! Poor Ponto; what would have become of you if he'd only got loose! (*laughs*) But I'm really very sorry—I am, indeed—won't you have a clothes brush?

CRAW. Clothes brush! Ten pounds to my tailor's bill—that's what it will be! The brute! I'm sure he relished it!

Enter LADY OLIVIA, REDCLIFFE, and CECIL, R. U. E.

LADY O. Well, I'm not sorry; I never could bear you in that coat!

CRAW. No, nor in anything else! Where's my paletot? Confound it, my coat! with a nasty slimy heap of mould on it! Who's done this? (*knocks the plant off*) Bah! the idea!

CECIL. Hollo! here, that's mine! (*picks it up.*)

CRAW. Stuff, sir, it's mine!

CECIL. But I put it there!

CRAW. What, the mess on my coat?

CECIL. Coat! I thought it was a hearth-rug.

CRAW. Hearth-rug! D'ye think I wear a hearth-rug, sir?

CECIL. 'Pon my word, can't say.

CRAW. (*putting on paletot*) Here, Lady Olivia, come on, quick! I want to go home!

LUCY. What, hurry home in that fashion? I shouldn't think of allowing Lady Olivia to be so ill-treated, and

shall hand her over to Mr. Redcliffe. (LADY OLIVIA advances smilingly to REDCLIFFE, who hesitates to give his arm, and looks towards MRS. TREVLYN.)

MRS. T. Don't consider me, Mr. Redcliffe, I'll take care of myself.

REDCLIFFE. (*bows*) As you wish. You command, I obey. Good morning, Miss Trevlyn. (*aside*) Curse her!

LADY O. Bye, bye, dear! We shall meet to-night; remember salmon-colour! (*exit with REDCLIFFE, L. U. E.*

LUCY. Good-bye! (*to MRS. TREVLYN*) Good-bye, dear! You are a darling! (*kisses her*) I will come early, and we'll have a long chat in your pet little room, this evening. Now, Mr. Crawdust, if Ponto has left you an arm?

CRAW. It's a mercy he did! At your service, madam, (*offers arm to MRS. TREVLYN*) if you don't mind my hat!

MRS. T. Good-bye, dear; remember, not later than nine! (*exit with CRAWDUST, L. U. E.*

CECIL. (*holding plant*) Where shall I put this, Miss Trevlyn?

Enter O'SHANTY, house R.

O'SHANTY. Please, Miss Lucy, your uncle wants you in the study.

LUCY. I'm coming, John.

(*exit O'SHANTY.*

CECIL. But, Miss Trevlyn, what had I better do with this?

LUCY. Oh, put it anywhere you like!

Enter CRAWDUST, hurriedly, L. U. E.

CRAW. Mrs. Trevlyn's parasol—she's left her parasol!

LUCY. (*going off*) There it is. (*pointing to parasol, on seat, R.*) Give it him, Mr. Mitford. (*exit to house, R.*

CECIL. Give it him—with pleasure! (*turns round, meets CRAWDUST eagerly advancing, gives him the plant.*)

CRAW. Confound it! What d'ye mean by this, sir? (*dashing down the plant*) D'ye take me for a fool, sir?

(*act drop quick.*

END OF ACT FIRST.

ACT II.

SCENE.—A drawing-room handsomely decorated. Folding doors at back, c., chairs, tables, &c., about the scene. Ottoman, c.

TREVLYN, in evening dress, discovered reading letter.

TREVLYN. Impossible! It can't be; he told me the securities were undeniable, and here I am let in for £3,000

to-morrow. The letter looks like business, and means pressure. I suppose that Mexican failure has got wind, for no one seems inclined to wait. Poor Isabel, too! I wonder if she suspects what a fool—worse—what a regular villain I've been to go headlong to ruin like this.

Enter SPINKS, c.

Ah, Spinks, I wanted you. Have you got everything in first-rate style—silver, lustres, mirrors, dinners—all that sort of thing, eh?

SPINKS. Everything, sir. Mr. Platum says he's sure it will give you satisfaction—London couldn't beat it—I never seed anything like it, sir—it's tip-top.

TREVLYN. That's all right. (*knock and ring heard—exit SPINKS, l. d.*) Ah, Mitford at last! I wonder what news he has got.

Enter CECIL, l. d.

Well, old fellow—Clasper will wait, eh?

CECIL. By Jove, he won't, though! It's an ugly piece of business. The fellow's a regular blackguard—one of those sixty per cent. scoundrels, you know,

TREVLYN. You don't mean to say he'll drive me into a corner?

CECIL. I do, though; it's all over the place. You mustn't mind my telling you, old boy, but the bank's in a shaky state, and is going to collapse or something of the sort to-morrow.

TREVLYN. You don't mean that, Cecil!

CECIL. I do—look here—(*shows a letter*) from Crawdust, dated this afternoon. (*laughs*) You see old Blacking's heard it, and is on tolerable thorns in consequence.

TREVLYN. The old scamp! and he's coming to-night?

CECIL. Of course. Do you think Lady Olivia would be cut out of a fashionable event like this? No, not if it came off in the crater of Vesuvius! (*exit with TREVLYN, c. d.—knock and ring heard.*)

Enter SPINKS, preceding LADY OLIVIA and MR. CRAWDUST, l. door.

SPINKS. (*takes CRAWDUST's coat—gives number*) Thank you, sir. No. 1, sir.

CRAW. What! are we the first?

SPINKS. Yes, sir, the missus is not down yet, sir.

LADY O. I told you so. The idea of coming here, like a parcel of musicians, before the candles are lighted! Another time I leave at my hour—half-past eleven!

CRAW. Half-past eleven, when it says "nine" on the ticket?

LADY O. (*to SPINKS with dignity*) Tell your mistress that Mr. and Lady Olivia Crawdust have arrived.

SPINKS. Thank'ee, your ladyship.

(*exit, r.*)

CRAW. (*sits, r.*) Well, Trevlyn is going it and no mistake! But I've been even with him—drew out my balance at a quarter to four. (*looks round*) All hired, I'll be bound.

LADY O. Your sagacity does you credit. Everything from the candelabras down to the rout seats—is evidently here at so much per foot.

CRAW. Everything—even the company!

LADY O. I cannot think how, at such a crisis, they manage to get credit. They appear to have plenty, to judge from the silver I noticed as I passed the dining-room.

CRAW. I believe you. All the ancestors since the Flood might have been born with a silver spoon in their mouths. Spoon! aye, with an entrée dish, and a couple of soup ladies!

LADY O. I have never heard much about ancestors.

CRAW. Haven't you? Well, Trevlyn might have hired his respectability too—at least, in the shape of pictures. I have known houses date back to William the Conqueror—in an afternoon. The order has been sent out at three, and the forefathers have been at the front door—with the rout seats before seven! I've done it myself.

LADY O. (*rises*) Never mind what you've done; it's enough for me that the founder of Sir Peter's race was a distinguished Druid.

CRAW. Oh, is it? Then he must have had something remarkably stony in his composition when he took a fancy to you! (*rises*.)

LADY O. Wretch! but this comes of giving my hand to a trade—blacking! what could come of such a union, but vulgarity!

CRAW. Vulgarity! Polish, Lady O., polish! (*imitates cleaning a boot*) Society has got polish out of me for the last twenty years at a shilling a bottle.

Enter SPINKS, r.

SPINKS. Please my lady, missus says will my lady bring his lordship and her ladyship's self up to the boudoir and take a cup of tea, until the parties begin to arrive?

LADY O. A well instructed man, and knows his station. (*to CRAWDUST*) I am ready, Julius. (*waits for his arm.*)

CRAW. Lordship! called me "his lordship!" Egad, I'll come it, too. (*swaggers out with LADY OLIVIA in an exaggerated style, R.*)

SPINKS. Well, he don't look as if he'd got a coronet in his pocket. (*exit, R.*)

Re-enter TREVLYN and CECIL, C. D.

TREVLYN. This ball's a lucky thing in it's way, you see; it will quiet all the small talk, like nothing else. But what's the good of quiet? I must get money—must! And this Clasper shows his teeth, eh?

CECIL. Every one of them.

TREVLYN. What on earth's to be done? I don't even know how we stand downstairs—and if there's a heavy run to-morrow—

CECIL. You must meet it.

Enter HOLDSWORTH, L. D.

TREVLYN. But how?

CECIL. (*points to HOLDSWORTH*) That's the best way out of it, Ted; take my advice—make a clean breast of it.

TREVLYN My uncle? I can't. I tried this morning to break a little of the matter to him, but it was too much for me—I could not do it. No, no, no—he must be the very last resource.

HOLDS. Now to read this young scape-grace a lesson. I think the time's come for it, too. (*to him*) Ted, can I speak to you for five minutes, or are you too seriously engaged (*pointing to back*) in this important business?

CECIL. (*aside to TREVLYN*) I told you so—he knows all about it. Courage, old boy! think what a bore it would be, you know, to come a regular smash. I'll go and drink to your success in a cup of tea—by Jove, I will! (*exit c. d.*)

TREVLYN. (*advancing, places chairs*) I am at your service, uncle. (*looks at HOLDSWORTH*) But this dress—shan't you be here to night?

HOLDS. No, my boy, I shan't. A precious time you choose for your entertainments. Not to mince matters with you—I think you must be mad!

TREVLYN. Uncle!

HOLDS. The truth is, I've come to say a word to you, and it's on my conscience that I haven't said it before; but I've heard some news to-day that turns silence into sin, so speak out I must, for things have come to a crisis at last.

TREVLYN. A crisis!

HOLDS. Yes, you've lost largely—I know all about it—your paper isn't worth a penny, and to-morrow—from all sides—you'll be literally besieged for gold. Don't deny it!

TREVLYN. Who has told you all this?

HOLDS. It's the common story from mouth to mouth. Nor the only common story—not contented with living at a ruinous rate yourself, letting your business go to the dogs ——

TREVLYN. Redcliffe's my right hand, and has done everything for me.

HOLDS. Your partner, eh? A pretty right hand indeed! But it's all of a piece—you've neglected everything; first and foremost, your poor wife.

TREVLYN. Neglect! Why, what wrong have I done her? Has she not everything money can purchase?

HOLDS. Or credit command! Ah, it was an evil day when you took this great place to tinsel it from top to toe.

TREVLYN. What more reasonable than to inhabit premises over my own bank?

HOLDS. Premises fitter for a club house than mere man and wife. A pretty life, too! Sham—everything sham, from the ceiling to the floor. Trappings, lights, servants, silver—not your own, but hired to humbug your friends—friends hired too, like the wine they drink, and the dazzle they sneer at, as unreal, as false, and as great a sham as the miserable gaslight life you lead.

TREVLYN. Really uncle, there is a season for all things, and ——

HOLDS. Hark you, my boy, I don't come to lecture, but to warn you. You are asleep—I must wake you. If you will be reckless—if the crash must come, at least, look that the honour of your home survives.

TREVLYN. What do you mean?

HOLDS. Do you think a husband's neglect will not sometimes bear a bitter fruit? Isabel ——

TREVLYN. What of her?

HOLDS. Nothing as yet, but your friend ——

TREVLYN. Redcliffe? (HOLDSWORTH assents) The idea's absurd. Ha, ha! what, Redcliffe!

HOLDS. Why is he ever hanging about your house, night and day?

TREVLYN. Oh, the thing's preposterous. (*they rise.*)

HOLDS. As you will then; I've had my say—perhaps an hour or two may tell a different tale. Now listen, Edward, if trouble comes upon you, you know one friend to whom

you'll never turn in vain. If you want money—well, I'll do my best, but as you bear your father's name, keep that from disgrace. Remember, that once lost can never be regained.

(exit, L. D.)

TREVLYN. But uncle—oh, he's a good, generous fellow. But what does he mean by talking in that way about "my honour?" (muses) Isabel and Redcliffe—no, the thing's monstrous; and yet, if I thought that she—away with the unworthy suspicion! she's truth itself, and he—(musing) Well, now I come to look at certain little things I've noticed in his conduct lately, from that point of view—(dance music heard without) Begun, have they? Happy reunion! Music, dancing—why a tight-rope is safe work to this!

Enter MRS. TREVLYN and REDCLIFFE, arm in arm, c. Hum, together! Can uncle have heard anything—can—(advances to them) Oh, here you are. I've been looking for you everywhere. A word with you, Redcliffe.

MRS. T. Then let it be a short one, for our dance is half over already.

TREVLYN. Your dance must wait. (checks himself) I don't mean that, but can't you see that I am worried—that I am not myself to-night?

MRS. T. I see you are not, but that is nothing new.

TREVLYN. It's only this, Redcliffe: what have we available in the bank at this moment?

REDCLIFFE. (taken aback) Available? £25,000. (aside) Suspects!

TREVLYN. As much as that? Are you sure?

REDCLIFFE. Sure—of course. Ah, you've heard them talking of a run upon the place to-morrow. Provided for, my dear sir—I've seen to it; we shall be ready for them at ten o'clock, to the minute! (aside) On the scent, is he? Well, we must hasten matters, that's all. (to MRS. TREVLYN) Shall we join the dancers? (exit with MRS. TREVLYN, c.)

TREVLYN. So you've seen to it, have you? possibly. Something very odd about his manner to-night. (looks at his watch) They won't miss me for half an hour—I'll just step down and look into it myself. "Seen to it!" I'll see to it as well.

(exit, L. D.)

Enter LUCY, CECIL, LADY OLIVIA, CRAWDUST, and several GUESTS, c. d. They group themselves, LUCY on c. ottoman, CECIL near her, LADY OLIVIA L., GUESTS R. and L.

CECIL. (looking at engagement card) I think ours is the next, No. 7.

LUCY. (*same business*) No. 7? Oh, I can't make it out at all, can you? (*gives him her card*) It's a valse, I think.

LADY O. (*in undertone to CRAWFORD*) She *thinks* it's a valse. That girl's an abominable flirt.

CRAW. Is she, by Jove? Then I shall go in for her.

LADY O. You'll do nothing of the kind.

CRAW. Oh, I'm not going to hang about like a piece of stuffed furniture all the evening, I can tell you. I shall dance, and get up an appetite!

LADY O. Crawdust, yon are unusually vulgar this evening. Let me beg you will confine yourself to two glasses of sherry.

CRAW. Ditto, Lady Olivia! (*looks at card*) Let's see—ah, four and twenty's my figure! A gallow! I can show them how to do that. (*is about to do so, LADY OLIVIA stops him*.)

LADY O. You'll stay with me. A man of your age too! Now, Sir Peter ——

CRAW. Sir Peter be ——(*going*.)

LADY O. (*drops her fan*) Julius, my fan.

CRAW. Now, (*picking up fan and giving it*) look here—Sir Peter may have been a more than ordinary fool, but when he walked out of this life he evidently knew what he was about! (*LADY OLIVIA turns away in disgust*.)

LUCY. And so you have found something to enjoy in the country at last?

CECIL. Enjoy! I should like to have a place, you know—farm-yard, a pig, and all that sort of thing, and live on new laid eggs.

LUCY. And garden all day in lavender kid gloves. (*laughs*.)

CECIL. Yes, 'pon my word, I should, if—if—(*aside*) I've half a mind to propose, 'pon my word I have.

CRAW. (*aside to LADY OLIVIA*) If you want a scene—well, blow it, we'll have one! I will! there! and I only wish somebody would walk off with you! (*approaches LUCY with an exaggerated bow*) I beg your pardon, Miss Trevlyn, for interrupting a pleasant tête-à-tête, but might you object to having the condescension to give me the pleasure of—(*referring to card*) we'll say No. 24?

LUCY. I'm very sorry, but my card is filled up.

CRAW. 24? The gallow, the gallow?

LUCY. I'm afraid it's gone.

CRAW. (*bows, retiring*) Ah, well, better luck next time. (*aside*) I suppose that fellow's got the whole four-and-twenty to himself!

LADY O. (*triumphantly*) I'm really quite sorry ! it would have been so amusing to see you dance !

CRAW. Would it ? Not much chance of your affording me a similar entertainment ! (*music—elderly gentleman advances to LUCY—she advances with him to LADY OLIVIA.*)

LUCY. You will dance this valse, Lady Olivia ?

LADY O. (*brightening and simpering*) Oh yes, dear !

LUCY. Mr. Muffles—Lady Olivia Crawdust. (*they bow—gentleman offers his arm, LADY OLIVIA takes it.*)

LADY O. (*spitefully to CRAWDUST*) Will you take my fan, dear ? (*gives it him, then exits triumphantly with MUFFLES, c.—GUESTS follow by degrees.*)

CRAW. (*after pause*) Hold her fan while she simpers away with that middle-aged porpoise ! and be sneered at into the bargain ! I'll go and drink five glasses of sherry !

(*exit, c.*)

CECIL. Quite refreshing to be alone ! That is, I'm a domestic sort of person, you know ; I like—that is—I don't care about balls, and all that sort of thing, you know.

LUCY. (*taking a book off R. table, abstractedly*) Indeed ! (*pause—during which both appear uneasy, LUCY sits R., CECIL is about to speak, but hesitates nervously, she appears absorbed in book.*)

CECIL. Novel ?

LUCY. Yes. (*still reading.*)

CECIL. Seems a good one.

LUCY. No, it's very stupid. (*reads.*)

CECIL. (*aside*) Seems to enjoy it, at any rate ! (*after a pause, purposely to open the conversation*) Who—who's the old fellow over the sofa ? (*looking at picture*) Uncommonly well done !

LUCY. Which ?

CECIL. The old fellow with the walking-stick.

LUCY. Oh, that's my grandmother !

CECIL. Dear me, I beg her pardon, but these old things, you know, one can't make head or tail of them.

LUCY. Especially when they are uncommonly well done ! (*resumes book.*)

CECIL. (*aside*) Doesn't seem to care about being sociable. I say, Miss Trevlyn.

LUCY. Yes.

CECIL. You don't happen to have the second volume there, do you ?

LUCY. Oh, you may have this if you like, I don't want it.

CECIL. I thought you said it was so—stupid ?

LUCY. Yes, very ; take it. (*offers it.*)

CECIL. Thanks, you're very kind, really ! But don't let me rob you ! Ah, a good idea ! I'll read it out loud, and then it will do for both of us.

LUCY. I'm all attention.

CECIL. (*reads*) Who's "Frank" ?

LUCY. Some one who's killed in the first volume.

CECIL. Ah, this is volume two ! Oh, then it's his ghost ; that's a good idea ! (*turns over leaves*) Let's see, I think I'll begin here. (*reads*) "Amy scarcely spoke, but sat on the other side of the room, in pretended unconsciousness, while he, turning first to one subject, and then to another, very plainly betrayed the nature of the secret, which was at last on his lips. Both evidently felt that the time had come for an avowal."

LUCY. What stupid nonsense ! Do find something exciting.

CECIL. Oh, but I like this, I think it's very exciting ! (*resumes*) "Come for an avowal. With an ill-assumed nonchalance, she endeavoured to appear indifferent to the situation." *She—Amy, I suppose?* Ah, yes. "While he behaved as most men do under such circumstances, said nothing, and looked—a fool !"

LUCY. That's "Frank." Oh, it's not so bad, after all ; quite amusing, go on.

CECIL. Go on ? It's trash ! The fellow who wrote that knows nothing about the circumstances, nothing !

LUCY. What do you know about the circumstances ? I suppose you haven't spent all your leisure time in making offers of marriage ?

CECIL. No, no, not exactly ; but I fancy I know the kind of thing one ought to do.

LUCY. That *you* would do ?

CECIL. Yes, that's it. Now just to illustrate the thing, imagine that I was going to make an offer to you. (*advancing to her with chair.*)

LUCY. No, no, not to me, the chair will do just as well.

CECIL. No, the chair won't do half as well. Placing myself near the object of my affections —

LUCY. Just to illustrate the thing ?

CECIL. Oh, of course ; I should tell her as well as I could, how, ever since I first set eyes on her, all things have grown stale and unprofitable, how I don't care about showing at the opera, about the shape of my hat, the price of my cigars, in fact, for all the more important things of a fellow's life ! Then, taking her hand — (takes Lucy's hand.)

LUCY. Just to illustrate the thing?

CECIL. Of course, purely, purely. I would ask her to—
to give up —

LUCY. All the pomps and vanities together; say good-bye to every little foible, even to her love of universal admiration?

CECIL. No, I shouldn't mind that.

LUCY. Well, and suppose she were to say, spite of all concessions, one short, little word?

CECIL. Yes?

LUCY. Or no!

CECIL. But, Miss Trevlyn—Lucy, you don't understand me, you know—this is what I want to say to you, and in fact, I —

Enter TREVLYN hurriedly, l. d., his hat on, and carrying a bunch of keys. LUCY and CECIL both rise, embarrassed.

TREVLYN. Ah, Cecil, the very man I want! You will go for me. Here, old fellow, take my hat, (*puts it on CECIL's head*) and run and fetch them at once!

CECIL. Fetch them at once, eh? (*TREVLYN whispers him*) What? By Jove! you take a fellow quite by surprise, you know, Ted!

TREVLYN. There's not a moment to lose! (*hurries CECIL to l. d.*)

CECIL. You don't say so? I'm sure I shall be delighted—with pleasure!

TREVLYN. Quick, there's a good fellow! It's a matter of thousands! quick!

CECIL. Really, this is very annoying! I say, Miss Trevlyn, we must finish that novel another time! Yes, by Jove, another time! (*exit*.)

LUCY. What is it, Edward? What has happened?

TREVLYN. Simply this. One of our safes has been robbed of every farthing. I found a light below, and the public door on the half lock.

LUCY. (*aside*) And I saw Redcliffe coming from the cashier's room just now.

TREVLYN. I have rushed up to give the alarm, and now I'm going to look at the other. Where's Redcliffe? Find him—send him to me.

LUCY. (*thinking*) He left about ten minutes since, to write a letter at the club, so he said, and that he would be back directly. (*aside*) Oh, heaven! a terrible suspicion! If this should mean danger to Isabel!

TREVLYN. (*noticing her emotion*) Ha! you know something!

LUCY. (*recovering herself*) I? Oh, no. But you spoke of Redcliffe, you asked —

TREVLYN. Where he was. Yes! (*excited*) Send for him, I must see him at once!

LUCY. You are right, you ought to see him at once. But, Edward, promise me, if you should meet with a surprise, a blow—a heavy one —

TREVLYN. A blow! What do you mean?

LUCY. Nothing as yet, but, if you do, you will bear it like a man! (*leans on chair*)

TREVLYN. Lucy, you are faint. This sudden news, this robbery has upset you!

LUCY. Yes, yes, how foolish of me, to be sure! (*laughs*) There, there, I am better now. (*TREVLYN is about to ring bell*) No, no, don't ring and alarm the whole neighbourhood with this! You're not half a man of business! (*takes opera cloak from chair*) Go, go, I will see to Redcliffe!

TREVLYN. You—what are you going to do?

LUCY. Never mind! men know how to fight—and storm—but when something's to be done, leave it to a woman!

TREVLYN. But, Lucy.

LUCY. Do as you're bid, and don't look scared! Do I appear alarmed? am I trembling? Now, go! go! (*hurries him off*) Oh, Isabel! dear Isabel, heaven watch over you!

(*exit R.—music heard.*)

Enter REDCLIFFE, c., *he has a small pocket-book.*

REDCLIFFE. Not a moment to be lost! Trevlyn suspects, and to-morrow must discover all! (*puts book in breast pocket*) So far, so good! £5,000 ought to last a little time, with management. One stake is secured, now to win the other.

Enter MRS. TREVLYN, c., *she appears fatigued and sits on c. ottoman.*

MRS. T. I feel quite faint! give me my fan, I think I left it there.

REDCLIFFE. (*taking it from side table and giving it to her*) You are ill, there rest a little! (*goes up c., closes doors.*)

MRS. T. 'Tis nothing, and will pass off presently.

REDCLIFFE. You will kill yourself with all these routs and balls.

MRS. T. No, it is not that.

REDCLIFFE. Ah, would that I could weave around you an enchanted silence!

MRS. T. Never mind the silence, you can talk to me—I can hear you.

REDCLIFFE. "Hear me?" And yet would you listen were I to speak of things more true than the unreal phantom life you lead? Would you turn away were I—in low, half-whispered accents—to tell you of one, who, for weeks, for months, has known no happiness, but in the sunshine of your presence. (*she starts slightly*) A friend!

MRS. T. Ah, I have need of friends, indeed.

REDCLIFFE. Oh, would that he by word, or deed, could give some proof, some token of his sincerity, his truth, his devotion!

MRS. T. I chose my life! Heaven knows I take that choice, and bear it to the end.

REDCLIFFE. And can you look to this, and still drag on? Think, life without prospect, aim or hope!

MRS. T. Why not? Once, heaven knows, I looked into the bright vision of the coming years, and saw—yes—all that lends to life its beauty, its enchantment. Fair paradise, so beautiful to my fancy then, a paradise where love was enthroned for ever! Love, true, never-dying love.

REDCLIFFE. And is it thus you talk? You, so young, so beautiful—

MRS. T. What do you mean? (*rises*) This language, and to me? Sir, you forget yourself.

REDCLIFFE. Pardon me, if I have offended you, but you were giving me your confidence.

MRS. T. True, I thank you for reminding me—I was—take care how you abuse it!

REDCLIFFE. Marble! (*aside*) Forgive me, but am I not your friend? and do I not know of all your sufferings? have I not seen the coldness, the neglect of one, who having robbed the world of its most priceless jewel, flings it away, unvalued and forgotten! (*watching the effect of his words.*)

MRS. T. There's something in his manner to-night, I know not what—that is horrible to me! I will end this! (*aside.*)

REDCLIFFE. (*aside*) Touched her! (*as she is about to speak*) Forgotten! yes, but not by all! I have watched you gaze to heaven, then give a weary sigh, and I have watched and watched, till a sweet whisper seemed to say, 'tis her you worship, her you love!

MRS. T. At last! and this is what you, as my friend, say to my face—to me?

REDCLIFFE. Oh, Isabel, yes, to you, and you must listen. You know not your own true happiness, it is not here ; no, you must leave this place to-night.

MRS. T. This was your meaning, was it ? Flight ? Back from me, villain ! (*weeps*) A bitter lesson, this, but heaven be thanked for sending it ! If I have dreamed too long, have, in the midst of a husband's cold neglect, listened too much to words of comfort, friendship, from another, if I have striven to charm away the weary desolation of my life by music, to which I, an honourable wife, should have turned a deaf ear, Heaven knows I am awake at last ! Arthur Redcliffe, you are a villain ! Leave this room, this house, for ever !

REDCLIFFE. Baffled ! but she must, by heaven, she shall ! (*aside*) You are mad, Isabel, fly while there is yet time ! you must ! (*she screams as he is about to seize her, and Trevlyn enters rapidly, c. d.*)

TREVLYN. Isabel ! what is this ?

MRS. T. Edward, my husband ! (*rushes to him*.)

REDCLIFFE. What is this, eh ? An appointment—not of my making.

MRS. T. Edward, I swear to heaven, 'tis false ! He has insulted me, has talked of love to me, your wife, and now he would escape his chastisement by falsehood.

TREVLYN. Hound !

REDCLIFFE. (*springing on him*) What ! to my face ?

TREVLYN. (*grappling with, and flinging him back*) Yes, hound ! to your face !

REDCLIFFE. I'll have your life for this ! you'll hear from me. (*is about to exit c. d., but is met by Lucy who bars the way.*)

LUCY. Hear from you ! Men may have met with men and fought, but the poisoned, crawling adder that hides and waits and wounds them unawares, they do not fight, they crush and stamp it from their path.

REDCLIFFE. We shall meet again ! (*to Trevlyn, as he is moving again up stage.*)

LUCY. (*placing herself in his way*) Yes, meet—but in a court of justice ! Edward, this man has robbed you—he is the thief who has broken in below.

REDCLIFFE. A foul calumny ! a gross falsehood ! (*is going off, c., but met by two Police Detectives, Cecil, and Holdsworth—one of the Police seizes Redcliffe, and takes from his breast pocket the pocket-book which he gives to Lucy.*)

LUCY. Then let this witness speak ! (*gives it to Trevlyn.*)

CECIL. (L.) I say, Ted, I should suggest they take that

fellow downstairs. (TREVLYN assents) Oh, yes, take him downstairs, downstairs!

(*exeunt DETECTIVES with REDCLIFFE, c.*

MRS. T. Oh, Edward, dear husband, let this be a warning to us both! Pity me, and say that you forgive me!

TREVLYN. Forgive, Isabel, that word is not for you, it is for me! (*voice of CRAWDUST, heard without, c.*)

CRAWDUST. I tell you I will! Come in, Lady Olivia, come in!

Enter CRAWDUST with LADY OLIVIA, c.

CRAW. Why didn't you tell the carriage to come at twelve, after the feed? Who ever heard of ordering it at three, like a morning paper! Hollo, hollo! (*seeing the others*) What does all this mean?

HOLDS. Why, that this is a meeting of good hearts and true!

CECIL. "Good hearts and true," I wish I could have thought of that just now. By Jove, I'll try it to-morrow. (*aside.*)

CRAW. What! you all look happy? How about the bank, eh?

TREVLYN. Firm as a rock! But you cannot be much interested in the matter, you are no longer on our books.

LADY O. (*aside*) What, not a fiasco? (*very amiably to MRS. TREVLYN, who turns away*) Ah, Isabel, my love, we knew there must be some mistake—I said to Julius —

Enter SPINKS, L. D.

SPINKS. Mr. and Mrs. Crawdust's carriage stops the way!

LADY O. (*enraged*) What! insulted! If you had only the soul of the late Sir Peter! (*drives CRAWDUST out of the doorway, L.*) Ugh, this is a vulgar house.

(*exit L. D., SERVANT follows.*

HOLDS. Gaslight friends, eh? Well, Edward, Isabel, what's it to be? This base metal or the true? This town trickery, or —

LUCY. The dear old country home! We're all agreed!

CECIL. Oh, yes, decidedly! all agreed!

LUCY. Fresh, honest, country air, and not this stifling atmosphere. A real healthy life, and not a poisoned dream! A life that looks alone to the pure gold of truth, and once holding this, values the unreal splendour of the world for what it is—mere tinselled falsehood—empty GLITTER!

CURTAIN.