

LUGARTO THE MULATTO

A DRAMA

IN

FOUR ACTS.

BY

CHARLES O'BRYAN, Esq.

AUTHOR OF

The Countess of Tersen, &c. &c.

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

aoa734

LUGARTO THE MULATTO.

*First performed at the Royal Surrey Theatre.
On Whit Monday, 20th May, 1850.*

CHARACTERS.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Count De Lugarto, <i>the Mulatto</i> .. . | MR. G. MEAD. |
| Monsieur de Rochechine, <i>the friend of Mathilde</i> | MR. B. NORTON. |
| Monsieur Gontran de Lancry, <i>in the power of Lugarto</i> .. . | MR. SHEPHERD. |
| Monsieur Lecherin, <i>a friend of Lancry's</i> .. . | MR. RAYMOND. |
| Fritz, <i>a creature of Lugarto's</i> .. . | MR. W. COLLIER. |
| Pierre Dubois, <i>a Woodman</i> .. . | MR. FL. ZROY. |
| The Chevalier Briancourt .. . | MR. DALY. |
| Monsieur Bertram .. . | MR. E. NEWTON. |
| Monsieur Morville } friends of Lugarto | { MR. HOWELL. |
| Monsieur Dupont } | { MR. RIVERS. |
| Mathilde de Lancry } Cousins— <i>married to Lancry</i> | { MADAME PONISI. |
| Ursule Lecherin } and Lecherin | { MISS COVENET. |
| Madame Lecherin, <i>Mother to Lecherin</i> .. . | MRS. DALY. |
| Madame Blondeau .. . | MISS BROMLY. |
| Marguerite, <i>the Old Woman of the Lone Chateau</i> | MRS. DALY. |
| 1st Lady .. . | MISS. DALY. |
| 2nd Lady .. . | MIS. GREGORY. |
| Ladies, Gentlemen, Servants, &c., &c. | |
| IN THE DANCE.—Misses Gregory, Davis, Darvis, White, George, Taylor, Rivers, Daly. | |
| GENTLEMEN.—Messrs. Warren, William Yonge, Rivers, Daly, Ponisi, Collier, Grice. | |

COSTUMES.

Fashionable French Costumes of the Day.

SCENES.—
Act 1.—Paris—House of M. de Lancry. The Introduction.
Act 2.—Ball Room in the Mausoleum of Lugarto. The Quarrel.
Act 3.—The Lone Chateau in the Forest. The Abduction, and the
Drugged Victim.
Act 4.—The Forest of Vincennes. The Duel and the Death

X6366765

LUGARTO THE MULATTO.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Drawing-room in the House of Monsieur de Lancry, elegantly furnished.—Several mirrors about the scene.—Practicable doors in c., and side doors r. 2 e., and l. 2 e.*

MADAME LECHERIN and MADAME BLONDEAU discovered, the former working at an embroidery.

BLOND. (*at door, l., calling.*) Fritz!

Enter FRITZ, l.

FRITZ. Here, madam.

BLOND. Clear the table.

(FRITZ is going off, l., after putting the remains of the dessert together, and is eating an apple.)

BLOND. Fritz, you are a most incorrigible glutton! I will acquaint your mistress, and then you will be discharged.

FRITZ. Sent away for a ribston pippin! I shall stay here in spite of all you can say to the contrary, Madame Blondeau, and shall never quit this house, but by the order of him who placed me here! do you hear, Madame Blondeau. *Exit, d. l.*

MADAME L. (*with astonishment.*) What does he mean?

BLOND. Impertinent, idle fellow!

MADAME L. Madame Blondeau—I esteem you, highly for your sincere attachment to your mistress; can I ask you a question, and expect a candid reply?

BLOND. (*looking anxiously round.*) Madame, I—

MADAME L. It is to the presence of Ursule, my daughter-in-law, that you attribute the change of manner in Monsieur de Lancry, with regard to his wife. No hesitation—tell me all without fear of wounding my feelings.

BLOND. Ursule has always been jealous of her cousin ; she saw with envy the marriage of Mathilde with Monsieur de Lancry, and since her arrival in Paris you have been able to judge, as well as myself, with what eagerness she receives the compliments of her cousin's husband—in brief, I fear that the presence of Ursule, has disturbed the home of Mathilde.

MADAME L. (*rising.*) But from whence arise these fears ? I conjure you, tell me all you know.

BLOND. If Mathilde had married any other than Monsieur de Lancry, I should not have been so uneasy. Monsieur de Rochegune, for instance, to whom she was betrothed by her father, when a child.

MADAME L. Monsieur de Rochegune ?

BLOND. A man sincere, generous and brave ; and one who would have made Mathilde assuredly happy. Monsieur de Lancry, on the contrary, is one of your fashionable husbands, he loves his wife, undoubtedly, but he would not scruple to *love others*. Here comes Mathilde, and your daughter-in-law ; I leave you, madame, and pray be cautious. *Exit, L.*

Enter MATHILDE and URSULE, C. D.—they both go to MADAME LECHERIN, and kiss her.—Music.

MATHIL. } Good morning, dear mother.
URSULE. } Good morning, dear mother.

MADAME L. (*c. embracing MATHILDE, affectionately.*) Good morning, my dear child !

URSULE. (*L., aside.*) "Her dear child!" not one word for me. (*aloud.*) Do you know, Mathilde, that you have made a decided conquest of my mother-in-law ; you have effected in a month what I have tried for, in vain, since my marriage. But what is the matter ?—you look dull.

MATHIL. (*R.*) Dull!—I dull ?

URSULE. Yes, and for several days past you have been so. One would suppose that our arrival had put you out of temper. What is the matter ?

MATHIL. (*with meaning.*) Nothing, Ursule ; and I know not in what way your presence here could make me dull.

GONTRAN. (*without.*) Fritz!—Fritz!

URSULE. I hear your husband ; if you are not more lively, I will make him scold you.

GONTRAN. (*speaking at the door.*) Fritz, tell Pierre not to take the horses out yet.

Enter GONTRAN DE LANCRY, C. from R.

GONT. Ah ! good morning, my dear Madame Lecherin !—

what a charming family picture!—good morning, Mathilde—
(kissing her.) a real Flemish tableau!—(kissing URSULE's hand
—aside to her.) and you, are the most graceful figure of the
group!

MADAME L. You went out early this morning, Monsieur de
Lancry.

GONT: Yes. I have been trying some horses, and we shall now
have the prettiest turn-out in Paris. (to URSULE.) Will you
look at them, cousin—they are yet in the yard; from this window
you will see them perfectly.

URSULE. Willingly, cousin. (*they go to the window, R.*)

GONT. (aside to her.) I have a letter for you.

URSULE. (*aloud.*) But you have such good taste, that
nothing is wanting but to admire.

(MADAME LECHERIN observes their actions in an opposite
mirror, intently, but unperceived by them.)

MATHIL. (c.) So!—it is to Ursule he addresses his conversa-
tion—her taste that he consults!

GONT. (*giving a note to URSULE, which she places in her
apron pocket.*) 'Tis here—take it.

MADAME L. What do I see—a letter?

GONT. (*aloud.*) Well, how do you like them?

URSULE. Charming! I am very partial to greys.

MADAME. L. (*aside.*) I was sure of it.

GONT. (*returns with URSULE from the window.*) I am
delighted that you are pleased with them.

MADAME L. (*aside.*) This cannot be overlooked—I must
know all. (*crosses c.*)

URSULE. (*laughingly to MATHILDE.*) How little you care
for these things, Mathilde; but you deserve them, nevertheless,
for—(*looking at MADAME LECHERIN.*) you are the woman to
exactly suit my mother-in-law, precise, formal, and—

MADAME L. (*restraining her anger, and holding up a skein
of silk.*) Ursule, I wish you would hold this for me, while I
divide it.

URSULE. (*impatiently.*) Willingly, dear mother. (*holding the
silk on her hands.*)

MADAME L. (*snatching note from the apron pocket of
URSULE.*) Your conduct is most disgraceful! My son shall
know all. Monsieur de Lancry gave you that note!

GONT. Really, madame, I do not see—

MADAME L. Monsieur de Lancry, allow me to acquaint you
it is impossible for me to suffer this under my own eyes, and
near your wife.

URSULE. (*coolly.*) Madame, before accusing me, you ought
to be assured what that paper contains.

MADAME L. What mean you ?

GONT. (*aside.*) What answer will she make.

URSULE. The affair is simply this—to-morrow is my husband's birthday ; I gave my cousin a commission relative to a surprise that I intended for my dear Benedict, and he has brought it to me.

MADAME L. We shall see ! (L. C.—*searching her pockets, &c., for her spectacles.*) Where are my glasses ?

URSULE. (*with affected indifference.*) Good bye to our surprise, cousin ; never mind.

MATHIL. I hear Monsieur Lecherin coming up stairs.

GONT. (*aside.*) Her husband ! Confusion ! This has taken an awkward turn.

MATHIL. (*to MADAME LECHERIN, who is searching about the table for her glasses.*) Madame, let me beg of you not to—

Enter MONSIEUR LECHERIN, C. from R.

LECHERIN. (L. of MATHILDE.) Good morning ! I have been taking a little walk to the Jardin des Plants.

MADAME L. Ah ! here is my son ; now all will be cleared up.

LECHERIN. (*crosses to MATHILDE.*) What is it, mother ?

URSULE. (*laughing—snatching the note MADAME LECHERIN has placed on the table.*) Oh, a dreadful circumstance has occurred !—shocking ! (*going to R. C.*)

MADAME L. Ursule ! Dare you ? That paper—return me that paper instantly !

URSULE. (*affecting liveliness.*) Oh no, dear mother ! this must also be a secret from you.

GONT. (*aside.*) I breathe again.

MADAME L. (*indignantly.*) My son, will you suffer—

URSULA. (*playfully.*) Just fancy, my dear Benedict ; because your mother saw my cousin give me a sealed paper, she supposes it must be a declaration of love, whereas, it is merely the bill for the present that I wished to make you on your birthday ; and—and, as I knew my cousin possessed an excellent taste, I requested him to select something. I was most anxious to keep it a secret from your mother ; indeed, (*petulantly.*) I did not wish any one to know it beforehand ; and, now—

MADAME L. What effrontery !

LECHERIN. Quite right, my dear ; no one shall know it, not even mother ; I will be completely surprised.

GONT. (R.—*aside to URSULA.*) Cleverly done !

MADAME L. Then you believe her, do you ?

LECHERIN. Ursula ! My wife ! Believe her ? Is she capable, dear mother, of telling an untruth ? (*crosses to URSULA.*) So mild—so kind—so good ! Only look at that beautiful smile !

Come, come, acknowledge that you are a little jealous of my poor Ursule. You are wrong, for I have heart enough to love you both. (*crosses her to L. C.*)

MADAME L. (*aside*) It is impossible to convince him. What blindness! what infatuation!

URSULE. (*in an affected manner, taking the arm of MADAME LECHERIN.*) My dear mother, come with me; I will convince you, and also my dear Benedict, that I speak the truth, even at the risk of anticipating the morrow.

LECHERIN. (*to his mother.*) There, there, what do you say to that? (*laughing, takes his mother's arm, R., URSULE is on her other side.*) Come, come, mother; I'll have no rancorous feeling exist between you two. Take her hand, Ursule. Good bye, cousin. (*shakes hands with LANCRY.*) I want to speak with you shortly. So, so, you plot surprises for me with my wife, do you? Well, well, I shall have my revenge, depend upon it. Adieu! adieu!

Exit, with MADAME LECHERIN and URSULE, c. and R.

GONT. (*after a pause—embarrassed.*) Mathilde, do you think me guilty?

MATHIL. Gontran, I am not to be duped by Ursule's falsehoods—you have deceived me.

GONT. Mathilde, I swear—

MATHIL. (*quickly.*) Dare you deny that letter?

GONT. I acknowledge I gave a letter to Ursule, but had you read it, Mathilde, far from blaming, you would have thanked me.

MATHIL. (*R. C.*) Would I could believe you.

GONT. (*tenderly.*) What can I do to convince you?

MATHIL. I would have proof—I will send to Ursule, and then, retire to my chamber; you will meet her here, and repeat to her, in my hearing, that which you have written; you hesitate?

GONT. No, but this implies—

MATHIL. If you are sincere, what matter if I hear it?

GONT. I am sincere, I swear to you—but then you may wrongly interpret Ursule's words.

MATHIL. My heart will not deceive me!

GONT. If you insist, I am willing—will you then, be quite satisfied?

MATHIL. Yes, Gontran! (*rings bell.*)

Enter MADAME BLONDEAU, L. 2 E.

My dear Blondeau, go and tell Ursule I wish to speak to her.

Exit MADAME BLONDEAU, c. and R.

MATHIL. Take care not to fail in your good resolution, Gontran—remember, also, she is our friend, my relative—nearly my sister; she is here—I leave you together. *Exit into room, R. 2 E.*

Enter URSULE, c. from R.

URSULE. Where is Mathilde?

GONT. I requested you to come in *her* name—fearing after what passed just now, that the suspicions of your husband were awakened.

URSULE. (*shewing a letter.*) Is it concerning this letter you have brought me here? to retract—is it not so?

GONT. (*coldly.*) I do not come to retract—but to confirm it.

URSULE. Do you remember the greeting you gave me on my arrival?

GONT. I had much pleasure in seeing you.

URSULE. “Happiness,” you said—I did not forget it.

GONT. Be it so—but listen; nothing in the world shall make me continue to cause Mathilde to be unhappy. Let us, if possible, forget the past; *your* future welfare—your husband’s happiness—Mathilde’s—mine—all rest on it.

URSULE. (*after a pause.*) I was about to stoop to prayers—even to reproaches—but no, (*contemptuously.*) like *you*, I will forget the past, like *you* I will not think of it—from this hour, for the sake of being virtuous, generous, and devoted, as you have done.

GONT. Persevere, Ursule, in that noble resolution, and you will increase the gratitude in which you will participate.

URSULE. (*with vehement passion and contempt.*) Do you think, then, that love like mine is to be trifled with, thus? You do not know me—you little think what I can do, when jealousy and hatred urge me on!

MATHILDE appears listening, R. 2 E.

You cannot know what I feel to find myself deserted by you—and for Mathilde! for Mathilde! (MATHILDE advances between them.) Mathilde!

MATHIL. Yes! Mathilde—who comes to ask, why you have brought grief and sorrow to her home? You will find me a very coward, Ursule, for I would rather avoid than meet you; I trust, therefore, you will remain no longer in the house of the woman whom you so loudly declare your rival—*you* have every controul over your husband, therefore, it will be easy for you to decide on returning to Roncry, even to-day—for us, Gontran, we will leave, also—we will return to Chantilly, to that solitude where we were so happy. (URSULE sinks overcome into an arm chair, L. C.)

Enter LECHERIN, gaily, c. from R.

LECHERIN. (*to MATHILDE.*) Cousin, cousin—see, it was

true! see, and admire! (*shewing a brooch he has in his cravat.*) There is the present that my wife plotted about with Gontran; is it not a fine one? Thank you, my dear—(*he kisses Ursule.*) thank you, also, cousin. (*crosses to c., to GONTRAN.*) By the way, I shall change my style of dress! Yes, I must study the fashions; and since my wife is pleased, I shall remain here! I like Paris!

URSULE. You must resign all your fine projects, my dear Benedict, I wish to return to Roncny.

LECHERIN. Return to Roncny! there's something odd in this! return to Roncny?

URSULE. Yes, my dear, and if you please, we will even set out to-day.

LECHERIN. You know, my love, I have no will but yours; but what is the reason of this sudden change? I do no comprehend.

URSULE. You would not wish to abuse the hospitality of—of our friends?

LECHERIN. Oh, by no means.

URSULE. (*markedly, looking at MATHILDE.*) Well, then, for particular reasons, Mathilde and her husband return to Chantilly.

LECHERIN. Indeed!

MATHIL. (*with meaning.*) Yes, cousin, an unforeseen circumstance obliges us to depart immediately.

LECHERIN. Oh, that's a different thing! so that you and my wife are agreeable, I can have nothing to say; I liked Paris, because my wife liked Paris—she likes Roncny better! I like Roncny—indeed I prefer it; for in the country, Ursule, it seems to me that I have you more to myself; but here, in this great city, I am actually sometimes afraid of losing you, altogether! Then it's decided—we start for Roncny.

URSULE. Yes. (*to GONTRAN.*) Will you give orders for our departure?

GONT. Yes, madame. (*rings bell.*)

Enter FRITZ, C. from R.

Order post horses by five o'clock, for Monsieur Lecherin, and have our carriage ready at the same time.

FRITZ. It shall be done, sir. (*going, returns.*) Oh, I forgot to say, sir, that a servant of Count Lugarto has just called and wishes to deliver a letter to you.

GONT. Shew him in.

Exit FRITZ, C. to R.

(*aside.*) Lugarto in Paris!

Enter SERVANT, C. from R.

SERVANT. (*presents letter.*) From my master, sir.

GONT. (*hurriedly, reads letter with visible agitation.*) Very well, say to your master that I will meet him.

Exit SERVANT, C. to R.

(*calls off.*) Fritz! tell them *not* to prepare the carriage.

MATHIL. How?

GONTRAN. I must stop in Paris; the letter I have received compels me; we shall not go to Chantilly—at least, not to-day.

MATHIL. What is the cause of this change?

GONT. I will explain it to you. (*they go up stage.*)

URSULE. (*aside to LECHERIN.*) Strange! We have not the same reasons, however, to alter our mind, let us, therefore, make the necessary preparations for our departure.

LECHERIN. Oh, by all means; *we* leave, all the same! Very well; adieu, for the present, then, cousin, we will return and wish you good bye!

Exeunt URSULE and LECHERIN, C. and R., the former glancing at MATHILDE.

MATHIL. Why do we not go also? (*pause.*) That letter, the counter order, your emotion, silence—all make me uneasy for you, and for myself!

GONT. (*with embarrassment.*) Mathilde, I shall introduce you to the Count de Lugarto.

MATHIL. The Count de Lugarto?

GONT. One of my best friends.

MATHIL. (R.) You have never spoken of him to me before.

GONT. (L.) Nothing more singular, my dear Mathilde, for love had made me forget friendship.

MATHIL. And we are compelled to put off our departure on his account?

GONT. (*hesitating.*) I—I am more vexed than yourself at the delay; but it is to render the count a service that I remain in Paris.

MATHIL. An important one?

GONT. Very—very important. I ought to acquaint you beforehand, that we shall see him often, and I hope, my dear Mathilde, you will oblige me by shewing him some little indulgence, and pardon a trifling eccentricity of language he possesses, which, custom might seem to you as—as unbecoming.

MATHIL. (*surprised.*) Indeed! This gentleman must be a very singular personage that you announce him with so much precaution.

GONT. Yes; he is of Brazilian origin, and of mixed blood, the natural son of a South American merchant, from whom he inherits five millions of francs. At the early age of fifteen he was left this princely fortune, and grew up in the midst of

excesses. To tell the truth, he has no other friend but myself; he is isolated, through fear of being sought for his money; in me alone he has confidence. Honour, gratitude for past services, all compel me to receive and aid him in whatever he may require.

MATHIL. I will receive him as you request, dear Gontran, since he possesses your friendship.

GONT. I was sure you would. Farewell! (*kissing her.*) I go to meet him, and will return as speedily as possible. Adieu!

Exit GONTRAN, C. D.

MATHIL. I know not why, but I feel very uneasy at the abrupt change this man has caused here! Well, I must resign my feelings—it is to render a service to his best friend.

DE ROCHEGUNE is here introduced by MADAME BLONDEAU,
C. from L.—she retires.

That feeling can but do honour to my husband, and then when Ursule leaves this house I shall be more at ease; and if any new misfortune happens—

DE ROCHE. (*advancing, L. c.*) I will be here to defend you!

MATHIL. (*taking his hand.*) Ah! Monsieur de Rochegune! my friend!—my brother!—you that I thought gone for ever!

DE ROCHE. I returned for you, Mathilde.

MATHIL. For me?

DE ROCHE. (L. c.) Listen to me, Mathilde; when your father and mine promised to unite us, their children, I swore to them to be your friend, to watch over, and, where possible, to preserve you from danger. I am returned!

MATHIL. To save me? Good Heavens!—from what—and whom?

DE ROCHE. The Count de Lugarto.

MATHIL. How!

DE ROCHE. He is the friend of your husband.

MATHIL. True.

DE ROCHE. Are you aware what this Monsieur de Lugarto is? Beware of him—do not see him—do not receive him; Mathilde, beware of him.

MATHIL. You alarm me!

DE ROCHE. All he approaches are lost! If a man, he is dishonoured—if a woman, she is defiled! He is a fiend incarnate—a kind of Mephistopheles of this world, contaminating the very air he breathes!

MATHIL. My husband told me nothing of all this; on the contrary—

DE ROCHE. You do not know all. (*in half-whisper.*) 'Tis

said, that Lugarto holds Monsieur de Lancry in his power, by some mysterious tie.

MATHIL. How!

DE ROCHE. But I will know the truth. Whatever may be the motive—the connection of your husband and that man shocks me. Beware of him, and depend on me; I shall be ever at hand to protect you, Mathilde—to watch over you!

MATHIL. (*taking his hand.*) Thanks—thanks, my kind friend. Oh! what do I not owe you!

DE ROCHE. (*bowing to her respectfully.*) And now, madame, that I have warned you of your danger, I leave you to encounter it. (*sighs.*) Farewell, Mathilde—farewell, madame! *Exit, c. to L.*

MATHIL. What am I to think? Oh, my husband could not be so blinded by friendship, as not to discern good from evil. I must confide in Gontran; although De Rochegune is incapable of calumny; the excess of his zeal for me, perhaps, exaggerated the danger.

Enter FRITZ, c. from R.

FRITZ. My master, madam, with Count de Lugarto.

MATHIL. (*aside.*) Already here! Shew them in.

Exit FRITZ, c. to R.—Music.

FRITZ *re-enters immediately, bowing on MONSIEUR GONTRAN and COUNT DE LUGARTO, c. from R.—Exit FRITZ, R.*

GONT. (c.) Mathilde, my love, allow me to present you to Monsieur the Count de Lugarto, my best friend.

COUNT. (L. c., *after bowing—aside.*) Very handsome! Gontran told me rightly, madame, that you were charming; but, on my honour, he has not done you justice. You know that I am frank on all occasions, my dear Gontran, I will tell you, with the same frankness, that it is dangerous for your friends to see such a treasure. You will be the cause of many aching hearts, madam.

MATHIL. (R. embarrassed.) You arrived last from London, sir?

COUNT. From London, madam. (*crosses c.*)

GONT. (L.) Have you brought any of your horses, count, for the races at the Champs de Mars?

COUNT. Bah! your French horses are not worth the trouble of beating; but we will not talk of that, but of announcing my return to Paris. I wish to give a splendid ball; as all those who style themselves fashionables will beg invitations to be admitted, it shall be a splendid fête—if you are there, madame, especially, and I have almost a right to reckon on your presence, for, between ourselves, it is for you I give it.

MATHIL. I am not aware, sir, if Monsieur de Lancry intends

COUNT. Oh, my dear Madame de Lancry, he will prove himself excessively ill-bred if he permits his wife to ask him when and where she may go—and with whom. Believe me.

GONT. (*aside, L.*) His familiarity annoys me.

COUNT. My dear De Lancry, do me the favour to say at once to Madame de Lancry that so close an intimacy as ours entitles me to her friendship.

MATH. (*with dignity.*) It appears to me, sir, that you are too eager to confound *me* in the intimacy that exist between yourself and Monsieur de Lancry.

COUNT. (*embarrassed.*) I may appear over anxious, madame—let me hope, then, that you will excuse my familiarity, and favour me, at once, by accepting my invitation to the ball; you do not answer? Speak, then, for your wife, my dear sir, since you *think* for her.

GONT. Certainly! we will go to the ball, count.

MATH. The familiar tone of this man disturbs me as much as the embarrassment of Gontran, in his presence.

Enter MONSIEUR and MADAME LECHERIN, arm in arm—in travelling dress, c. from R.

LECHERIN. Well, adieu, cousin—farewell—we're off.

(*crosses to L.*)

GONT. (*presenting MONSIEUR and MADAME LECHERIN to COUNT.*) Relatives of mine, count, Monsieur and Madame Lecherin—the Count de Lugarto.

COUNT. (*crosses to L. c.*) I hope, Madame Lecherin, you will do me the honour of accompanying Monsieur and Madame de Lancry.

LECHERIN. (*astonished.*) Where? where?

COUNT. To a ball at my house, sir.

LECHERIN. To a ball! and when?

COUNT. In eight days from this.

LECHERIN. No; excuse me, we shall dance at Ronery, that is, if my wife has a mind—we can amuse ourselves at Ronery, as well as at Paris.

URSULE. Quite as well.

COUNT. (*to URSULE.*) I hope you will delay your departure, madame, and sacrifice a few days, merely to—

URSULE. It is impossible, sir.

LECHERIN. Oh, quite impossible! (*goes up L. H.*)

COUNT. (*to URSULE.*) I am sure that two words of mine will be sufficient to make it possible.

URSULE Sir!

COUNT. (*aside to her.*) What if I mentioned Farmer Anselm, madame?

URSULE. (*aside.*) Farmer Anselm ! Oh, for heaven's sake !

COUNT. (*aside.*) You will come, then, will you not ? (*aloud.*) Very well, madame, you consent ? (*LECHERIN comes down, c.*

URSULE. As my husband chooses, sir.

COUNT. (*turning to LECHERIN.*) You hear, sir.

LECHERIN. (*astonished.*) As my wife wishes, sir.

URSULE. Well, sir, if my husband desires it, I also—

LECHERIN. Oh ! I wish to go as much as you do, to this ball—more than you, in fact—it will be quite a treat to me !

COUNT. Very well, madame—a thousand thanks—I shall depend upon you. (*to MATHILDE and GONTRAN.*) Farewell, my good friends. (*takes MATHILDE's hand.*) Are you really offended with me ? My dear fellow, (*to GONTRAN.*) your wife decidedly treats me with too much rigour—so much the worse for you—I shall be obliged to make love to her. (*crosse c.*) You perceive I do not take you like a traitor, Gontran, acquaint you fairly and openly that I shall commence hostilities on *Monday next* ; till then, adieu.

GONT. Adieu, Count—come, cousin.

(*going R. to MATHILDE*)

COUNT. (*aside—looking at MATHILDE.*) Very handsome On *Monday*, mind ! Adieu !

(*Music.—Exit c. and R., the others R. and l.*)

END OF ACT I —(30 minutes.)

Characters change to Evening Costumes.

A C T II.

SCENE 1.—*The Stage represents a Room, in front of the Ball-room, which is closed in by curtains, which are drawn back to show the Company. Side doors R. 1 E., and L. 1. E., also with richly drawn curtains. Sofas, tables, chairs, &c., &c., en suite.*
—*Music heard.*

Enter Two LADIES.

1st LADY. What a splendid fête ! All Paris is at Lugarto's to-night.

2nd LADY. Oh, it is not to us that he gives it—it is to Madame de Lancry.

1st LADY. Without doubt, are you not aware that Lugarto is on very intimate terms with her?—at least, so they say.

2nd LADY. Oh, that is impossible; Lugarto has only been here eight days.

1st LADY. What matters—he is an extraordinary man—nothing resists him; where others fail, he triumphs. But, here is Madame de Lancry, with her husband; we shall be overheard.

They exit at R. C., first curtseying to

MATHILDE and GONTRAN, who enter L. C.

GONT. You are tired, love—rest yourself here.

MATHIL. (*sitting L.*) What motive compelled you to bring me to this ball, when you know I did not wish to come?

GONT. My dear Mathilde, I have no other motive, no other reason, but to be agreeable to our friend; indeed, I ought to quarrel with you for not displaying more affability.

MATHIL. Dear Gontran, I do not feel well, and wish to leave this place as soon as possible.

GONT. You surely will not offer such an affront to Lugarto? Come, let us return to the ball.

MATHIL. No, Gontran; at least, let me breathe here.

GONT. Do so, then; but I must return to the ball-room, to make an excuse for your absence. *Kisses her hand, and exit, R. C.*

Enter MONSIEUR and MADAME LECHERIN, L. C., in fancy dominoes.

LECHERIN. (C.) Oh, splendid! What a ball!—what music!—and what perfumes! It is quite a fairy land, this Paris—decidedly better than Roncry—and my wife shall live here. (*MATHILDE exhibits agitation.*) It is her element. See, how her eyes sparkle!—how happy she is! I never saw her look so pretty, did you, cousin? (*to MATHILDE.*)

URSULE. (crosses to C.) Hold your tongue! Are you unwell, Mathilde?

MATHIL. No—yes—madame—I—

LECHERIN. (L.) Madame! What is the matter now? How reserved they appear to each other!

URSULE. (to LECHERIN.) Leave us; and when the quadrille begins, you can return and acquaint us; we will wait here for you. Go!

LECHERIN. I go, despot! (*aside.*) They've quarrelled—what is the matter, I wonder? Oh, they'll soon make it up again—Ursule is so gentle, so—(*URSULE turns to him.*) Oh!—*Exit, c.*

MATHIL. Your intention, then, is to remain in Paris, after the promise you made?

URSULE. Am I to be prevented visiting Paris on account of your jealousy? *I left your house—what more do you wish?

MATHIL. Ursule, listen to me—for the last time I ask it—I must beseech you not to prolong your stay here! I fear your influence with Gontran! For the honour, the peace of my home, Ursule, I conjure you to leave Paris! If you refuse, take heed!

URSULE. Threats!

MATHIL. I do not threaten you, but I warn you of the future, for my own happiness! Yes, I have a secret presentiment that a most important crisis of my life has arrived! I will be on the alert, then, with all my strength and means, to preserve that which you would tear from me. Press me no further, or I will unmask you!

URSULE. Do so—I shall know how to defend myself! You will unmask *me*? From this moment I am your enemy—your mortal enemy! I am tired of concealing my hate!

MATHIL. Your hate?

URSULE. I hate you, because I have suffered in all my feelings on your account! To sum up all, you married Monsieur de Lancry, in whom I had placed all my hopes—all my affections; for this, I loathe you!

MATHIL. And you love him still, after marriage with another?

URSULE. Even so.

MATHIL. I shall address myself, then, to your husband—it is for life or death, Ursule, and believe me, I would rather expose myself to your enmity than stoop to your friendship!

Exit, L. C.

URSULE. (R.) And I will use all possible means to triumph over you, to gratify my hatred, and my love!

Enter LUGARTO, R. C., having overheard the last speech.

COUNT. (C.) I will be your ally, ready to assist either your love or hatred.

URSULE. My love!

COUNT. Have I not already began by forcing you to stop in Paris—and are you not willing?

URSULE. I do not understand you.

COUNT. You love Gontran? *love* him as much as you *hate* Mathilde. Gontran would sacrifice all for you—duty, family, honour—even the love of Mathilde.

URSULE. Even Mathilde!

COUNT. Listen! At midnight a post-chaise will be ready at the door of this hotel—favoured by the tumult of the ball you can leave the room unobserved, and start for London with Gontran.

URSULE. No, no, Gontran still loves Mathilde!

COUNT. Gontran loves but you—and will give up all for your sake, I answer for it!

URSULE. Impossible!

COUNT. We'll see; at midnight he will wait for you here.

Ah! (looking off, L. C.) Yonder is Monsieur de Lecherin, apparently looking for you; allow me to conduct you to him. (leads her to C. D.) You understand—at twelve! *Exit Ursule, c.*

COUNT. (advancing.) All goes well! Another bends to my influence. Mathilde, only—will she resist? Once rid of Gontran, we shall see! (rings a bell.)

Enter a SERVANT, L. C.

Let some one find Monsieur de Lancrey.

Exit SERVANT, R. C.

What a crowd! what a noise! and all this for me—a Mulatto! the son of a slave! This fête, this luxury, beauty, pleasure, all for me! And yet, in their hearts, they laugh at—and despise me! Why, then, should not I, in return, hate this vile race? Both men and women pursue me because I am rich! (pause.) My mother was a negress and died under the blows of her master, after giving birth to me; that master, who was my father, lost his legitimate son, and then remembered his natural child, who was his slave; he was compelled to acknowledge me, before he died; to leave me his name, and fortune—I took the fortune without the name. Disgusted with my colonial life, I visited the great cities of the world, to see liberal men, that I might learn something more; but old Europe and young America are alike! Everywhere people sell themselves! bazaars, markets, slaves, everywhere, only here the chain is gold, and is harder! I wished to be noble—I have purchased a name, and title; I am the “Count de Lugarto,” a noble black! Ha, ha, ha! Nothing is impossible with five million francs. Nothing resists me, unless, indeed, it is the love of Mathilde! Oh, Mathilde! they say she has principles, virtue, honour—what happiness if she could give to my life that which I feel is wanting! or, would that I could hate her!

Enter GONTRAN, C.

GONT. (down L.) You sent for me, Lugarto.

COUNT. Yes, I have just seen Ursule, that poor woman is mad for you, my dear fellow.

GONT. What can I do?

COUNT. Run away with her.

GONT. You are joking.

COUNT. And you shall run away with her this night.

GONT. Do you speak seriously?

COUNT. To-night, at twelve, precisely, a carriage and post

horses will wait for you at the garden door of this house—and you will set out with Ursule for London—she has consented!

GONT. This is madness, folly! I cannot believe you, Lugarto!

COUNT. You have said; but it will prove fact, nevertheless!

GONT. At least, let me know the motive that has induced—

COUNT. (*with meaning, crosses L.*) You are very scrupulous, on a sudden—it's a pity that you began so late!

GONT. Unfortunate!—

COUNT. (*authoritatively.*) Decide! Ursule will be here presently; be all animation, all fire during your interview; if she consents, you will wear in the button-hole of your coat a flower from her bouquet—when the quadrille commences I will keep Madame de Lancry in conversation, so that she may not observe your absence; go, and remember!

Exit c.

GONT. Good Heavens!

Enter URSULE, c., down L.

What shall I say—how act? Direct me, my good genius!

URSULE. Gontran is here then, and alone!

GONT. Ursule, were you seeking for De Lecherin?

URSULE. No, I have just left him.

Enter LUGARTO at back.

GONT. (*seeing him.*) Ah! I, also, have left Mathilde to be near you; I am still the same, Ursule, I assure you.

URSULE. You—who wrote that cruel letter—you, who only eight days ago desired me, so harshly, to leave your house?

GONT. Was not Mathilde concealed?—was not that letter for meeting, a mere farce? The proof that it was a device to hide my love is, that I begged you so earnestly to leave us. I offer you, now, all the sacrifice a man can make to her he loves!

URSULE. What say you?

GONT. I will quit France with you, and sever at once those chains that weigh us down!

URSULE. I dare not trust your words!

GONT. (*aside.*) She refuses, thank Providence! (*sees LUGARTO, who signs threateningly to him.*) He here still! Ursule, you must accept my proposal, or my honour, my life is lost! Think what I sacrifice for you!—country—fortune—Mathilde, also, I resign—for you!

COUNT. (*aside.*) Aha! that was something like!

URSULE. Ah, Gontran, I believe you—I *must* believe you!

GONT. Fate will have it!—Ursule, you consent?—let us begone!

URSULE. Hush!—some one is here! Ah! Mathilde!

GONT. Heavens!—Mathilde! This way, quick—quick!

They hurry off at L. D.

COUNT. (*advancing.*) They are off!—

Enter MATHILDE, R. C.

(*to MATHILDE.*) How grateful I am, madame, for the circumstance that gives me this meeting.

MATHIL. Be so good, sir, as to inform Monsieur de Lanery that I feel fatigued, and wish to return home.

COUNT. What—so soon?—at the most brilliant moment of the evening!

A SERVANT crosses the stage from R., to L. at the back.

MATHIL. (*to SERVANT.*) Acquaint Monsieur de Lanery that I am waiting for him. *Exit SERVANT, c.*

COUNT. A fête that I have given for you, and you alone!—oh, I cannot permit you thus early—

MATHIL. You forget, sir—

COUNT. I will not suffer it—at least, not before making an acknowledgment that may surprise you, or offend you.

MATHIL. Sir!

COUNT. And yet is it necessary?—have you not already guessed it? Well, then—(*seizing her hand, and falling on his knee.*) I cannot look upon you, Mathilde, without loving you to distraction! You do not answer me! This silence is—

MATHIL. (*with pride and dignity.*) There are sentiments, sir, that silence only can explain!

COUNT. (R.) Perhaps you do not think me capable of loving you as you deserve? You shall see what it is to be loved by a man who can make you the most envied of women! Oh, answer me! here, at your feet, I crave one word!

MATHIL. (L.) Sir, I am in your house, and you dare to offer me this insult!

COUNT. (*aside.*) She resists! Oh, happiness! You thrust me from you, madam—you turn from you the man who can place millions at your feet! One word from you, and I will cover your shoulders with a mantle of diamonds; I will place beneath your feet a carpet of flowers; you shall be the admiration of man and the envy of woman! (*pause.*) And you reject all this? Oh! if you knew how I have longed for the love of such a being as yourself! Allow me to admire you in silence—but do not condemn me before you know what devotedness I am capable of! (*a pause.*) You are yet silent, nothing moves but to my love, and you do not offer anything in return, but—

MATHIL. But disgust and contempt!

COUNT. Contempt! Disgust! Well, then, to other means! On your knees proud woman! do you hear? On your knees, you will crave of me to have pity on you! You are not aware then that I hold Gontran and yourself in my power?—that with but one word I can make you fall with terror at my feet!

MATHIL. What do I hear? Ha! thank Heaven! here's Gontran!

Music—Enter GONTRAN, DE LECHERIN, ROCHEGUNE and several of the COMPANY, in various dresses, from c.

MATHIL. (*crossing to GONTRAN.*) Oh, take me away! let us leave this place instantly!

COUNT. (*aside.*) He will leave—he has the flower! (*to MATHILDE.*) Say no more, or your husband is lost!

GONT. What is the matter, Mathilde? what has happened?

LECHERIN. The quadrille! The quadrille! (*advancing to c.*)

(*the COMPANY take their places for the dance.*)

COUNT. (*to MATHILDE.*) The quadrille is forming, madam, allow me to conduct you to a seat.

MATHIL. (*aside—sinks into chair, r. c.*) Oh, who will protect me, here?

DE ROCHE. (*aside, behind her chair.*) I! Fear not!

MATHIL. Ah! Rochegune! thank Heaven!

Enter URSULE, c.

(Music.—The quadrille commences, and during the dance

LUGARTO *is seated by the side of MATHILDE and URSULE, DE LECHERIN at the side of URSULE, and GONTRAN next, ROCHEGUNE stands near LUGARTO*

COUNT. We are still at variance, madame.

MATH. Sir, you use me cruelly!

COUNT. (*aside to her.*) All eyes are on us! It depends only on you whether they can guess what I am saying—but already every one suspects us! how should I hide my preference—I cannot conceal it; you are compromised at this moment!

ROCHE. (*going to GONTRAN, l.*) Sir, I address myself to you, because you are the husband of that lady; if you do not instantly demand an apology from that man—(*pointing to LUGARTO.*) I will take the quarrel upon myself; for the last hour he has been insulting your wife.

LECHERIN. I shall knock him down, I promise you, if that is the case!

GONT. (*aside.*) Death sooner than this shame!

MATHIL. (*agitated.*) Sir, do not force me to unmask you!

COUNT. See, Gontran does not make himself the least uneasy about you!

MATHIL. (*indignantly.*) Sir! (*rises, goes to GONTRAN, l. c.*) Gontran, defend me—defend your honour! (*Music.*)

(*a general movement among the COMPANY.**)

* ROCHE. LUGARTO. GONTRAN. MATHILDE. LECHERIN. URSULE.
R. R. C. C. L. C. L.

GONT. (*rising.*) Monsieur de Lugarto, you are an infamous scoundrel!

ROCHE. (*aside.*) At last!

COUNT. (*coolly.*) Sir!

GONT. You are a villain! You wish to compromise the honour of my wife—and to make me an obliging husband—because I am under some obligation to you! I repeat you are a contemptible scoundrel, and as such I treat you!

(*tears off his glove, and dashes it in the face of LUGARTO, together with the flower from his coat, URSULE crosses behind to R., and exits R. 1 E.*

ROCHE. Good! good!

COUNT. Unfortunate man, you are lost.

MATH. Oh, Heavens! (*faints.*)

LECHERIN. (*supporting her.*) Bravo, cousin, bravo! Attend to your "affair," I will take care of your wife!

Exit, supporting MATHILDE, L.

COUNT. Gentlemen, (*to the COMPANY, who are separating.*) I beg you will stop—my fête—(*significantly, and glancing at GONTRAN.*) is not over! Listen to me! Monsieur Gontran de Lancry, that personage—that refined man of fashion is—

GONT. (*aside to him.*) Oh, pardon! I—I consent to all!

COUNT. That man is mad, who occasionally acts in moments of despair as you have seen, but repents when he comes to his senses. Monsieur Gontran, you apologize for your behaviour, I accept your acknowledgments. (*aside to him.*) Go and wait for Ursule, all is ready for your departure! *Exit GONTRAN, R.*

Enter FRITZ, L. 2 E.

COUNT. (*aside to him.*) Where is Mathilde?

FRITZ. Monsieur de Lecherin has conducted her home.

COUNT. (*aside.*) Well, she is mine! Since peace is restored, let the ball proceed, gentlemen! (*ALL go up as the drop falls.*)

END OF ACT II.

A C T III.

SCENE.—*A Room, elegantly furnished, in a Mansion belonging to Count de Lugarto, at Chantilly—doors R. 1 E., and R. 3 E., and L., at the back, R. C., a fire place, with handsome looking-glass over, and time-piece—a large window with iron bars, and shutters to open outside, L. C.—night—storm of rain—thunder and lightning.*

MARGUERITE is discovered, listening at the window.

MARG. I thought I heard the rolling of a carriage! it is the

thunder! there is such an echo in the forest. (*clock strikes three.*) Three o'clock in the morning, and no one arrived yet! (*lightning.*) What a flash! one can see it through the shutters! (*sound of wheels.*) That is surely a coach! (*listens.*) Yes, yes! That person who came to tell me to have all in readiness must have nearly killed his horse, for he was full an hour before the carriage!

Music.—Enter MATHILDE and FRITZ, R. D.

MATHIL. What a fearful night! What a storm! (*looking round.*) Where am I?

FRITZ. Near the forest of Chantilly, madame.

MATHIL. What house is this?

FRITZ. Monsieur de Lancry ordered me to conduct you here, madame.

MARG. Will you not go near the fire, madame?

MATHIL. Yes, yes—I am cold! (*to FRITZ.*) What became of that carriage that was following us? it seemed in pursuit.

FRITZ. You may rest perfectly easy on that score, madame; we were considerably in advance. In the descent of the hill of Lusard the road was broken up for repair, and two lanterns pointed out the danger—

MATHIL. Well?

FRITZ. When we passed the dangerous part, I put out the light of both the lanterns; and a minute or two after, by a flash of lightning, I saw the carriage that was following, upset into that break-neck place, at the side of the road.

MATHIL. Heavens!

FRITZ. (*L.*) There was no other way of preventing them from obstructing us, madame; and I had positive orders to elude them.

MATHIL. (*aside.*) It was Monsieur de Lugarto, without doubt! Oh, I am dreadfully uneasy since that fearful scene at last night's ball! What passed after I fainted I know not!

FRITZ. Have you any further orders for me, madame?

MATHIL. Not at present, Fritz. (*aside.*) Why does Gontran send me to this house? Why, on such a night, does he make me quit Paris so abruptly?

FRITZ. (*aside to MARGUERITE.*) Do not forget your master's orders! (*makes her a sign to be silent, which she replies to in the affirmative*) *Exit, R. D.*

MATHIL. (*standing near the fire, when a violent clap of thunder is heard.*) Good Heavens! the storm gets worse! Gontran, what is he doing—where can he be? (*to MARGUERITE.*) I wish to speak to Fritz. (*sits.*)

MARG. He is gone back with the carriage, to Chantilly—there being no place here to receive it.

MATHIL. (*alarmed.*) Are we alone, then, in this house?

MARG. Yes, madame; but master cannot be long before he arrives.

MATHIL. True, true; my fears are follies, and shame me.

MARG. Your ladyship must be tired—will you not take something?

MATHIL. No—yes, give me a cup of tea.

MARG. Yes, your ladyship.

Exit L. 1 E.

MATHIL. I tremble when I think of all that has happened. I still see the terrible and inexplicable look that Lugarto threw at Gontran—his fiend-like glance; I remember he struck Lugarto in the face—and I saw no more! On reviving, this letter was given me, from Gontran:—(*reads it.*) “My dear Mathilde, the consequences of my dispute with Lugarto, obliges me to leave Paris, to-night. Fritz, who will deliver this letter to you, will conduct you to Chantilly, where I shall meet you—Gontran.” What is this new mystery?—and for what purpose was that carriage following us? But my husband cannot be long before he arrives, and then—

MARGUERITE has by this time re-entered with the tea, on a salver, which she places on a table.

Did Monsieur de Lancry say what hour he would be here?

MARG. No, madame.

(*thunder.*)

MATHIL. What a night! Who owns this house?

MARG. (*hesitating.*) This house, madame—your ladyship—this house?

MATHIL. Yes.

MARG. Oh—this house is—that is, *was*—to be let furnished, madame.

MATHIL. Well?

MARG. Monsieur de Lancry came to hire it, a few days ago.

MATHIL. (*aside.*) Singular!

MARG. Does your ladyship require me again?

MATHIL. No; only when Monsieur de Lancry arrives, beg of him to come to me without delay.

MARG. Yes, madame.

Exit L. 2 E.

MATHIL. (*sits.*) I am chilled with cold!—(*takes a cup of tea.*) perhaps this will refresh me. (*drinks.*) The storm seems to abate, the thunder is not so loud; but the wind is mournful and dreary. (*rises.*) Still, to be alone in this house, distant from the road, in the middle of a forest, is—(*sits again.*) I wish that woman was here. (*slow, as if dozing.*) Oh, if my poor Blondeau knew—(*pause.*) Strange! my eyelids grow heavy, in spite

of me! Sleep! (*rises hastily.*) No, no, I will not sleep!—by walking I shall overcome this drowsiness! (*she paces the stage, when a noise is heard behind door, R. 3 E.*) What is that?—I thought I heard a noise behind that door! (*noise heard again.*) Yes, it is not the effect of my imagination! Who's there? (*thunder heard.*) No answer! (*she runs to a bell rope L. and rings violently; (a pause.) she rings again, still with her eyes fixed on R. door.*) No one comes!—there is a death-like silence in this old mansion that fills me with terror! (*sinks into an arm-chair, hiding her face in her hands.*) What is the matter with me?—my sight fails me—I feel giddy—and—(*a violent clap of thunder heard—she rises quickly, takes the light, and goes towards the door, L.*) I must speak to that woman—to some one—I will not stay here alone! (*she is about to place her hand on the handle of the door, when the key is heard to turn in the lock; she lets the light fall from her hand as she draws back in alarm—lights down.*) They have double-locked the door! (*tries it.*) Ah, the window! (*runs to, and opens it.*) Barred and closed on the outside!—some villainy is passing here!—help! help!

The door, R. 3 E. suddenly opens, and LUGARTO enters.—MATHILDE screams and draws back.

COUNT. (*at R. door.*) Madame, your screams are unavailing,—no one can hear them—this house belongs to me!—the people who live here are mine!—no human power can release you! (*advances towards her.*)

MATH. (*retreats.*) Do not approach me! Help!—oh, Heavens!—help! (*thunder increases.*)

COUNT. You hear—the thunder only answers you.

MATHIL. (*falls on her knees.*) Heaven protect me!

COUNT. (*coolly eyeing her.*) Very handsome. Pray, madame, be calm, and hear me; I have many things to say to you.

MATHIL. (*with firmness—rising.*) Beware, sir!—I have friends who—

COUNT. If you mean Monsieur de Rochegune, and your ingenious cousin, Lecherin, they were, perhaps, your friends; but, thanks to dark nights and bad roads, they are effectually prevented displaying their friendship at present.

MATHIL. That carriage that was following us, then—

COUNT. Was, positively, that of your two cavaliers, Rochegune and Lecherin; they were left half dead at the road-side, and will be detained long enough to lose all traces of you.

MATHIL. Alas! is there no hope?

COUNT. None. Deign to look at that clock. It is half-past three, is it not? Well, then, thanks to an infallible narcotic

you have just taken, before ten minutes you will be insensible.

MATHIL. (*in great agitation.*) No, no!—such infamy—is—impossible!—im— (*with langour.*)

COUNT. Madame, while you have the faculty of hearing, have the goodness to listen to me. (*storm continues.*)

MATHIL. (*pacing the side of stage, and calling wildly.*) Gontran!—Gontran! Oh, Heaven! (*in despair.*)

COUNT. Gontran thinks no more of you. He loves another, whom he went off with this night, during the ball. Need I name her? Even should he come to rescue you, with this talisman—(*pulls a paper from his pocket-book.*) I would prevent his entrance here. This night, at the ball, my Pylades forgot himself so far as to insult me! One word of mine, however, quickly recalled his senses—he fell on his knees, and in the most abject tone, craved my pardon; I granted it on condition that he instantly departed for London—and all this was effected by my talisman!

MATHIL. My brain turns!—Oh! that I were dead!

(*staggers to sofa.*)

COUNT. I perceive you do not understand, madame. This paper—this dreaded paper—gives me a power of life and death.

MATHIL. (*in terror.*) Ah!

COUNT. That awakens you! You reject my entreaties!—I repeat to you, again, no human power can take you hence.

MATHIL. (*languidly.*) I can no—longer—resist the fatal—Oh, Lugarto! have pity—have mercy on me!

(*sinking—staggers to the table.*)

COUNT. (*with triumph.*) In five minutes you are mine!

(*crosses to R.*)

MATHIL. (*making a desperate effort to arouse herself.*) Never, villain!—never! Rather than that, Heaven receive my soul!

(*seizes a knife from the tray brought on by MARGUERITE, and raising it to stab herself, when DE ROCHEGUNE speaks without, R.—Mathilde!—Mathilde!—Music.—A crash is heard—the R. door is burst open—MATHILDE utters a loud scream, which is followed immediately by a long hysterical laugh, as she crosses the stage rapidly, and falls in the arms of DE ROCHEGUNE, who enters R. door, with LECHERIN—their cravats disordered and dress dirty—each with pistols.*)

COUNT. (L.) Hell and fiends!

DE ROCHE. (R. C.) Mathilde!—Mathilde! do not be alarmed, you are quite safe!

(*as he places her on a sofa, LUGARTO runs to the window,*

but is intercepted by LECHERIN, who presents his pistol at him.

LECHERIN. (*crosses—advancing on him—LUGARTO retreats to L.*) Another step, and I fire !

MATH. Save me !—save Gontran !—the paper !—the drink !—that monster !—I can no longer— Ah !—

(falls senseless on the sofa.)

COUNT. Gentlemen, what is it you mean ? I am in my own house !

DE ROCHE. Silence, sir !

COUNT. But—

DE ROCHE. Be silent, or I'll stop your prating ! (LECHERIN and DE ROCHEGUNE seize LUGARTO—DE ROCHEGUNE searches his coat pockets.) Where is the unlucky paper ? (*takes out paper and opens it.*) Here it is ! (*reads.*) Oh, Gontran !—Gontran !

COUNT. This is robbery, and I protest—

DE ROCHE. (*taking LUGARTO to L. table.*) Take this pen, and write as I dictate ! (*cocking his pistol.*)

COUNT. (*taking pen.*) Dictate ! What means this ?

DE ROCHE. (*presents pistol.*) No words !—write ! (*dictating.*) “ Monsieur de Lancry,—I send you with this, the paper, by means of which I compelled you to leave Paris—By stratagem I brought Madame de Lancry to my house, at Chantilly, when Messieurs de Rochegune and Lecherin, who watched and followed me, arrived in time to rescue my victim !—Cowardly as I am cruel—”

COUNT. (*throwing down the pen.*) I will not write that !

DE ROCHE. Oh, you are not a coward ? Well, we shall see ; you shall have a chance more than you deserve. These pistols are loaded—it is moonlight—come ! (*he goes towards R. door*)

COUNT. (*rises.*) To-morrow—to-morrow ; I cannot fight to-night, and without a witness !

DE ROCHE. We shall have two—Monsieur de Lecherin, and the postilion who brought us here ;—come !

COUNT. To-morrow I will meet you, sir—to-morrow !

DE ROCHE. (*indignantly.*) Then write down that you are a coward, or here, at the feet of your victim will I blow out your treacherous brains !

LECHERIN. Come, come, let us do things properly.

(presents pistol.)

DE ROCHE. (*dictating.*) “ I am, also, cowardly as I am cruel, and I herewith openly acknowledge my treachery.” Sign it—“ Lugarto.”

COUNT. (*aside—enraged.*) Perdition seize you ! (*writes.*)

DE ROCHE. (*reads, then folds the letter.*) “ To Monsieur de

Lancry." (*dictating.*) There is the acknowledgment of the crime, now for the punishment. To-morrow you will quit France for Italy. Think not such crimes as yours may be committed with impunity. Look upon that angel;—you must not, shall not tamper with her peace—her honour! Your stay in France, therefore, is limited to a few hours; and that you may not be tempted to remain, the blade of this knife—(*icking the one up MATHILDE had dropped.*) reddened in the flame, shall brand you on the forehead with an indelible—

(*heats the knife in the fire.*)

MATHIL. (*faintly—who, during the latter portion of this last speech, has partially recovered.*) What do I hear?—for pity's sake leave him to his remorse! Rochegune, my dear friend, such a revenge is unworthy of you!—Providence has selected you to prevent a crime, but not to strike the guilty! Spare him, and let him depart.

DE ROCHE. Right—I outrage the laws. Go, sir, and thank her you have so deeply injured for your deliverance!—begone!

COUNT. Never will I return. My carriage is without; I will travel day and night till I am beyond the frontiers. To you, madame, my acknowledgments are due; adieu, messieurs.

(*hastily—Exit R., closing the door, which is heard to lock.*)

DE ROCHE. (*crosses to MATHILDE, R.*) Mathilde, calm yourself, and let us depart. Your troubles are now ended, for I will send this paper, which has caused all the mischief, to Monsieur de Lancry, immediately!

MATH. Oh, my dear, kind friend—my deliverer!—how shall I thank you? And you, too, my dear cousin!—oh, thanks!

LECHERIN. Oh, it's no matter of credit to me, my good cousin; it is Rochegune that has done all. But come, let's begone at once, and— (*they are all going off R. D., but find the door locked.*) Why, the rascal has locked us in! You were wrong to let him go thus!

The shutters of the L. window are suddenly opened from the outside, and LUGARTO appears at the window, his carriage waiting behind him.—Moonlight.

COUNT. True, you were wrong to let me go at all! I have an account to settle with you, Monsieur de Lecherin! (*fires a pistol at him, LECHERIN falls, wounded, in chair.*) Mathilde!—your husband is on his road to London!—do you know with whom?—your cousin, Ursule!—d'ye hear? (*to DE ROCHEGUNE.*) And you, sir, who would have branded me on the forehead, thus I mark you in the heart!

(*fires at DE ROCHEGUNE, who falls.*)

MATHIL. (*screams.*) Ah!—

(*music.*)

COUNT. (*jumping into his carriage.*) To Marseilles!—gallop! (*the whip is heard to smack, and the carriage to roll as he drives off; and the act drop rapidly descends upon the Tableau.*)

END OF ACT III.

Twelve Months supposed to elapse.

A C T I V .

SCENE.—*A Neatly Furnished Apartment in the House of Mathilde, at Paris. The arrangements of the Scene giving an idea of taste in their disposal—but without being ostentatiously elegant, doors R. and L.—(2nd grooves.)*

Music.—MATHILDE and ROCHEGUNE are discovered.

MATHIL. No, my friend; although a year has now elapsed since that fatal night when you were wounded in my defence, I have never heard of either of those two men who so cruelly conspired to destroy me!

DE ROCHE. Mathilde—when our parents were friends; *my* father, in his youth, was poor—*your's* rich; and he came to offer mine, on an occasion of great necessity, the command of one half of his fortune! Mathilde, the whole of my worldly wealth—life and soul—all—all are yours!

MATHIL. Thanks, my kind friend—I have but *one* favour to ask you. (*mournfully.*) You saved me from my enemies—now save me from myself! Rochegune, my friend, my brother! let us part! we must not see each other again!

DE ROCHE. It is impossible! It would be leaving you to the attacks of the infamous wretches who plot your destruction! They will return when they find me gone. Never; I will not consent to throw you into the peril I have saved you from.

MATHIL. There is no longer fear of danger; but I feel that I ought to avoid you.

DE ROCHE. I am resigned. Yes, Mathilde, I will go, since you demand it, and will not return until you recall me—until you need my aid—if I live till then!

MATH. Yes, yes—you must, my friend. (*in a kindly tone, and taking his hand.*) Courage, courage, noble heart! (as

Rochegune turns to conceal his tears.) At least, my thoughts and prayers will always follow you !

Enter MADAME BLONDEAU, L.

BLON. Madame Lecherin, madame.

Enter MADAME LECHERIN, L.—BLONDEAU goes off, L.

MADAME L. (c.) Good morning, my child—good morning. Monsieur de Rochegune, I am glad to meet you together, for you can both assist me !

MATHIL. (r.) What is the matter ?

MADAME L. He has returned !

MATH. Who ? Your son ?

MADAME L. Yes, he arrived last evening. Alas ! he is much changed ! He whom you knew so frank and cheerful, has become dull, silent, and melancholy ! My poor son ! He loves but her on earth, and she has destroyed his happiness !

MATHIL. Perhaps he suffers more from being deceived than not being loved.

MADAME L. Oh, no, no ! his heart is stricken ! *I thought also, that it was a temporary grief which time would obliterate ; I was mistaken ; see, he is here !*

Music.—Enter LECHERIN, slowly, L.—his appearance completely changed, pale and haggard cheeks, his hair grey, and his whole demeanour presenting the aspect of excessive grief; he presses the hands of MATHILDE and ROCHEGUNE as they advance to meet him, and then sinks into an arm chair, R. C.

MATHIL. (r.) Well, dear cousin, you have returned—I hope now, that you intend to stay with us ?

LECHERIN. No.

DE ROCHE. What news have you ?

LECHERIN. Bad.

DE ROCHE. From whence do you come ?

LECHERIN. From Naples.

DE ROCHE. And where did you lose trace of them ?

LECHERIN. At Naples ; but I suppose they took the road for France—I came by sea—and wait for them here ! Oh, that I may meet them !

MADAME L. (*aside to them.*) Speak to him I entreat you ! I cannot !

MATHIL. Come, courage, cousin—we both need it, much—let us think no longer of those who have so deeply injured us ! forget her !

LECHERIN. Ha ! Forget ! forget ! No, no—impossible ! (*abstractedly.*) Tell my heart not to beat, my memory cease, my

life end ! Forget her ! I love but her in the world ! No ! despite my wrongs, my affliction—the misery she has caused me, never—never can I forget her !

DE ROCHE. Never !

LECHERIN. I still love her, and cannot live without her—I will return to seek her, and when found—pardon her for leaving me—for loving another ! Another ! another ! Demons of hell ! his life ! his life !

MATHIL. Oh, Heavens !—do not seek it ! Think what will become of your parent should she lose you ; you, so kind, so affectionate a son !

LECHERIN. No—no ! Ursule !—I shall never see her again !—never—never ! It is my own fault not to have watched her with more care. But I am not without hope ; with assurances of pardon and kindness, I may induce her to return. I know her well ; she is thoughtless, but her heart is good. Then what am I doing here ? She will think me indifferent—or a coward ! I must leave you again, mother. (*goes to her.*) I must find her—I must find them *both* ! Adieu, mother—adieu, Mathilde—Rochegune, my friend, pity me !—adieu !—Heaven—Heaven bless you all ! Ursule—Ursule—Ursule ! *Exit slowly*, R.

DE ROCHE. (*following.*) Stay, my friend—my friend !

Exit, R.

MADAME L. My son—my son—my son ! *Exit*, R., *following*.

MATHIL. Misfortunes pursue us all ! I will not see Rochegune again ; he must leave to-day !

Enter BLONDEAU, L.

BLOND. A lady, who would not give her name, wishes to speak with you, madame, on business of importance.

MATHIL. Shew her in.

Exit BLONDEAU, L.

Music.—Re-enter BLONDEAU with URSULE, L., her veil down.

MATHIL. Leave us, Blondeau.

Exit BLONDEAU, L.

URSULE throws up her veil.

MATHIL. (L.) Heavens !—Ursule here ?

URSULE. Do you know me again ?—yet I am much altered.

MATHIL. (*much agitated.*) You here ! Do you come, then, to revel in the mischief you have created ?

URSULE. Mathilde, have you seen your husband ?

MATHIL. (*coldly.*) My husband !

URSULE. Gontran is in Paris—Lugarto, also, and will follow up his vile schemes against you !

MATHIL. With Gontran ?

URSULE. They are together, and more bound than ever ! Go, then, fly before it is too late !

MATHIL. No, no, you wish to take from me the only aid that has proved faithful to me in my misfortunes! It is a concerted plan; but I will frustrate it—I will remain!

URSULE. (*despairingly.*) Mathilde, believe a rival who thus falls at your feet! I will confide to you a dreadful secret, the origin of all my faults—of all my hate and revenge! I must tell it, if I die in the act, for I will save you!

MATHIL. Rise—and speak.

URSULE. You know that I loved Gontran, but you are not aware *when and how that love was formed!* You became rich, happy, and was betrothed to a man young, brave, handsome, and every way worthy of you. I could not look upon your intended without hate for you, without love for him. I sought to loosen his affection for you, and one fatal night, at an imprudent rendezvous, I gave him—at Farmer Anselm's, near our aunt's chateau—I—Oh, Heavens!—shame—shame!

(turns from her, and convulsively buries her face in her hands.)

MATHIL. Unhappy woman!

URSULE. (*quickly.*) Mathilde, that first fault caused me to commit others. While I was on a journey to Abbeville, Gontran married you; and after a brief interval, I was united to Monsieur Lecherin. Lugarto, who knew our secret, dared to propose to me to aid him in a new snare which he intended for you! I thank Heaven for the power given me to warn you in time! I have braved all danger and shame to save you! Now, Mathilde, do you believe me?

MATHIL. What am to do—how act? Where is Rochegune? I will send to him. Yes, I must see him again; he, perhaps, may assist, may save me! (*going.*)

Enter GONTRAN, L.

MATHIL. Ah! Too late!

URSULE. (R.) Already here!

GONT. (L.) Ursule!

URSULE. You did not expect to meet *me* here?

GONT. And pray, madame, may I ask what motive brings you here?

URSULE. (*firmly.*) You shall soon know that, sir; I am come to inform Mathilde of your arrival, and advise her to shun you!

GONT. Dare you?

URSULE. I dare all! for well I know the power, the influence Lugarto has with you! (GONTRAN *threatens her*) Oh! there is nought to fear when the only remaining wish we have left us, is—to die! and for myself, I should desire it rather than

become, as you are—a slave to that monster! (*aside to MATHILDE.*) You see, I spoke truly. It may not be too late to save you; but beware—keep on the alert, for Lugarto is in Paris, also, and you are aware of what he is capable; in the meantime, I will inform Rochegune, and see you again.

Exit, L.

GONT. Well, madame—I am indebted to Ursule for having informed you of my return—she has spared us a surprise that could not have been pleasant to either.

MATHIL. Sir, let us conclude an interview painful to both; what do you require?

GONT. (*hesitating.*) I will repair the injuries I have committed against you.

MATHIL. I can forgive you, sir; but ask nothing more.

GONT. My intention was to take you from this scene—the witness to the scandal of my past life—to some place where you would not be reminded of my errors; and by my conduct, efface from your heart all traces of your wrongs!

MATHIL. Do not hope it, sir—it cannot be!

GONT. (*suddenly changing his tone and manner.*) How, madame! You forget that I have a right to command here. (*MATHILDE lowers her head desparingly.*) You will depart with me this day! (*crosses, R. C.—seats himself.*)

MATHIL. What injuries have *you* ever received from *me*, that you should assume this *rigour*? You are not, I know, inherently wicked, Gontran—Lugarto urges you to this step; by what tie—what power is it that he leads you? Answer me! Speak!

GONT. (*rising.*) Lugarto is master of my will—my life. A word from Lugarto can strike me as the headsman strikes! I must obey him; Mathilde, he could send me to the galleys!

MATHIL. Oh, Heavens!

GONT. (*quickly.*) The galleys! to lasting misery and degradation! In a moment of error I forged his signature, and at this moment he possesses the document fatal to my future peace on earth.

MATHIL. He holds it no longer!

GONT. Ha!

MATHIL. I saw it—yes, I am certain, in the hands of De Rochegune, at the house at Chantilly.

Enter LUGARTO, L.

GONT. Should it be true, I am free! I am free!

COUNT. (*advancing.*) Not yet—here is the forgery still! (*shews it.*) The one that your friend Rochegune, robbed me of, madame. (*to MATHILDE.*) When I left you at Chantilly, I

returned immediately to Paris, where I concealed myself, with gold everything is possible. You may remember that about that very period the Government Post was stopped on the Paris Road, and the courier left for dead—the dispatches and letters, were pillaged by the robbers, I know not how the affair was managed—but twenty four hours after the occurrence, a letter signed "Lugarto," and addressed to "Monsieur de Lancry, Poste Restante, London," was in my hands. Do you understand? Gontran de Lancry, you are still in my power!

GONT. (*half aside.*) Unfortunate that I am; all hope is lost! (*crosses L.*)

COUNT. Do you regret the separation from your wife? Well then, I will unite you again; you shall take a most delightful journey with her to my chateau, at Capo de Montè—you can reside there—it's an enchanting place, I assure you.

MATHIL. (*after a pause.*) The silence of Monsieur de Lancry, proves to me that he once again consents to become your accomplice, sir; he may depart immediately, but I do not accompany him. (*sitting, R. C.*)

COUNT. (*aside to GONTRAN.*) The carriage is below—the moments fly—speak, then, or must I—

GONT. Fiend! Torturer! leave me! (*crosses, c.*)

COUNT. (*aside to him, enjoying his distress.*) Do you not see her drift? She wishes to remain here with Rocheugune.

GONT. Ha! Rocheugune!

COUNT. Who has become her knight errant—her defender, protector—call it what you will! Bah! put an end to it man.

GONT. (*with passion.*) Oh, Satan! (*to MATHILDE.*) Madame, prepare to depart this instant.

MATHIL. (*alarmed.*) Gontran, for pity's sake! have you then, so soon forgotten all that you said, when you imagined yourself secure from his control?

GONT. You will depart with me!

MATHIL. Death sooner.

GONT. Then, madame, to prove to you that, as your husband, I will be obeyed—(*advancing to, and seizing her hands.*)

Music.—Enter LECHERIN and ROCHEGUNE, R.

LECHERIN. Not yet, Monsieur de Lancry—villain and seducer! Two words, first!

GONT. What would you?

LECHERIN. Your life, sir!

GONT. (c.) Sir!

LECHERIN. (l. c.) Before the day is over, your life, or mine will terminate the disgrace you have brought upon me.

DE ROCHE. (R. C., tapping LUGARTO on the shoulder.) I

forbade your return to France ; observe me—you shall not leave it again.

LECHERIN. (*crosses to ROCHEGUNE.*) One moment, my friend. (*addressing GONTRAN, and pointing to LUGARTO.*) Yonder is a second worthy of you—here, (*taking the hand of ROCHEGUNE.*) is mine.

GONT. (R.) We accept your invitation. The time, and place ?

LECHERIN. One hour of this—by the pond, near the cross-way, in the wood of Vincennes.

GONT. We shall be there. *Music.*—*Exit, with LUGARTO, L.*

MATHIL. Lecherin ! Rochegune !

LECHERIN. In an hour, Mathilde, you will be a widow—or you shall console my mother ! farewell ! farewell !

(*Music.*—*Exit, rapidly, with DE ROCHEGUNE, L.*—MA-

THILDE appears as if fainting, as URSULE appears at R. door, she receives her in her arms, and bears her off, R.

SCENE II.—*The Forest of Vincennes. Sunset—a finger post near the L. 2 E.—a bank on R.*

PIERRE DUBOIS discovered, near some branches of trees which he has just lopped off—faggots or bundles of others about the stage, tied up.

DUBOIS. (*whetting his bill hook.*) The sun sets very red—that's a bad sign for to-morrow ; now to finish my work, for my day's bread is not earned yet. (*looking round at the trees.*) All oak ! nothing but oak—that's hard for a finisher ! however, here goes ! (*looks off, R.*) Hollo ! what's that yonder ? a carriage—and two ladies are getting out of it ; I declare, they are coming this way, and stepping out bravely, too ; Now what can they want at this time of the day, too, in the wood of Vincennes ? it's rather late ! Oho, a rendezvous ! but what is it to me ? it's no business of mine ! (*Music.*—*He sets to work.*)

Enter MATHILDE and URSULE, rapidly, R.

URSULE. Heavens ! we have mistaken the road—they are not here !

MATHIL. (*looking round, perceives the woodcutter.*) Ah ! this man may possibly give us some information. (*goes to him.*) My friend, is not this the crossway, near the pond ?

DUBOIS. (*taking off his cap.*) No, madame, this is the end of the black crossroad.

URSULE. We have missed the way, then, and all hope is lost !

MATHIL. (*to DUBOIS.*) The pond near the crossway? Where is it? (*draws her purse.*)

DUBOIS. (*pointing off, L. U. E.*) You must take the first to the left, and then to the right, and you are there, madame; it's no distance at all from here.

(*MATHILDE offers him money, which he respectfully refuses.*)

URSULE. (*crosses to MATHILDE, L.*) Thank Heaven! Have you seen any one pass this way lately?

DUBOIS. No, madame—not a soul—and I have been here since daybreak.

MATHIL. Then there is yet time; come, quick—we may be able to save them both!

Throws down a piece of money to DUBOIS, and exit hastily with URSULE, L. U. E.

DUBOIS. What can be the matter? poor creatures, they seem to be in great distress about some body or thing; that sweet looking one has left me the money—a five-franc piece, I see. (*picking it up.*) Well, it won't do to let it lie here; I'm too much in want of it—but what did she wish to give it me for—because I gave her a few answers about this neighbourhood; well, I'm sure I did not wish it; but it's very acceptable, nevertheless; Jeanneton shall have a new pair of sabots out of this, and Guillaume a handkerchief for Sunday.

Music.—Enter GONTRAN and LUGARTO, with swords, L. 1 E.

COUNT. (*sitting on bank.*) I can go no further through this infernal wood!

GONT. But we are not yet at the crossway pond, and we must not keep them waiting—come, come on!

COUNT. (*looking at his watch.*) All in good time, mon ami; the meeting is at eight o'clock, and it wants a full quarter of the time, yet; from what you said on the road, this said pond can be but two steps further. (*looks round, sees the WOODMAN, and addresses him in a brusque tone and manner.*) Holloa! fellow! where is the pond near the crossway. (DUBOIS stops at his work, turns, looks at LUGARTO, and then resumes his employment without answering.) Do you hear, fellow?

GONT. Stay, Lugarto! (*to DUBOIS.*) My friend—can you furnish us with the information we require?

DUBOIS. You are a gentleman, sir, I see—the place you are asking for is about three minutes walk from here—take the left hand road, (L. U. E.) then the right, and you are on the spot.

COUNT. (*on bank.*) You perceive, my good friend, we have plenty of time.

GONT. But you can rest yourself just as well there as here; indeed, we shall be late.

COUNT. (*turning round, looks off.*) See, yonder they come—we are before them !

Enter DE ROCHEGUNE and GONTRAN, with pistols, R.

DE ROCHE. (*to GONTRAN.*) You have been waiting for us ; but we are not at the place appointed.

LECHERIN. We shall be just as well here—come, let us be quick ! we need not proceed further.

GONT. Let it be so, then.

DE ROCHE. (*to LECHERIN, pointing to DUBOIS.*) But we shall be observed.

LECHERIN. (*to DUBOIS.*) My honest friend—will you remove further off, we have a little business to settle here, and you may be in our way ?

DUBOIS. Excuse me, sir—I am at my work—and each blow of my axe is a mouthful of bread for my wife and children.

COUNT. What are they to us ? Leave the spot instantly, or—

LECHERIN. (*to DUBOIS.*) Your wife ! Here, here, my friend, (*gives him a piece of gold.*) leave us and there is something for you and your family—perhaps you love them dearly. You will at least be happy to-day !

DUBOIS. Oh yes, sir, very dearly—my wife and family are the greatest blessings I enjoy in this world.

LECHERIN. (*half aside.*) I also, could have said the same had it not been for those villains ! (*becomes absorbed in thought.*)

DUBOIS (*c.—aside.*) This is a duel, I see. Well, I'd give this Napoleon—(*shewing the gold he has just received.*) if that surly, black rascal was to be shot instead of any of the others. This one's— (*pointing to LECHERIN.*) an honest gentleman, I think, therefore the chances will be against him ; for the greater the rogue—ahem ! I wish I could prevent their fighting at all ; but what could I do against four ? Aha ! those ladies that were just now—surely they must be here for the purpose of interfering in this matter ;—it must be so. I'l run and fetch them as quick as thought.

Exit L. U. E.

COUNT. (*L.*) Monsieur de Lancry being the challenged, we have the choice of arms.

DE ROCHE. (*R. C.*) Pardon me a moment, sir.

LECHERIN. Let it be swords or pistols, which you please, so that we proceed.

DE ROCHE. Stay, my friend—no mad' generosity. (*to GONTRAN, who is L. C.*) I regret, sir, that you should have forgotten it is the custom, in affairs of this nature, to have honourable witnesses ; you might have spared me the necessity of settling the conditions with that man, as to the mode of combat, &c.

COUNT. Your remarks are insulting, sir !

DE ROCHE. Let us arrange, first, for these gentlemen, and, afterwards, we will balance accounts. You do not escape me so easily this time, I promise you.

COUNT. (*aside.*) We shall see. (*aloud.*) I maintain that the choice of weapons belongs to us!

LECHERIN. Steel or lead—so that it is to the death—'tis no matter.

DE ROCHE. None at all, my friend, so that the chances are equal. (*to GONTRAN.*) Monsieur de Lancry will not, I think, insist, which of the two, Monsieur de Lecherin or himself, has received the greatest injury?

GONT. You are right, sir; I shall accept everything that you propose.

DE ROCHE. Our choice then, is pistols—the distance, twenty paces—at a given signal, the adversaries will walk towards each other, until within five paces—and fire.

GONT. (l. c.) Agreed—I accept the terms.

COUNT. (l., *aside to GONTRAN.*) Are you mad?—you resign your advantage;—that brute will give you shot for shot!

LECHERIN. (*aside, abstractedly.*) Ursule!—Ursule!

DE ROCHE. (*to LUGARTO—placing his handkerchief in c. of stage.*) Count five paces sir.

(*LUGARTO measures five paces, and places his own handkerchief at the distance opposite the other.*

LECHERIN. (*aside.*) I should like to have seen her for the last time! (*reads a letter.*)

(*DE ROCHEGUNE offers two pistols to GONTRAN, who chooses one, he then gives the remaining one to LECHERIN.*

LECHERIN. (*to DE ROCHEGUNE.*) This paper is for her—it is my will! I leave all that I possess, between my dear mother, and Urs—(*his voice becomes choked with emotion—DE ROCHEGUNE presses his hand.*)

COUNT. We wait your leisure, sir.

Music.—GONTRAN and LECHERIN go off instantly, pistol in hand, the first, l. u. e., the last, r. 2 e., in an oblique line.

DE ROCHEGUNE and LUGARTO walking by their side, counting the additional number of paces—starting from each handkerchief. The SECONDS, r. and l., stand out of the line of fire. DE ROCHEGUNE then gives three claps with his hands. A pause. GONTRAN and LECHERIN are seen advancing towards the two handkerchiefs, looking at each other. LECHERIN fires—GONTRAN places his hand quickly to his side, staggers forward, l., and leans on LUGARTO.

COUNT. (*to LECHERIN.*) Do not move, sir!—your opponent can still hold his weapon. Courage, Gontran, you have yet strength enough left—

GONT. I have, thank Heaven! to do justice on a monster!
(fires suddenly at LUGARTO, who falls dead instantly.)
(A scream heard without, at the same moment, and as GONTRAN sinks from loss of blood—

MATHILDE, URSULE, and PIERRE DUBOIS rush on, L. U. E.

MATHILDE goes immediately to GONTRAN—**URSULE** sinks insensible c.—Tableau, and

CURTAIN.

EXPLANATION OF THE STAGE DIRECTIONS.

| R. | R. C. | C. | L. C. | L. |
|--------|---------------|---------|--------------|-------|
| Right. | Right Centre. | Centre. | Left Centre. | Left. |

FACING THE AUDIENCE.