

# E X T R E M E S;

OR,

## MEN OF THE DAY.

A Comedy

IN THREE ACTS.

BY

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TO HIS

LANCASHIRE FRIENDS,

WHOSE SOMETIMES

EXTREME

BLUNTNES OF SPEECH,

HE ALMOST INVARIABLY FOUND NEIGHBOURED

BY

EXTREME

KINDNESS IN ACT,

THE AUTHOR,

IN A "GRADELY" SPIRIT,

DEDICATES

THIS COMEDY.

(6216)

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## EXTREMES.

### P R E F A C E.

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THE materials for so long a Comedy as *Extremes* unexpectedly proved, must, of course, have been previously acquired; but no particular consciousness of their existence preceded the design and composition of the Drama, which, from conception to completion, as it is now presented, occupied the Author a period of sixteen days. Although certain, that of mere haste of production it must have many faults, its success upon the stage has made him fearful of attempting to amend, that, which no longer seems his own work. When the fire of composition has been suffered to die out, as it generally is once accepted work passes the door of the studio, judgment, no longer warmed by the spirit of conception, may be potent to criticise, but is feeble to improve; and so, as an exercise to the always vigorous judgment of the critics, yet not without an avowed dependance on their mercy, the Author leaves the faults of the Comedy of *Extremes*.

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NOTE.—For various reasons the Author cannot particularize, and therefore begs the Ladies and Gentlemen named in the original cast generally to accept his sincere thanks.

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First performed at the Lyceum Theatre, August 26th, 1858.

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### Characters.

SIR LIONEL NORMAN	...	Mr. FITZJAMES.
HON. AUGUSTUS ADOLPHUS	...	Mr. CHARLES.
DR. PLAYFAIR	...	Mr. BARRETT.
MR. CUNNINGHAM	...	Mr. GARDEN.
EVERARD DIGBY	...	Mr. FITZHENRY.
FRANK HAWTHORNE	...	Mr. EDMUND FALCONER.
ROBIN WILDBRIAR	...	Mr. EMERY.
JAMES	...	Mr. JAMES ROGERS.
MRS. VAVASOUR	...	Mrs. WALLIS.
LUCY VAVASOUR	...	Mrs. CHARLES YOUNG.
MRS. WILDBRIAR	...	Mrs. WESTON.
JENNY WILDBRIAR	...	Miss KATE SAXON.
MISS EUPHEMIA CHOLMONDELEY	...	Miss C. WESTON.
JEMIMA SIMPERTON	...	Miss MILLER.

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### Costumes.

SIR LIONEL.—Fashionable morning dress for summer, dark hair, whiskers, and moustache. *Act II.*—Fashionable morning dress for October, hat, and gloves. *Act III.*—Full dress.

ADOLPHUS.—Same, only a little more extravagant; light wig divided in c., light beard, and long peaked moustaches falling down.

DR. PLAYFAIR.—Plain suit of black all through; low crowned hat with broad brim turned up; iron-grey wig slightly bald.

MR. CUNNINGHAM.—Black suit with over frock coat; white hair.

EVERARD DIGBY.—Same style as Sir Lionel, but plainer; no moustache.

ROBIN.—Green cutaway coat with canary-coloured waistcoat, and light cord trowsers, wide-awake hat, light hair. *Act II.*—Grey suit, peg-top trowsers. *Act III.*—Blue frock, velvet collar, snuff-coloured trowsers, and white waistcoat.

JAMES.—Smart modern livery; coat buttoned, large bouquet in breast, hair powdered.

FRANK.—Full dress suit of black. *Act II.*—Frock coat, grey trowsers and waistcoat. *Act III.*—Morning winter suit; then fashionable wedding dress.

MRS. VAVASOUR.—Fashionable morning dress. *Act II.*—Walking dress. *Act III.*—Full dress for old lady.

LUCY.—Morning dress, hat. *Act II.*—Morning dress; riding dress. *Act III.*—Morning dress, And *last Scene*—Bridal dress, wreath.

MISS EUPHEMIA.—Morning dress, different for each Act.

MRS. WILDBRIAR.—Handsome plaid silk and cap. 2nd—Claret-coloured silk velvet, turban to match. 3rd—Light moire antique. 4th—Light green silk.

JENNY.—White muslin. 2nd—Fashionable silk, hat and feather. 3rd—Handsome morning dress; wedding dress without wreath.

JEMIMA.—Plain coloured muslin, small apron, and cap.

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SCENE—Hawthorne House, Dorsetshire.

TIME—1857-58.

# EXTREMES;

OR,

## MEN OF THE DAY.



### ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.—*A richly-furnished Drawing Room, with large bay window at the back, opening upon a terrace, and affording view of lawn fringed with flowers; extensive woods beyond; an entrance to conservatory, R. U. E.; arched entrance to a library, within which statues and paintings are visible, L. U. E.; doors of entrance, R. and L.; books, writing materials, newspapers, vases, &c. on tables; sofas, screen, chairs, &c.; a portrait of Lucy Vavasour, L. 2 E.*

JAMES discovered reading *Times* newspaper, L. C.

JAMES. "The bank having noted a further reduction in its rate of discount, the funds rapidly rose from 93½ to 95¼; and finally Three per Cent. Consols were quoted at 95⅔. New Three per Cents. and Reduced Annuities rose in an equal ratio. Business on 'Change yesterday was exceedingly brisk, and confidence seemed completely restored in the money market." That's a comfort; while that ere monetary crisis lasted, and the funds kept a bobbing up and down, and hevery day brought intelligence of a fresh smash, it was really hawful for people who 'ad a little money, to think of what was a going to 'appen.

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SCREEN.	CHAIR.	WINDOW.	CHAIRS.	SOFA.
CHAIR.	SMALL TABLE.		CHAIR.	TABLE.
CHAIR.	CHAIR.	TABLE.	CHAIR.	
			CHAIR.	SMALL TABLE.

DR. PLAYFAIR. (*outside, L.*) Here, some one!—is there nobody in the house? I object to being left alone.

JAMES. That is Dr. Playfair, one of the trustees and executors; and as he objects to everything, he might object to my reading the news. (*puts paper on table*)

*Enter DR. PLAYFAIR, L. 2 E.*

DR. P. Has the solicitor—I mean Mr. Cunningham—arrived?

JAMES. (R.) I *ham hunder* the *himpression*, sir, that he has not; but it is possible that I might be mistook.

DR. P. (L.) I object to that indirect and circumlocutory method of answering a question. Why can't you say that you don't know—short and straightforward? When a man's ignorant of any matter, nothing like owning it off hand.

JAMES. I never confesses total *hignorance* upon any subject.

DR. P. Then the greater humbug you. Do you know where the *Times* paper is?

JAMES. Yes, sir; it is at this present moment deposited on the table to the *hextreme* left of the apartment.

DR. P. I object—but there's no use in objecting to noodleism when you are talking to a noodle.

JAMES. Shall I do myself the felicity of obtaining and presenting it to you?

DR. P. No, I shall get it myself; and, hark ye, I object to your society any longer; so oblige me by leaving the room.

(*goes to table, L., takes paper, and goes up to R. table*)

JAMES. If it wasn't that he's *hexecutor*, and might *hoffer* *hobstructions* to my receipt of a legacy, if there should be one, I should tell him that he was no gentleman. I have been in the service of a dook and a marquis, and never was ordered *hout* of a room before. Oh, Jeames Dodsworth, this comes as a punishment on your *havarice*, and for demeaning yourself to take service with commoners, merely because they give larger salaries, and *hallows* more perquisites. The *haristocracy* may be poor now and then; but they *halways* *happreciates* *sentiment*, *helegance* of diction, and refinement of manners.

*Exit, L. 1 E.*

*Enter EVERARD DIGBY, R.*

EVERARD. Ah, my dear doctor! I am most happy to see you.

DR. P. I object to the use of the superlative most—humbug—twice as happy to see a hundred other people. I like you well enough not to be annoyed at meeting you; but don't deal in humbug.

EVERARD. Ha, ha! always the same contentious, but sensible adviser. I am glad to see you in the positive degree, and comparatively more glad to see you than—

DR. P. A dun or a bailiff—no compliment that. I like it the better, and accept it frankly. (*shakes hands*) What brings you here? Don't expect a legacy, I hope? I'm quite sure that you're not mentioned.

EVERARD. Oh, I never had the slightest reason to indulge an expectation. You know that I am a lawyer, and being cousin to Miss Vavasour, she and her mother have invited me to pass the long vacation here. It's partly a friendly, partly a professional visit; they may want my advice as to the settlements, after the will has been read.

DR. P. Oh, she has made up her mind to inherit?

EVERARD. Can there be a doubt of that?

DR. P. (L.) Don't know. Hawthorne, queer fellow, had relatives. Don't see why he should ignore their claims. Do you know his history?

EVERARD. Partially. I know that he was originally poor, but of a respectable family, and—

DR. P. (L.) In fact you know nothing at all about it; as it's short, don't mind telling you. I think his family never heard the word respectability in their lives, and I'm quite sure never understood what it meant. Hardly knew their own surname. George had some difficulty in ascertaining that, in after years. They were miners, or labourers in a mine—a coal mine; lived in darkness, and died in it; plugged up, or stifled off by choke damp, or some other infernal gas: that is, all of them except George, his scamp of a brother, and a cousin. George went to sea, enlarged his ideas, returned, became a workman in an iron foundry, got into the engineer's room, showed talent for designs, learnt to read and write, and draw—saved money, made foreman, married employer's daughter: employer died, wife died, became rich, invented all sorts of self-adjusting machines, built steam engines, laid railroads, built iron ships, speculated, made nearly a million of money, bought an estate; and, as he was a man of progress, and his manners in a great degree reflected the favourable change in his fortunes, found, when he was about fifty, an honourable lady—a poor baronet's daughter—willing to marry him, and share his wealth.

EVERARD. (R.) What an extraordinary career, to be sure.

DR. P. Not at all extraordinary—plenty of instances—national and individual—of progressive ascents from insignificance to wealth and name. Well, his second wife had no children, and he grew fond of her niece, the present expectant heiress, Miss Lucy Vavasour; but before adopting, or rather

becoming attached to her, finding that he was likely to be childless, he made some inquiries about his own relations.

EVERARD. The brother and cousin you spoke of as having escaped choke damp?

DR. P. Yes; the brother he traced to a small manufacturing town in Lancashire, but learnt that he was a bad mechanic, a supposed good writer of songs popular among workmen, and a fluent tap-room orator when half drunk, which was usually the case four days out of the seven. Intensely disgusted with each characteristic, he determined to withhold all recognition of such a relative; but shortly before his death he again made some enquiries, and the fact of his brother's demise, and of his one son's industry, having raised him into a little independence, which enabled him to support his mother in comfort and respectability, and to look forward to a still better day, was modestly communicated to him by that son. To his surprise he learnt that his brother and family had all along been aware of his success; but from a dislike to subject him to a possible humiliation, had refrained from seeking his assistance in the hours of their greatest privation.

EVERARD. That was very noble.

DR. P. Perhaps it was—perhaps it was a stupid stiff-necked spirit of pride—don't know which—but he was touched by it, and again first nature asserted her sway, and suggested the injustice of leaving all his property to a mere collateral relation, while kindred in whose veins his paternal blood flowed, lived, and were deserving, too; and still he felt bound by the moral obligation he had contracted to Lucy. The expedient Hawthorne hit upon we shall know to-day, when the will is read.

EVERARD. Do you surmise its nature?

DR. P. (L.) No; and if I did, I shouldn't tell you one moment before the seal was broken upon the will.

EVERARD. Quite right. What of the other relative?

DR. P. Oh, the cousin; he had married some petty farmer's daughter in Lancashire, and had thriven well in a small way; he, however, made his exit from this world some time before Hawthorne's demise.

(HONORABLE AUGUSTUS ADOLPHUS and SIR LIONEL NORMAN *laugh outside*)

Who are those?

EVERARD. Sir Lionel Norman and the Honorable Augustus Adolphus.

DR. P. I object to both. The former is too fine a gentleman for my taste, and the latter too complete a puppy; let us walk and shun them for the present.

*Exeunt through window, L. C.*

*Enter SIR LIONEL and ADOLPHUS, l.; MRS. VAVASOUR and MISS EUPHEMIA, r.; preceded by JEMIMA, who places chairs, and then exits, r.*

SIR L. Good morning, ladies. My dear Mrs. Vavasour, how do you find yourself to-day?

MRS. V. (*seated, r.*) As I always do in the country, Sir Lionel, alive, and little more: the air is too bracing for my delicate organization. Augustus, do me the favour to close that window. I am like an exotic, and can only live out of Belgravia in a conservatory, or a house of like temperature.

ADOL. (*aside, l.*) Dear delicate old soul, how well she is preserved.

SIR L. (*aside, l.*) It is the privilege of a lady to talk nonsense and the duty of a gentleman to sympathise.

(ADOLPHUS goes up and closes window, c.)

Let me draw this screen between you and the possible draught from yonder door; and where is Miss Vavasour, has she not dawned this morning?

MRS. V. I really don't know. Euphemia, where is Lucy, have you seen her?

MISS E. I have heard—not seen. At present, I believe, she is in the gardens, or the conservatory.

MRS. V. (*r. c.*) By herself, out of doors at this hour?

MISS E. (*r.*) She had made an early breakfast and toilet, and knocked at my door an hour ago, wishing me to accompany her to some favourite points of view, but I was not ready, so she went alone.

MRS. V. What robust habits the girl has, to be sure; acquired them from living as a child so much with Mr. Hawthorne.

LUCY VAVASOUR appears on terrace, c.

LUCY. Down, Bijou—down; don't be naughty; you can't come into the drawing room; don't look sad, little stupid. I shall see you again, and have another romp with you.

MRS. V. Can that be Lucy's voice?

SIR L. Yes; here is Miss Vavasour.

(LUCY opens window, runs in c., and closes it quickly, shutting out a little spaniel)

LUCY. (*c.*) No, no; you must not come in; go away—go away. Ah, Sir Lionel! Mr. Adolphus, good morning. My dear mamma—toilet made, and down, and looking so much better. Ah, how I rejoice! I knew the change would do you good. I vow you have a colour.

MRS. V. (R. C.) I trust not—you alarm me—it must be hectic. You know the country air never agrees with me. Nothing but the necessity of attending the reading of this will could have induced me to risk the illness sure to follow.

LUCY. Oh, don't say so! I am sure that you must derive good from the purer air of the country. I feel as if in another and a much more delightful sphere. The emerald earth and azure sky, the fragrant, and yet nimble, jocund atmosphere, formed, as it were, of beams and ether, dancing from the high-most hill to mingle with the breath of flowers, murmurs of rills, and songs of birds, and all the other healthful, joyous pulses that beat mirthful music in the ear of dear old mother Nature—old, yet ever young—give to me a sort of second-better being.

SIR L. Poetry!

MISS E. Enthusiasm!

MISS V. Nonsense!

ADOL. (*aside, l.*) Rubbish!

SIR L. (L. C.) I sympathise with your admiration of the Woodlands; it is a truly charming retreat.

LUCY. I expected as much from your good taste, Sir Lionel.

SIR L. The shrine is as it should be, in keeping with the divinity.

LUCY. Meaning me. Oh, that compliment is extravagant and premature! I am not mistress of it yet—may never be.

MRS. V. I wish, Lucy, you would not indulge in such surmises; they are very disagreeable, and cannot possibly be correct. Mr. Hawthorne could not have been guilty of such injustice.

LUCY. I shall never accuse him of injustice; he was always good and kind to me; but he may have had relations with stronger claims than mine: we should make some allowance for the interests of other people.

ADOL. (L.) That depends upon the sort of people. Who are the others to whom Miss Vavasour refers?

MRS. V. (R. C.) I did hear from Dr. Playfair, that there were some nobodies summoned to hear the will; but they can only be the recipients of some small legacies.

LUCY. (C.) Your nobodies must be somebodies, my dear mamma. Three or four of the best rooms in the east wing were prepared for them by Dr. Playfair's orders; and I believe they have occupied them since last night.

ADOL. (L.) Heyday! this looks serious.

MRS. V. Low people in the house! what profanation! Please to ring, Augustus, for James. I must enquire who those people are--what they are like.

LUCY. Nay, nay, dear mamma! Will not that be a little unbecoming?

MRS. V. At another time, under other circumstances, it might, but the interests of my child are at stake. There may be some conspiracy at work. I should get all information. Don't you think so, Sir Lionel?

SIR L. Well, it is but to inquire what company have arrived, and in that sense it cannot be considered a breach of etiquette.

ADOL. (*aside*) Money is at stake, and etiquette may go to the devil both for fine lady and punctilious gentlemen. (*rings*) Oh, by all means, let us have James's evidence, its sure to be amusing.

*Enter JAMES, L. 2 E., crosses to L. C.*

JAMES. Ave I the 'onour to be required?

MRS. V. Oh, James, be good enough to inform me who, and what sort of people those strangers are, at present domiciled here.

JAMES. Ham I to report as I think, madam—or has I ham bound out of politeness to speak of any guests received into this noble mansion?

SIR L. Ha! ha! a nice distinction.

ADOL. Yes, yes, a capital opening. I foresee some strange revelations; let us hear his real opinions.

MRS. V. The truth, James, as you think.

ADOL. By all means make a clean breast of it, James.

JAMES. Then in my hopinion, madam, they are a rum lot.

MRS. V. What?

JAMES. I beg parding, but I always speaks graphically, and in keeping with my subject.

OMNES. Ha! ha! ha!

SIR L. (c.) Figuratively, I suppose, he means.

JAMES. Yes, sir; I means figuratively and graphically too. They are, madam, a *h*invansion from the lower regions.

ADOL. Figuratively also; no sulphur or brimstone odour, I trust?

JAMES. (L. C.) Oh, no; but a deal of the clod-hopper odour about them. The fust that arrived was a young man, good looking enough, and not badly dressed, but one could see with 'alf a heye that he was no gentleman.

LUCY. (R. C.) Indeed! why so, James?

JAMES. Why? why because he seemed rather out of conceit with himself, which no gentleman never *his*.

OMNES. Ha! ha! ha! Capital.

ADOL. What a discriminating rogue!

OMNES. Ha! ha!

MRS. V. What was his name?

JAMES. Well, I think I knows, but I aint sure; there is some mystery over that part of my *h*information.

ADOL. The interest increases.

MRS. V. Indeed! pray explain.

JAMES. He *h*arrired in a sort of a gig, or a dog cart, which was driven by a man in a rough dress.

ADOL. His servant!

JAMES. I doubt that, for when he got down he shook hands with him, *snd* said: "Well, good bye Hedmondson," and the other replied: "Good bye, Frank, lad, and I wish you luck. Luck!"

MRS. V. Luck! Vulgar wretch.

JAMES. Werry low, indeed, madam.

ADOL. (L.) But what about the mystery—where's the mystery?

JAMES. Why, sir, when we addressed him as Mr. Frank, he *h*opened his eyes, and looked *h*astonished like, and seemed *ha* going to speak, and then stopped short, and shut up as if afraid to speak, and afterwards muttered something to himself *habout* its being no matter, and discovered soon. Werry mysterious conduct, I call that.

OMNES. Ha! ha! ha!

ADOL. A capital story; quite a goblin legatee.

MRS. V. Now for the others, and don't deal so much in detail.

JAMES. Oh, the others are a greater mystery than the first; there are three of them.

ADOL. All in one; a triple ghost.

JAMES. Oh, no; nothing ghost-like about them; very substantial, especially the *h*elder matron; *h*arrired in a flashy carriage and four, postillion and coachee, but only jobbed from the town where the railway station is; the company, fust a woman—

SIR L. Why not say a lady, James?

JAMES. Well, in compliment to the fair sex, I'll call her a lady; rather a fine figure, but *hexcuse me* *h*inclining, to or upon the hedge of being reckoned among the 'as beens.

OMNES. Ha! ha!

JAMES. Daughter a nice looking girl, very tastefully dressed, and *hexceedingly* genteel *h*in manner compared to the *h*other; *h*and a son in the most vulgar, flashy style of getting *h*up that was ever seen at a country fair, or an 'alf-bred race-course. They made noise enough, and *hexamined* *he*verything. The mother said the room into which they were shown was fitted up with gimeracks and tinsel thingumbobs, not worth much.

OMNES. Ha! ha! ha!

JAMES. The son said the sofa on which he stretched himself was first-rate—a right down plummy one. *Hexcuse* this

language, it was theirs, not mine ; but the daughter said that everything was in exquisite taste.

LUCY. The young lady seems to be a favourite with you, James.

ADOL. A case of love at first sight, eh, James ?

JAMES. Oh, no. I know my station and my dooty to society too well, and I left the room rather than loose my art. Left alone, they wanted refreshment, and rang the bell. When hasked what they required, the old lady said, " Best in the house." I stared, and she said I needn't, for that she could pay for it. As it was late, I henquired which they preferred, dinner or tea. " I'll none of your slops of tea," said the mother ; " I'm right down faint wi' thirst." " So am I," said the son ; " but I want summat to eat." I suggested wine and seltzer water for the lady. " Wine—rubbish ! it always made her ill ; she wanted a mug of beer." I was so horrified, and in such a state of confusion, that I didn't know whether I was standing on my 'ead or my 'eels.

OMNES. Ha ! ha !

ADOL. Poor James. I quite sympathise with you.

JAMES. The young lady, stepping forward, said : " Be kind enough to bring, or order, some refreshments, such as are usually set for a light supper or for luncheon, with a little ale for my brother and mamma ; and, please, a cup of tea or coffee for me."

LUCY. Good little fairy, that was prettily said.

JAMES. Well, I thought so myself, miss, hat the time ; hat least, it was a speechies of refined Henglish that I could understand.

OMNES. Ha ! ha ! ha !

ADOL. Oh ! James, James ! you'll be the death of me.

MRS. V. Well, now for the names of these anomalies.

JAMES. Oh, that the hold lady told me and the other servants twenty times—Mrs. Betsy Wildbriar, her son Robin, and daughter Jenny Wildbriar.

ADOL. Is it possible—our Lancashire witches memoried by months of laughter ? (crosses to L. C.) Sir Lionel, don't you recollect the ball at Preston, on the occasion of the militia being reviewed by old Sir Charles, where we saw those wild roses blossoming in all their native simplicity of blush and fragrance ?

SIR L. I remember something of the occasion, but nothing of the people.

ADOL. Oh, they are presented to the life. James, you are a capital word-painter—quite a character photographist.

JAMES. (L.) As I said before, sir, I 'ave eyes in my 'ead, and wasn't born yesterday.

MRS. V. (R. C.) That will do, James; you may retire for the present.

JAMES. Very well, madam. I think I have opened their keyes, and sustained the dignity of a hupper servant.

*Exit, L. 2 E.*

LUCY. You really know these people?

ADOL. (L.) Met them at the militia ball last summer; they had just inherited—wonderful creatures—perfect studies for an antiquarian—original as Lancashire itself—descended in an unmixed line from the aboriginal British, or the first Saxon squatters on the banks of the Ribble—that is, the mother and son. Sir Lionel, try and remember them?

SIR L. (L. C.) Well, I begin to recall something in connexion with them. Didn't Everard fall in love with the daughter, and get laughed at by us all?

LUCY. Everard in love! That's excellent!

ADOL. To be sure; the girl as James reports, very nice and as ladylike. But the great joke was my telling the mother, in confidence, that Everard was a marquis—the Marquis of Banterdown—ha! ha! travelling incognito for reasons of state, and cautioning her not to address him by his title, or to betray the slightest knowledge to him of the secret.

LUCY. (C.) What a shame! I do not see the object of the ruse.

ADOL. Oh, it was productive of the greatest fun in the world. She first told her daughter, then her son, then all her immediate acquaintances. Then her open admiration of Everard! She addressed him as Mr. Marquis, and then begged his pardon twenty times. Everard was surprised, but never knew at what we laughed, and, for mirth's sake, don't tell him now. Let us keep up the jest here. We shall have such a meeting, as I believe both mother and daughter are in love with him. Ha! ha!

LUCY. I shall be no party to a practical joke.

MRS. V. You will not interfere one way or the other—such vulgar creatures are not worth a moment's consideration for or against.

(knock at door)

MRS. V. What's that?

MISS E. Some one knocked at the door.

MRS. V. Strange—this is not usual with the servants.

ADOL. Oh, it's one of our Wildbriars, or the goblin legatee—let us have them. Come in.

FRANK opens door, L. 2 E.—about to enter, perceives LADIES; hesitates; GENTLEMEN look at him with eye-glasses.

FRANK. (L.) I beg pardon. I—I am afraid that I intrude.

ADOL. Well, you certainly do intrude if you have no further

intelligence or business to communicate, but your suspicions upon that matter.

FRANK. Sir! *I didn't know what to say*

ADOL. Eh! *see you have no principle or backbone here again*

FRANK. Yes—ah! It is very possible; but I thought—that is, I know that I have business, if this is the principal drawing-room, as I was left to surmise. Have I made a mistake? if so, I beg pardon.

ADOL. (L. C.) Why did you not ask guidance and information from one of the servants, instead of troubling ladies and gentlemen to instruct and chaperon you?

FRANK. Sir! *I could hardly tell her what to do*

ADOL. Eh! *but after all, I don't care*

FRANK. (aside) Confound his impudence. Sir, I did ask information from a servant in the hall, at whose want of politeness in not answering, I no longer wonder, having met a greater rudeness in reply from a gentleman in the drawing room. As I know that I have business, and do not come here without authority, it is only in compliment to the ladies present that I retire for the moment, to spare them the annoyance of altercation.

ADOL. Your chivalry is most distingué.

LUCY. Much more than yours, Mr. Adolphus, in my opinion (crosses L.) Stay, sir.

SIR L. (c.) And in mine, too. Courtesy should never be cast aside by the gentleman. (goes back to table, R.)

LUCY. Mr. Frank, I presume?

FRANK. (surprised, L.) Eh! madam. Yes, Frank is my name—that is, one of my names.

ADOL. (aside) Oh, most hybrids have two. (goes to LADIES, R., and then takes chair R. corner)

LUCY. One of the relatives of the late Mr. Hawthorne, summoned to attend the reading of the will?

FRANK. Yes.

LUCY. In that character, let me, as for the time being nominal mistress of this mansion, assure you, that your right to enter this room is equal to that of any one here, and may prove greater. It is the hour appointed for the reading; the trustees and executors have arrived, I believe, and will be here in a few moments. Pray remain. I entreat: you will pain me by refusal. (he bows) Be seated, I beg. On that table you will find the London papers of this morning, I believe.

FRANK. I thank you. Much obliged; sorry to have disturbed you.

LUCY. Pray don't mention it. These gentlemen did not, in the freedom and privacy of an almost family conversation, recollect that strangers had equal business here. I trust under

these circumstances, you will forgive my friend's apparent want of courtesy.

FRANK. Certainly, madam. I never indulge in anger after an explanation. Forget and forgive is a good—Ah! well, I—I am talking. I beg pardon; pray don't let me keep you from your friends. (*she curtsies, and returns to her chair, R.*) Courteous and kind, as beautiful. The mistress? she deserves to be. (*FRANK sits at L. table, and takes up newspaper*)

SIR L. That was admirably done; ladylike in the extreme.

MRS. V. You did quite right, Lucy. Adolphus was too severe; and, as lady of the mansion, it is your place to show courtesy to all under its roof; but you should not have raised hopes in the young man's mind by talking of his possible inheritance.

LUCY. Why not? I was only Mr. Hawthorne's favorite, not his relative.

ADOL. What relative is the newspaper *solitaire*?

MRS. V. I can't imagine. I never heard of Mr. Hawthorne's having any relatives, although he too frequently alluded to his humble origin, and was fond of saying that he had no family connections, and was a self-raised man.

ADOL. Surely, he did not spring into existence from the mouth of a furnace, to engineer his cradle, and model his own pap-spoon?

OMNES. Ha! ha! ha!

LUCY. For shame. I will not listen to a jest in connection with his name. He was a great man of his talent, and a good one of his kind heart, and he always loved me.

SIR L. Who could help that? (L. C.)

ADOL. He was a rich man, and made *himself so*, and therefore devilish clever, I must own.

MRS. WILDBRIAR and JENNY appear in conservatory, R. 3 E.

DR. PLAYFAIR at window, L.

MRS. W. Eh! but it's a bonny, a beautiful place, and summat like Crystal Palace. Eh! there's an old man will tell us the way. Here, you sir, which is road to thingumbob—what do you call 'um room?

DR. P. I object to that method of making an inquiry. I shall not answer any question put in such a barbaric dialect.

MRS. W. What's the man mean? I speak good English, don't I?

DR. P. I object to that assumption. I call it a most inexplicable jargon.

MRS. W. Eh! he's either soft, or right down impudent.

JENNY. No, no; pray, mamma, give me leave. (*crosses to L.*) You will excuse us, sir, we are strangers here; will you be kind

enough to inform me where we shall find, or perhaps, as doubtless you are going there, you will point out the room in which the will is to be read?

DR. P. Don't object to that; nice little girl. This is the room, my dear; permit me—*(offers chairs at back, and advances)* Good morning, good morning—*(LADIES and GENTLEMEN rise)* Miss Vavasour, ladies, gentlemen—so all the parties assembled, and I saw from the terrace, Mr. Cunningham coming up the avenue; we shall read the will at once.

MRS. W. Eh! but my lad, Robin, mun be here first; do you know where he is? I mean Robin, my son, Robin Wildbriar.

DR. P. Don't know—and I don't care. *(aside)*

MRS. W. Drat the lad, I'm sure he's up to some mischief. *(comes a little forward and perceives others)*

DR. P. Shouldn't at all wonder, if he's like his mother.

MRS. W. Eh! what a lot of fine folks, and nobody to introduce us. Jenny, lass, now's time to show your education; just astonish them by doing it first rate. You won't—then I'll do it mysen.

JENNY. No, no, mamma; by and bye; it's not the custom—this is a business meeting—no need of introduction—no acquaintance at present likely to be made; pray be silent and sit down.

MRS. W. Does lass think I'm ashamed of my name or mysen? I'm none going to sit mumchance when there's people to talk to.

JENNY. But they don't know you.

MRS. W. Well, then, I'll make 'em know me. Yon old woman seems to be mother of the family. I'll speak to her first. *(advances, c.)* Dame, how are you? hope you're quite well, as I am, thank heaven. You dunnut know me, nor I you. I'm Mrs. Betsy Wildbriar, fra' Lancashire, and this is my daughter, Jenny—and a nice lass ou is too, and well educated; better than her mother; but then her mother is none the worse for that;—we've comed up here to hear my lad and lass's second cousin's—my old man's that wur, first cousin's will read: not that we care over much for that, for, thanks to my poor dead and gone brother, who died of yellow fever in Ingey, we've got plenty of money of our own, and summat to spare for poor folk. And now I've telled you who and what we are, some one of you do the same by me, and put us all right and straight and comfortable like, that's the way we always do. There, I think I've done that very well. *(crosses, L.)*

ADOL. Isn't she a glorious creature? *(crosses, c.)* Allow me to have the honour of officiating, as I claim to be an old acquaintance of this lady, having had the pleasure of meeting her at Preston on the occasion of the pleasantest evening, thanks to her society, that I ever passed at a militia ball.

MRS. W. Eh!—what the Honorable Mr. Augustus Adolphus, Esquire!—aye, for sure, and how are you, lad? Eh! I'm so glad to see you, man—and here's Jenny,—Jenny, come and shake hands wi' an old friend: (*JENNY advances, L., and curtseys*) and how's the Marquis? Eh! I forgot—how's Mr. Everard Digby?—see how Jenny blushes—eh! she's rather sweet there, I can tell you. Oh, don't need to frown or deny it, lass; you're as good as he—he's but a man after all, if he is a Mar—. Eh! bother that cognito of his. I wur nigh letting eat out o' bag.

*Enter EVERARD, through window—comes down, R.*

ADOL. He's here—and will be delighted to renew his acquaintance. Your charming Preston acquaintances, Mr. Everard!

MRS. W. Eh! it's him, sure enough; and how are you, my lor—Mr. Mar—no, I mean Mr. Everard? you're looking prime. Here's Jenny—same as ever; shy and backward as ever hur wur. Come forward, lass, and speak wi' an old acquaintance.

EVERARD. Ah, Mrs. Wildbriar (*crosses to JENNY, and takes her up to seat, L.*), and my piquante little partner in the Schottische; I am delighted to see you. Pray be seated—permit me—(*leads JENNY to chair, and talks to her, L., at back*)

MRS. W. He's just same as ever—pleasant and social like. Eh! he's a gradely man. I wish he wasn't a Mar—bother that, I'm always boggling over it. If he were only a cotton spinner, or a farmer, he might have her to-morrow, and one hundred thousand pounds.

ADOL. Permit me. Mrs. and Miss Vavasour; Miss Euphemia Cholmondeley; Sir Lionel Norman.

MRS. W. What! the Baronite!—Proud to see you, sir (*he bows formally*) Isn't he well, or has he the rheumatiz in his side, or pains in his back, that he bows so stiff and grand loike?

ADOL. It's his knightly dignity.

MRS. W. Oh, I hate such stuck-ups; the Mar—you know who—is twice as agreeable.

ADOL. (R. C.) Dr. Playfair, who—

DR. P. (*coming down, L.*) Objects to any character-painting, at your hands, sir.

ADOL. And this gentleman—

FRANK. (*rising*) Will introduce himself. I am, Francis, more commonly called Frank Hawthorne.

OMNES. Hawthorne!

MRS. W. Hawthorne? Any relation to my old man's—that wur first cousin—that wur?

FRANK. His nephew.

**M**OMNES, Nephew? *M*iddleton *H*eadiswell—*G*. *W*. *a*ll  
**MRS. W.** Eh! then we are relations, too. You are poor Bill Hawthorne, the poet's son, that used to write in Bolton Luminary, eh! I'm glad to see you, lad, for your fayther's sake; he used to come often to our house when on his tramp rambles; many a meal's meat he's had wi' us, and many a good bright shilling I've lent him; but he drank it all. Don't be ashamed; he was a good-hearted man for all that. And your our Jenny's second cousin? Jenny, come and shake hands wi' your cousin, lass.

**FRANK.** (*going up to JENNY*) Pray don't rise; permit me; I have much pleasure in making your acquaintance. (*shakes hands and returns to his seat*)

**MRS. W.** Oh, I've heard of you—you're a good lad—you always took care o' your mother; and I hope your uncle has taken care of you in his will, as he ought, for you're his own brother's son, and blood's thicker than water.

**JENNY.** (*comes down, c. l.*) Hush, hush, mamma! consider there are others here.

**MRS. W.** Oh, I'll speak my mind, if there were twenty times as many—that I will, for sure. (*goes up stage*)

**MRS. V.** A nephew! I never dreamt of the existence of so near a kin; but the moment I saw that man, I had an instinct of something wrong. He's sure to have been left a large legacy.

**LUCY.** I hope so—in mere justice he should.

*Enter JAMES, l. 2 e., preceding MR. CUNNINGHAM; all rise to receive him.*

**JAMES.** Mr. Cunningham, solicitor, trustee, and *hex-e-cutor*. (*goes up, R.*)

**MR. C.** Good day—good day, ladies and gentlemen.

**DR. P.** (*goes to him, and shakes hands; then returns to his seat*) Ah, Cunningham! I thought that you were going to be late for once.

**MR. C.** (*looking at watch*) Late—late; no—no; minute hand within fifty-five seconds of twelve o'clock—will to be read at twelve—never waste time by coming too soon or too late to an appointment. Are all the parties summoned here?

**DR. P.** I believe so.

**MRS. W.** No—no; my son, Robin, isn't. Drat that boy, wherever can he be? Robin! Robin! (*calling at window, c.*)

**DR. P.** I object to that noise—not here, will must be read without him.

**MRS. W.** Stop—stop a bit; here he is at bottom o'steps. Here, Robin—Robin—this way, lad; they're going to read will here.

*Enter ROBIN, c., up steps of terrace, vulgarly, but flashily dressed; trowsers turned up, and boots muddled.*

MRS. W. Robin, lad, just come in pudding time—as you always do, when pudding's first. Lots o' fine folk here, and some old acquaintances. Take off your hat, make a bow, and I'll introduce you.

ROBIN. (R. c.) Na; I dunnot want no introduction. I can speak for mysen. (*advances, c.*) Lads and lasses, old men and old women, my service to you. I'm Robin Wildbriar; oh, I aint ashamed of my fease, or my name, for I've done nothing as yet to make me, and I don't mean to; and if you can only—all of you—say the same, you may hold up your heads any whur. (*JENNY signs to him*) Eh! all right, lass; and now I've said my say, I'll take a seat. (*takes chair and sits, c.*)

MRS. W. (R. c.) Good lad, couldn't have spoken better if he had studied it out a book. Eh! where have you been your boots are all mud?

ROBIN. Why, you see, I picked up an acquaintance with a terrier pup that belongs to these parts, and he and I have been rat hunting in the stream down there. I wiped boots dry upon the grass of the plat yonder; but if there's any offence I'll take them off, and put them outside. (*JENNY comes down on his L., and signs to forbear*) All right, lass. (*rises*) Mother doesn't know Jenny's dodge and mine—I'll tell her. Mother, stick by me, and do as I do. Jenny and I agreed, as I wasn't up to the ways of the nobs, for her to give me a sign whenever I put my foot in my mouth, and as she's just done it, I'd better shut up. (*all take seats—ROBIN puts his chair back*)

DR. P. Silence for Mr. Cunningham.

MRS. V. (*seated R.*) One moment. James, you can leave the room.

JAMES. I beg parding, but as I was five years in the service of the lamented George Hawthorne, Esq., I thought it just possible that I might ave a hinterest, a slight one, of course, in the will.

ROBIN. Didn't he pay your wages, man?

MRS. W. That's right lad—an impudent lacquey.

(*JENNY signals again*)

ROBIN. Hold hard, mother; Jenny's tipped the wink.

MR. C. MRS. W. EVERARD.

JAMES. (*table*) ROBIN. (*table*)

SIR L. JENNY.

MRS. V.

MISS E. (*table*)

AUGUSTUS.

LUCY.

(*table*)

FRANK.

DR. P.

MR. C. James, you are not particularised in the will, I know; as I drew it up.

JAMES. That's enough. (*aside as he crosses to L.*) You drew it up; you drawed it out, you mean; but I thought as much, as soon as I saw his low connexions harrive. *Hingratitude halways accompanys ignorance.* *Exit, L. 2 E.*

MR. C. As the will will be hereafter open to every one's perusal, I do not think it necessary to read the somewhat lengthy preamble, which sets forth the testator's history, and some motives which induced the disposition made by him of his property.

MRS. W. Aye, don't give us any preamble.

ROBIN. Come to the point, lad.

JENNY. Hush, hush.

MR. C. I shall only read the marginal abstract of its several bequests, and thus dispensing with the lengthy forms and technicalities, put you in immediate possession of the whole purport.

MRS. W. Speak plain English, man, and let us ha' no clim-clavers.

ROBIN. Shut up, mother.

MRS. W. I shan't; and you had better not insult me before people, or I'll give thee a clout on the side of the yead.

DR. P. Silence, woman!

MRS. W. (*coming down, c.*) Woman!—who do you call woman? I'm as good as you, and have as much money—may be more; I dunnot care none for your will. I can do about it, and if you speak two words more, I'll go out o' the house, now then.

ROBIN. I say, you've napped it, ould chap; haw, haw! (*to DR. PLAYFAIR—LUCY rises and goes to MRS. WILDBRIAR*)

LUCY. Pray excuse the doctor, madam; he is one of the executors, and is only anxious that the will may be read without interruption, and I am sure, as a good lady, you will excuse him, and oblige us all by listening in silence. (*goes back to seat*)

MRS. W. You're right, lass. I'll do anything for fair words, but I wunnot be driven.

ROBIN. Na, I'm sure ou wunnot; mother's like a pig feyther had—(*JENNY checks him*) All right, lass—mum.

MR. C. (*reads*) "I, George Hawthorne, formerly of Alnwick, Northumberland, and now of the Woodlands, Dorsetshire, being of sound mind, declare this to be my last will and testament, and do hereby give, will, and bequeath all and several of the various sums to the parties herein named and described in this my will. Imprimis.—To my second cousin, Robin Wildbriar—"

ROBIN. That's me.

MRS. C. "And his sister Jane, or Jenny Wildbriar——"

MRS. W. My lad and lass first.

MR. C. "The sum of two thousand pounds each."

ROBIN. Well, we could ha' done without that.

MRS. W. It isn't much, but it's a summat, lad, as a token of remembrance; we're independent, thanks to my brother. (LUCY casts a glance at MRS. WILDBRIAR) All right, lass; (to LUCY) I'll say no more.

MR. C. "Items—To my old and valued friends, John Playfair and William Cunningham, whom I appoint joint trustees and executors of my will, the sums of two thousand pounds each."

ROBIN. That's as much as he has given us, his cousins.

MRS. W. May be they want it, poor creatures, they look shabby enough.

MR. C. "Item—To Mrs. Sophonisba Vavasour, relict of the late Henry Vavasour, the sum of two thousand pounds."

ROBIN. That makes ten thousand pounds in all as yet.

MR. C. "Item—To my newhew, Francis Hawthorne——"

ROBIN. Eh, that be my cousin—which be he? (MRS. WILDBRIAR points to FRANK, ROBIN rises and goes to him) I mun shake hands wi' him; how is thee, lad?—I'm glad to see thee; I am for sure. (shakes hands with FRANK)

DR. P. Silence, and sit down.

ROBIN. I mun speak to my cousin.

DR. P. Sit down; sit down do—or leave the room.

MR. C. Sit down; sit down, sir.

ROBIN. Get off wi' you! (sits down sulkily)

MR. C. "Item—To my nephew, Francis Hawthorne, a life interest, chargeable upon the general estate, of three hundred pounds per annum."

MRS. V. I breathe again.

SIR L. So do I. The heiress is now clear.

MRS. W. And is that all to his own nephew?—shame of hissen.

JENNY. Hush—hush, mamma.

MRS. W. I cannot—I wunnot; it's a shame, and I'll give him summat mysen.

ROBIN. So will I; we munnot see cousin wronged. Cheer up, lad.

MRS. C. "Item—To my second wife's niece and long adopted daughter, Lucy Vavasour, a life interest, chargeable upon the general estate, of five hundred pounds per annum."

MRS. W. Why he's given her more than his nephew.

MRS. V. Great heaven, five hundred pounds a year, is that all? My poor child! And what becomes of the rest?

ADOL. I guess; an hospital for ricketty engineers.

SIR L. Or a bluecoat school for miners' illegitimate.

MR. C. "And all the remainder of my property and

personal estate, inclusive of the mansion and manor of the Woodlands, the several farms and rent-charges attached, and held under the same freehold, together with various sums of money vested in railway scrip, government securities, Three per Cent. Consols, Exchequer Bonds, and Bank Stock, &c., &c.—”

(DR. P. *aside to EVERARD*) Nearly a million.

MR. C. “I give, will, and bequeath—ahem!”

OMNES. To—to whom?

MR. C. “Jointly—to the said Francis Hawthorne and Lucy Vavasour, on condition of their entering into and fulfilling a contract of marriage within six months from the date of the publication of this my will.”

MRS. W. Eh! that's capital!

ROBIN. First-rate!

ADOL. Singular!

MISS E. Wonderful!

MRS. V. Horrible!

SIR L. Damnable!

MR. C. “And in the event of the said Francis Hawthorne refusing to comply with the prescribed condition, I give, will, and bequeath the whole of the above-named property to the said Lucy Vavasour, her lawful heirs and executors.

ROBIN. He'll be none such a fou—eh, lad?

MR. C. “Also, in the event of the said Lucy Vavasour declining to contract the conditional marriage, I give, will, and bequeath the whole of the said property to the said Francis Hawthorne, his lawful heirs and executors.”

MRS. W. She'll never be so soft—eh, lass?

MR. C. “And in the double event of the said Francis Hawthorne and Lucy Vavasour mutually declining to accept of the condition, I give, will, and bequeath the whole of my property and estate, subject only to the payment of the aforesaid legacies and annuities, in trust, to my executors, to build and endow a foundation school and hospital, for the pauper orphans of miners, born in the neighbourhood of Alnwick, Northumberland, subject to the annexed rule and conditions.” Which I presume, it is quite useless for me to read to the present company. And now, there are six months, short of one hour, left for the interested parties to determine their acceptance or rejection of the condition; during which, this mansion, with its usual establishment of servants, &c., will be at their service, for the entertainment of their friends and families, in accordance with the testator's directions to the executor's, endorsed upon this his will.

(*all rise and put back their chairs except LUCY and FRANK,  
who sit on opposite sides of stage, L. C. and R. C.*)

MRS. V. My poor child!—disposed of!—doomed!

LUCY. No! neither disposed of, nor doomed. I am still mistress of myself; and who knows—it may be for the best?

MRS. W. I wish you joy!

DR. P. Joy—joy!

FRANK. Joy—joy! who knows—it may be misery?

END OF ACT I.

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A lapse of three months is supposed to have occurred.

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## ACT II.

*Scene same as in Act I.*

*Enter JAMES and JEMIMA, R.*

JAMES. Yes, Miss Jemima Simperton, *h*of all the *h*extraordinary positions that a *h*upper servant has ever been placed in, mine is the most trying and *h*imical to my feelings. *H*ever since that *h*eccentric will of the formerly late lamented, but now *h*ungretted George Hawthorne, Esq., was promulgated, I ave been in perpetual 'ot water. How can a *h*upper servant preserve his dignity to the lowers, when he don't know who is his master, and when he has to deliver his *h*orders as from one to the *h*adherents of the other?

JEMIMA. It is very difficult indeed; and nobody but yourself, Mr. James, could manage to preserve any appearance of regularity in a house under such divided control. As in the play, we have the Capulets and Montagues on each side, never meeting but to wrangle.

JAMES. *H*excuse me, but the play aint a comparison at all—*h*it's *h*only *h*image is the House of Commons, with two *h*oppositions, a *h*independent country party, and some *h*outsiders, that don't know their own minds; and I'm in the position of the unfortunate Speaker, who is obliged to listen to all the jaw (eloquence, I should have said, of the *h*uppers—the lords), and for the sake of the respectability of the 'ouse itself, is compelled to keep up a *h*imposing *h*aspect of attention, and a *h*wigilant *h*eye on the uproarious junior, and *H*irish members; and I see *h*o prospect of a coalition neither; the

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R.

ADOLPHUS.

L

ROBIN. JENNY. EVERARD.

MISS E. SIR L.

MRS. V. LUCY. MR. C.

MRS. W. FRANK. DR. P.

leaders—as the leaders always is—are too polite to look each other in the face.

JEMIMA. (R.) Miss Lucy will never marry Mr. Hawthorne, of that I am sure: she was always partial to the baronet, and you see he is still here and attentive.

JAMES. (L.) So he is; but he is only a trimming, I can see, and haint popped the question yet, and never will, if she loses the fortune: he's poor, and his 'igh blood is worth a fortune, and he'll not sacrifice at the 'ymenial halter unless Plutus gives away the bride.

JEMIMA. What a fine figure of speech to be sure. I should have thought that he was above mercenary motives.

JAMES. So he is; hit's his dignity that requires to be upheld by the needful, and he must victimize his affections to the hinity of the baronetey, which is mortgaged to the very verge of bankruptcy.

JEMIMA. If Mr. Hawthorne were only a gentleman now, he might be induced to sacrifice the fortune and decline the condition.

JAMES. If he did he would prove himself a *demned* fool.

JEMIMA. Mr. James!

JAMES. Hexcuse the vigorous expression; but even an haristocrat of the purest Norman blood could not be expected to resign his claim to such an inheritance on account of being inimical to the co-heiress. The days of such high-flown sentiments and hactions is faded and gone. We sacrifice our haffects, but we never sacrifice our worldly interests. It haint the fashion in hupper, or even in middle life. Such things are only heard of now in *Heast hend* melo-dramas.

JEMIMA. What a nice little bit of flirtation there seems to be going on between Mr. Everard Digby and Miss Jenny Wild-briar.

JAMES. I 'ave observed that, and I hardly think it fair. She is the only member of her family that's deserving of respect, and he ought not to try and turn the girl's head if he don't mean marriage, which her low birth and connections would make disreputable for a barrister so highly connected.

JEMIMA. I don't know that; he seems very much smitten, and he's kept in countenance by the Honorable Augustus Adolphus, who has begun to ogle that vulgar old woman, the mother, and Miss Euphemia Cholmondeley, who actually affects a sentimental attachment towards the cub of a son.

JAMES. You 'orrify and astonish me with the noos. What is the haristocracy coming to after that? Pounds, shillings, and pence is a hobject—as ever been, I know, with the best of us—but some regard for position, for helegance, hought to accompany it. Miss Jemima, if such should be the case—I—I

shall leave the *haristocracy* to hits fate, and whilst I can preserve some recollection of its ancient dignity, retire into private life, and not *heven* hopen an 'otel nor a liquor waults. As my favorite *hauthor* says—

“ Let wealth and commerce—arts and science—die,  
“ But give us still our old nobility.”

*Exeunt*, L. 1 E.

FRANK HAWTHORNE *enters from library*, L. 3 E. *He looks round, then comes down and gazes a few moments on the picture of Lucy*, R.

FRANK. Like; very like—and oh, how beautiful! Not the beauty that dazzles at the first glance—dulls upon the second—to grow vapid, vulgar, at the third—the rarer beauty of expression, whose fascination steals over you as you gaze, and seems to wile away your soul. And yet, I think a high spirit lightens in those eyes. She will not sell herself for gold, she will sooner accept poverty. How to win her confidence, to read her heart, to conquer it? No way. She must hate me as the imposed and conditional husband, linked to no generosity, the representative of the niggard doubt that tasked the golden boon. Seldom as we meet, and quickly as we turn from each other, as by some repellent instinct, I have noted that her cheek grows pale, and despite of her self-control, an expression of repugnance—a shudder passes over her form. Well, well, the time will soon come to spare her that; and yet would I give the world to prolong the ordeal that sometimes yields her to my eyes. Yes, yes, to win her smile, I think I could play slave and fool unto the very verge of baseness.

*Enter DR. PLAYFAIR, L.*

DR. P. Umph! in the absence of the original, I see you make love to the portrait.

FRANK. I—I? oh, no. I am an admirer of good pictures, and I was just noticing the exquisite finish of this portrait. I presume, from the style, painted by—by Landseer.

DR. P. I object to that. If you had looked at the whole picture instead of the face only, you would have remarked that there was no dog in it, and therefore not likely to be by Landseer, who in my opinion in addition to being one of the best painters, is the greatest satirist of the age, for he never paints man or woman unaccompanied by a puppy. (FRANK *laughs*) There, I've got you nicely out of your anger, and your shame too. I object to both; particularly to the latter. No reason to be ashamed of trying to scrape acquaintance with your future wife's character through the medium of her portrait. As yet

you haven't had much chance of studying the original: you ought—time's getting on.

FRANK. (R.) This gentleman may mean well, but he lays too rough a hand upon the wound to be entrusted with its cure. Sir, if you speak in badinage, you are quite welcome to a laugh at my expense; if seriously, allow me to say, not in anger but earnestly, that this is one of the subjects upon which I neither give confidence nor take advice. As for the picture, if you will look at the scroll work in the left corner, you will find Edwin Landseer's pencilled autograph, who, in this instance as I dare say in many others, having to paint a truly beautiful woman, thought but of his subject, and left—the puppy out.

*Exit, R. 3 E.*

DR. P. Out—outside I suppose the fellow means, implying me. I'm afraid it's a truth. I have no business to bark at his heels, since he objects to it. Confound him! he always gets the better of me at the wind-up of a dispute, and hang me if I don't begin to feel a friendship for him. I shan't be able to object to anything he says by and bye.

*Enter LUCY, MRS. VAVASOUR, and SIR LIONEL, R. 1 E.*

LUCY. (L. C.) Oh, here is Dr. Playfair, and he will give us his advice.

DR. P. I object to that. Never give advice—it's a complete waste of time and thought; for although everybody asks and endeavours to extort it, no one ever allows it to exercise the slightest influence upon purpose or opinion.

LUCY. That may be the rule, Doctor, and you will allow me to be the exception.

DR. P. I object to that. Why should you be a greater fool than your neighbour, as you must be if you permitted anybody's judgment but your own to guide your conduct?

LUCY. Well, but, Doctor, you and I have always been friends, and surely I may task your kindness to the extent of an opinion upon a matter that deeply affects my welfare.

DR. P. (L.) Well, I don't object to that; you are one of the very few people I like, so now propound your problem, and I'll solve it if I can.

LUCY. Well, the question is, what am I to do with him?

DR. P. Him—and who is Mr. Him? Your lap-dog, with the snuffles in his nose, or your cast-off beau, with the jaundice in the whites of his eyes?

LUCY. Oh, for shame! I am serious, and you know very well the disagreeable him of whom I speak.

DR. P. I object to that, because I don't.

MRS. V. It's Mr. Hawthorne. We want to devise some means of preserving the property, and disposing of him.

DR. P. The readiest way to dispose of him, is to marry him.  
MRS. V. You wouldn't have my daughter marry a clod?

DR. P. Why not?—It was a clod of the same clay that made all the money; but I object to the term clod, it's not apposite. If you will be figurative, call them nuggets.

OMNES. Ha! ha! ha!

LUCY. Ah, well, the particular nugget that remains I don't like.

DR. P. Well, do as I tell my squeamish patients with a draught or a pill, gulp it, and take the sugar after.

LUCY. Oh, to me, this is rude and unkind.

DR. P. So it is, and I beg pardon. If you really wish to keep the property—

MRS. V. Oh, that doesn't admit of a question. (*seats herself at R. table*)

DR. P. And to get rid of Hawthorne?

LUCY. That I certainly do.

DR. P. You must offend him, and incur his dislike.

LUCY. Surely I have done that by avoiding him.

DR. P. I object to that—worst way in the world; he was rather struck with you, and sees only the romance of the tie formed by the will. He's in love with you: I caught him a few moments since gazing in silent devotion on that picture of yours;—he's always to be found on the terrace, or at one of the windows, slyly peering at you every time you go out into the grounds; in fact, he watches and worships your rising and setting, as a fire-worshipper the sun, or a lunatic the moon.

MRS. V. (R. C.) Vulgar creature!

SIR L. (at table, R.) Impudent puppy!

LUCY. (L. C.) Poor fellow!

DR. P. (aside) She pities him; and I don't object to that. He dreams of you in your retirement; and his fancy makes you twice as handsome as you are.

LUCY. (curtseying) Thank you, doctor.

SIR L. (comes down, R.) Surely—

LUCY. Don't speak, Sir Lionel. I know you were going to say that that is scarcely possible.

DR. P. Bosh!

(SIR LIONEL goes to table, R.)

LUCY. Ha, ha! you hear! but don't interfere—the doctor and I are old friends.

DR. P. And gives you four times the number of virtues and graces that any woman possibly can possess. In short, he idealizes you into a divinity; and all this is due to your avoidance.

LUCY. Now, doctor, you are really too ungallant. Surely you do not mean to imply that my presence must necessarily

dissipate any good opinion that may have been previously formed of me?

DR. P. That depends upon your conduct. He's sensitive and high-minded, and seems to have a good stock of common sense; you have only to surprise him with a little drawing-room coquetry; alarm him with an exhibition of frivolity; vex him with some heartless badinage; and season the whole with a huge admixture of twaddle (you must know how, having lived so long in good society); and, my life on it, he'll reject you.

LUCY. (L. C.) Ha! ha! ha! the doctor's recipe for getting rid of a sensible, sensitive, high-minded man.

DR. P. (*aside*) About whom you begin to feel an interest, despite of your professed dislike. It will bring them together; and if she likes him, she will soon give over playing a part.

LUCY. Well, I'll do it; that is, I'll try to conceal my natural graces—ahem, doctor—and to assume as many disagreeable airs and follies as the aforesaid will permit.

SIR L. But what if the fellow should prove, as I think, a mere simpleton, and not take umbrage at this treatment?

LUCY. As a dernier resort, I can always decline.

MRS. V. (*rises*) And lose the property, my child! you must not entertain such an idea.

SIR L. (*aside*) No, no; for then to decline would be my dernier resort.

DR. P. He's coming this way to have another gaze at the picture. Present him the original, and commence your game.

LUCY. Well, if it must be done, the sooner it is got over the better.

SIR L. Shall we remain?

LUCY. Oh no! you must be my reserve corps, upon whose aid I can fall back, if necessary; at first, I must attack the enemy single-handed.

DR. P. You'll find him a formidable foe, or I am much mistaken; he has always put me to the rout.

*Exit*, L.

*Exeunt SIR LIONEL and MRS. VAVASOUR, R.*

LUCY. Dear me! Now that I am alone, I begin to feel a little nervous, and my heart flutters. I wish I had not heard of his admiration of my portrait, or the doctor's encomiums on his good sense. It is not pleasant to be obliged to incur any sensible person's contempt. I feel a great disposition to run away. No, no—I am too English for that. He must not see me when he enters, or perhaps he'll run away. I'll entrench myself in this chair, and not open fire until the enemy is within range. (*she sits in large easy chair, L. C.*)

*Enter FRANK, R. 3 E. from conservatory, looks round, and comes down as before, R.*

LUCY. It is true—my portrait, sure enough, is the object of his attention.

FRANK. Heigho!

LUCY. He sighs, poor fellow—fool, I should say; and yet I pity him. Heigho!

FRANK. (*overhearing, turns and perceives her*) Miss Vavasour!

LUCY. La! Mr. Hawthorne, is it you? (*smiles graciously*)

FRANK. Yes; I beg your pardon; I didn't know that you were here—I shall retire.

LUCY. Oh, pray do not! Is my company so very—very disagreeable, that you can't endure it for a moment or two?

FRANK. Oh, no—no. Can it be possible you think that such is my feeling?

LUCY. I must think so, if you continue to run away every time we chance to meet.

FRANK. True—true; but I was only fearful of intruding upon you an unwelcome presence.

LUCY. Oh, that doesn't matter; it is—heigho!—our duty to become acquainted. It is not, Mr.—Mr. Hawthorne?

FRANK. Yes; that is, if it is your pleasure.

LUCY. Oh, I dare say I shall have much pleasure, if you'll only permit me. Pray, be seated. (*he looks awkwardly around*) Do sit down.

FRANK. (*taking a chair at a distance, R.*) There is something under this sudden change.

LUCY. I can't look at him. Excuse me, will you do me the favour to hand me my fan? You will find it on the table near you. (*he rises and gives it, and returns to his chair*) Thank you; I am sorry to trouble you, but I'm so affected with *ennui* this morning, that I can't bear to get out of my chair, and in a *tête-à-tête* with a gentleman, I can never speak, or even look at him, save from behind my fan. (*aside*) He's rather good-looking, but awkward to a degree.

FRANK. My idol's feet, I begin to fear, are made of clay. Or is this a ruse? If so, I'll balk it. She thinks me fool. I'll play the fool.

LUCY. I saw you looking at my portrait. Do you think it like?

FRANK. I did—very like.

LUCY. Did, but don't. I'm getting on famously. Didn't you think it rather dreamy-looking with that sort of expression the critics term *ideal*, but which I call moonishness?

FRANK. (*seated R.*) I think it conveys the expression of which you speak.

LUCY. Which does he mean, I wonder? Oh! then it must

be very unlike me, for I'm not in the least moonish or poetical. Will you pardon me? I have some crochet work in that little basket on the table over there, which you will favour me by handing. (*he rises and brings it from upper table, R., takes fan, and places it on table*) I can work now, as I have got rid of the nervousness consequent upon our first *tête-à-tête*. You needn't wander all the way back to that distant chair, there is one close by.

FRANK. (*aside*) This is barefaced coquetry, or it masks some designs. Thank you—as you please. (*takes chair R. C., and seats himself*)

LUCY. As I please! How gawkily done. You admire the Woodlands?

FRANK. Much. Eh!—that is, I think it a nice place enough.

LUCY. Nice place! and that is all he has to say of my beautiful Woodlands. He's either soulless, or vexed; so much the better. Will you excuse me again? I think I should prefer my embroidery to this crotchet work, Mr. Hawthorne, you'll find a frame and design on that table to my left hand. I can't shake off this *ennui* to-day, and am as changeful in desire as a child. I've all my life been a spoilt one.

FRANK. (*gets embroidery frame from L. table, and comes down L.—aside*) So it would appear; and yet there is a soul-like light flashing from under those half-closed eyes—there is a melody of tenderness rippling through those affected tones, that, like spells, charm me into yielding to this folly.

LUCY. (*seated, L. C., pouting*) No silk on the reel!—oh! here is a skein. Ahem! Mr. Hawthorne, will you think it too feminine a task to hold it on your hands whilst I wind? Hercules, or some very heroic gentleman of olden time, I believe, did something like it.

FRANK. (*L.—aside*) I don't wonder at him, if Omphale was anything like you.

(*he holds his hands awkwardly and close together, she puts them apart—he then raises them very high and afterwards drops very low*)

LUCY. You are too tall, or you hold your hands too high—and now too low. See, there is a footstool upon which you can seat yourself. (*pushing footstool towards him—he sits on low stool, L.*) Docile and patient as a spaniel. (*winds silk, and labours to restrain laughter*) Ha! ha! ha! Excuse me, Mr. Hawthorne, but—but you do look so ridiculous. Ha! ha! ha!

FRANK. (*on the stool*) I dare say that I do. Ha! ha! ha!

LUCY. Oh! you can be good-tempered enough to laugh at yourself.

**FRANK.** Perhaps I should not, if I had not perceived almost from the first that you were acting a part, and disguising your real nature for some purpose.

**LUCY.** Pray pardon me, sir, I confess it. (*rises, crosses, R. C.*)

**LUCY.** You do? Ah! that is honest, and I most sincerely admire your frankness, and forgive the ruse. (*rises*)

**LUCY.** Oh, dear, what have I done? I'm spoiling all. Yes —yes, I had a motive—a purpose—one I didn't mean to tell you, though; but I suppose I must, now. I—I wanted to see —to see how you would go in harness.

**FRANK.** (*aside*) Harness! what does she mean?

**LUCY.** Yes, you know that under our circumstances it wouldn't be comfortable to find ourselves straining to go separate roads when we are harnessed.

**FRANK.** Excuse me, but I don't understand what you mean by being harnessed.

**LUCY.** Why, married, to be sure. The will says we are to be; and what is marriage, but the fettering of two parties together whose tastes generally differ, but whose interest and convenience it is to travel the same road, and not quarrel by the way.

**FRANK.** Dare I tell you what I think marriage to be?

**LUCY.** Oh! yes, I should like to know your ideas. I have told you mine.

**FRANK.** Pardon me, I think not. You have but echoed the cant of the *blazé* inconstants—the reckless *roués* of the world—who seek to bury principle in the grave of passion. Marriage is at once the most solemn and the most beautiful mystery of this life; and as among nations, a reverence for its sacredness, as an indissoluble, an untransgressible bond between two beings, and *only* two, is the highest test of civilization, so the nobler the estimate individual man or woman forms of its obligations, the higher must each be lifted in the scale of humanity. Do you not believe me?

**LUCY.** I do, I do, with all my heart and soul.

**FRANK.** Ah! I thought so.

**LUCY.** Oh! I'm ensnared again! I can't play the game any longer without aid. (*laugh outside, R.*) Ah! here comes that Mr. Adolphus, and my beau ideal of a preux chevalier, Sir Lionel Norman.

*Enter MRS. VAVASOUR. AUGUSTUS, and SIR LIONEL, R. 1 E.*

**ADOL.** Ha! ha! a capital design! I'm so glad that you have made me a party to the joke.

**MRS. V.** (*R. C.*) Yes, it's a disagreeable necessity (*affecting surprise*) What, Lucy and Mr. Hawthorne *tête-à-tête*?

LUCY Yes, mamma : you know it is necessary that we should become acquainted.

FRANK. So, the play begins again.

ADOL. Oh, yes ! Let people be ever so unlikely to be found together after marriage, it is customary to preface the ceremony with a little show of sociality.

MRS. V. Oh, of course ; we do as we like afterwards. He can speak tolerable English, I suppose. (*seats herself*)

LUCY. Oh, yes, mamma ; he speaks very well, and is not near so dull as you might imagine. (*seated*)

FRANK. Is this said to test the extent of my love, or to offend me ?

LUCY. He bears that ; his spirit has sunk many fathoms deep in love or stupidity.

ADOL. As he has just come up, as it were, from the other world, no doubt you found the gentleman's conversation highly entertaining ?

SIR L. Yes ; of its very novelty, however bizarre, it must have served to amuse.

LUCY. Oh, dear, no ! it was edifying. Mr. Hawthorne is rather of a serious bent of mind ; and on the solemn subject of marriage, did not fail to improve the occasion.

OMNES. Ha ! ha ! ha !

ADOL. What, a Spurgeonite ! imbued with the afflatus of the conventicle !—the large, the very large conventicle ! Catch-em-alive, oh ! He would make thee a sister of grace before leading thee to the tabernacle. (*goes up L.*)

OMNES. Ha ! ha ! ha ! (*FRANK laughs heartily*)

MRS. V. The fool laughs at himself.

SIR L. Really, that pathetic mingling of piety and passion—of the parson in the Romeo—the puritan in the Corydon—seems to me as the most incongruous—the most laughable of bipeds.

ADOL. I have never beheld one when the spirit moved : I should so like to hear him hold forth.

SIR L. (*crosses to FRANK*) Perhaps the gentleman will oblige us ?

ADOL. He doesn't understand, and is silent.

SIR L. I addressed you, sir.

FRANK. Did you ? Then allow me to say, that I could not have imagined so fine a gentlemen capable of such point blank rudeness.

ADOL. Oh ! I vow he's angry ! (*goes to FRANK*) Now, my dear fellow, be good humoured. You really mustn't attempt to sermonize us. (*turns up stage*)

SIR L. No ; If you can't lightly give and take, nor yet endure the privileged sarcasms—the badinage of drawing-

room society—you had better not venture within its pale.  
(*goes up, R., and sits*)

LUCY. (*crosses to FRANK*) Sir Lionel is quite right; you must not lose your temper at a little banter: if you can't reply in the same spirit, you had better hold your tongue. (*crosses, R.*) Sir Lionel, I go to make my toilet for our drive. Mr. Hawthorne, we shall meet again soon, I hope. Why, what's the matter? (*returns, L.*) You are not jealous of my going to take a drive with Sir Lionel?—you must not, because I like Sir Lionel, and I hate jealousy. I shall expect you to prove a very gentlemanly husband, and to forgive all my caprices and follies, and extravagancies—and I'm over burdened with them, I can assure you; if you doubt it, ask my friends yonder, and they'll give me such a character: even Sir Lionel will tell you that I am very captious; but then, you know, I have always had my own way, and we are to have so much money, that were I even wicked, you could not help but have me. How you look! Oh, no! I don't mean quite that; I am not so unwomanly.

FRANK. I thought not.

LUCY. There, I've forgot again; (*crosses, R.*) so be good humoured when next we meet, and we may be good friends in—in time. If that doesn't determine him to reject me, my game is played out.

*Exeunt MRS. VAVASOUR and LUCY, R. 1 E.*

FRANK. We may be good friends in time—never, never—did you mean what you say? but you don't—you don't; your lips scorn the words that cross them, and your eyes recant them quicker than your lips pronounce, or love conspires with thee to make me slave and fool. *Exit into library, L. 3 E.*

SIR L. The fellow is a complete puzzle; he's not likely to be shaken off.

ADOL. I'm afraid not, and your chance of adding the Woodlands to the entail of the baronetcy is but slight, but you will have a beautiful wife.

SIR L. (*R.*) Perhaps; but she must be an heiress.

ADOL. (*L. C.*) Oh, lady heiresses are few and far between. Our friend, the Marquis of Banterdown, has wisely enough marked down the nabob's niece.

*FRANK re-enters, to take his hat and gloves from table—they do not perceive him)*

SIR L. She is a very nice little girl. (*seated*) How she ever grew upon the Wildbriar tree is a puzzle; but the mother and son are insufferable.

ADOL. Oh, the Wildbriars are not so bad after all. Country bred, with amiable aspirations.

SIR L. Ah, you have been taken into confidence, Adolphus—and see them by the light of a lac of rupees.

ADOL. Ah, well, their manners are certainly rustic—I may say very rustic—but time will amend these—must, for the widow has been left £250,000.

SIR L. You astonish me! £250,000? Why, that in amount treads upon the heels of the Hawthorne fortune.

ADOL. Yes, she talks of giving son and daughter each a hundred thousand, and of keeping fifty for herself, to make presents to her grandchildren, when such buds blossom.

SIR L. Well, although whilst a hope remains of her inheriting, I'm the Endymion proper, most professedly a minion of our Diana of the Woodlands, I think I could contentedly retire from the chase, if that little Hebe, Miss Wildbriar, were to be caught and hid away from her Satyr-like kindred.

FRANK. Ahem! (*they start and turn*) Good morning, gentlemen.

*Exit, L. 3 E.*

SIR L. (*rises*) Confound it, that fellow here? I hope he has not overheard my last remark.

ADOL. (*rises*) If he has, what does it matter; he can't translate it. Your classical metaphor were as much a riddle to him, as Greek proved to the majority of a reformed House of Commons.

SIR L. Ha! ha! true, it is likely; but Miss Vavasour's toilet is, I dare say, complete.

ADOL. And Diana awaits her Endymion.

*Exeunt SIR LIONEL, R., ADOLPHUS, L.*

SCENE SECOND.—*A Chamber (1st grooves).*

*Enter MRS. WILDBRIAR, R.*

MRS. W. Here, Jenny, Jenny, lass; Rob, Rob, where are you? Drat that lad and lass, they're always out of the way when I want them.

*Enter ADOLPHUS, L. 1 E.*

ADOL. Did I not hear Mrs. Wildbriar's voice? Great heaven! whom do I behold; surely my ear must have deceived me, and yet the contour, the figure can only belong to one—it is Mrs. Wildbriar.

MRS. W. Yes; I'm mysen sure enough. What is't makes man doubt?

ADOL. This magnificent toilet has so added to your natural advantages, that, joined, they took me by surprise; and I fancied I beheld a still more beautiful woman.

MRS. W. Get away wi' you. I'm well enough, but I'm not

so soft as to swallow all that blarney ; I don't like saft sawder, so ha' done wi' it.

ADOL. I beg your pardon, but I assure you that that dress becomes you amazingly.

MRS. W. Oh, the dress : well, I think it does favor itsen—it ought, for it cost enough of money. Eh ! I dunnot mind telling you it took a start out of me when it was first brought home. My servant lass had put it out in the middle of my bedroom, and it was standing up of itsen, and spread out, so that when I saw it, I thought some one was inside, and going to run away wi' it, and I shrieked out for help—eh ! didn't my lad and lass laugh at me—it was the iron thingamygigs inside—they call 'em crinoline—that stuck it out like a balloon, and I wouldn't wear none o' them : I couldn't ha' gotten out of door if I had put it on ; I'm sure I couldn't, I'm big enough 'about.

ADOL. Oh ! you are by no means remarkably *embonpoint*.

MRS. W. That's French for plump, isn't it ? I've heard it before from my Jenny. Eh ! I was as slim as she is when I married my poor old man ; he wouldn't know me now were he alive.

ADOL. He must have been a very happy man. Heigho !

MRS. W. What's the matter wi' the man, aint you well, that you breathe so hard?—hast the cholic-spasm, or a stitch in thy side ? You can cure either immediately by taking a sup of burnt brandy.

ADOL. Oh, no ; it's an affection of the heart.

MRS. W. Heartburn, mayhap ?

ADOL. Yes, my heart does burn.

MRS. W. Well, a little soda, or a bit of magnesia, will make that all right ; if they're not handy, nibble a bit of chalk. I often do myself.

ADOL. (*aside*) Ugh ! sentiment here is thrown away ; where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise. No, no, my dear madam, it was a flutter of the heart, to which I am always subject—(*aside*) in the neighbourhood of any woman worth a certain number of thousands.

MRS. W. Flutter of the heart, eh ? I never had that but once, when I saw my old man in company with another lass, just a day before he got my leave to put up the askings ; and he owned to me after that, that he did it on purpose to make me not hold him too cheap. Ah ! he was a sly chap, my mestér, but a good man for all that. But tell me, have you seen my lad or lass anywhere ?

ADOL. I think Miss Wildbriar is walking in the avenue with Mr. Everard Digby.

MRS. W. With the marquis ? I'm afraid he'll turn the girl's head ; if he doesn't mean to marry her it's a great shame, and

so I'll quickly tell him. She's as good as he, if he were twice a marquis, and may be has more money; for I've heard that some of these lords and ladies are just as poor as they are proud. (*ADOLPHUS looks abashed, thinking the conversation levelled at him*) Eh! and do you know I begin to think that that stuck-up Miss Euphemia is as sweet upon my Rob as the marquis is on Jenny. I wonder where she is?

**ADOL.** Ahem! I think I may gain favour by revealing the truth as respects Miss Euphemia. May I propose a stroll while I impart a secret to you, Mrs. Wildbriar? (*crosses to R.*)

**MRS. W.** I wanted either the lad or the lass to keep me company, as I have got the rheumatiz in my ankle, and must have some one to lean on; and besides, I hate walking alone.

**ADOL.** I shall be most happy to be permitted to offer my arm; pray lean on it.

**MRS. W.** Eh! it aint much of an arm you have to lean on, man; I should tire you.

**ADOL.** Fear not; animated by a spirit of admiration, it would sustain you for a life time.

**MRS. W.** Eh! it 'ud break in two under half my weight in a jiffey; but as I cannot do 'bout a stick of some sort, I may as well have you as another, and I shan't lean heavy on thee; so come along, and tell us your secret. *Exeunt, R.*

*Enter ROBIN and MISS EUPHEMIA, L.*

**ROBIN.** I say, mother!—oh, she's gone.

**MISS E.** And so, Mr. Wildbriar, you don't share in the general admiration bestowed upon the Woodlands?

**ROBIN. (R.)** Oh, the place itsen is first rate; but there aint no pleasant sociable company in it—all stuck-up baronets and honourables, and fine ladies with their noses in the air. There's that cousin of mine, I did think to have found a bit of a chum in him, but he's no better than the rest: don't care a bit about a rat hunt, ferreting rabbits, or bowls, or skittles, or dog fights. Jenny is in love with one of the stuck-ups, and mother thinks o' nothing now but dressing and undressing hersen; and if it weren't for that terrier pup, I should have no society at all out or in doors.

**MISS E. (L.)** Oh! don't say that; I'm sure I'm always happy to meet you, and ever find pleasure in your conversation.

**ROBIN.** No, do you? well that is kind of you; but may be it's because no one else cares much about speaking to you;—excuse me, I come fra Lancashire, and always speaks my mind, (*aside*) except when sister Jenny's by to put the stopper on.

**MISS E.** I admire your candour; and it may be a sympathy arising from the neglect we mutually experience, that suggests the friendly interest that exists between us.

ROBIN. Oh, I have no interest at all in the matter; you speak to me, and I speak to you in return, and much obliged. I'm a civil lad, and no wastrail. Are you fond o' toffey?

MISS E. Toffey!—I must plead ignorance of what it is.

ROBIN. No! Where were you brought up?

MISS E. In Paris principally.

ROBIN. Ah, that accounts for your not knowing English. It's made of sugar and butter baked in a pan. I've got some real Everton—brought a stock with me—and I'll let you have a lump when I see you again.

MISS E. I shall prize any gift of yours.

ROBIN. Eh! you mun eat it, woman, and not prize it. I say, you don't like their manner of living in this house, do you?

MISS E. Ahem!—not much.

ROBIN. Neither do I;—there's no getting a meal in decent time: they eat their breakfast when they should be taking their dinner, their dinner when they should have done their tea, and their tea when it's supper time, and their supper when they should be waking out of their first sleep.

MISS E. Earlier hours would certainly be more healthful.

ROBIN. Aye, that they would; and what's worst of all is the lots of slops and made-up dishes that come on the table before you can get anything substantial to eat, and nothing much then. I did think to enjoy my dinner yesterday, because there was a giblet pie, but there was no black pudding in it, and it warn't worth much. You like black puddings, of course?

MISS E. Black currant puddings?

ROBIN. What!—Black currant pudding in a giblet pie? Noa, black puddings made wi' pig's meat and groats or oatmeal, Eh! when we lived on the farm we always had such a stock; mother makes them prime! but what's worst here is that they never have a dumpling to begin with. You know what they are, I suppose?

MISS E. Yes, when a child I remember being partial to an apple dumpling.

ROBIN. Oh, I mean suet dumplings; hard ones, to eat wi' gravy, pepper and salt, or it may be treacle—good hard 'uns; them's the chaps to fill up; if I could only catch mother out of a fine dress, I'd persuade her to go down into the kitchen and make some, just for once; she makes them better than any one else—first rate. Oh, you should taste mother's dumplings.

MISS E. I should be most happy.

ROBIN. Would you?—then, ecod, I'll get mother to make some to-day, eh? This is the only bit of pleasant conversation I've had since I've been here. She's a stunning nice girl after all; rather thin, but dumplings would bring her round soon. She seems to be sweet on me, and I'm in a great mind to make

up to her. Hem!—that is the way them stuck-up chaps do—Hem! hem!—Were you ever in Lancashire?

MISS E. No; I should like to visit it much—it's a delightful expectation with me.

ROBIN. No; is it? I say, you're a rare nice wench to talk to. If I were to offer to gi' thee a buss, you wouldn't lug or pow my hair, would you?

MISS E. I really don't know what you mean.

ROBIN. Don't understand Lancashire English at all?

MISS E. I must confess ignorance of those words.

ROBIN. Ah, I shall be obliged to give her up; never get along wi' her so ignorant.

MISS E. But I should be very willing to learn.

ROBIN. Noa, would you?—ecod, then I'll begin to teach you. You see, this is a buss. (*kisses her, she slightly screams*)

*Enter SIR LIONEL and EVERARD, R., she runs off, L.*

Eh, don't be frightened, lass; I don't care the toss up of an old button for these chaps, wi' all their grandeur.

SIR L. } Ha, ha, ha!  
EVERARD. }

ROBIN. (L.) Haw, haw! what are you laughing at? I'll be bound that both on you ha' kissed your sweethearts in secret as well as me, and when you're alone—you wi' my sister, and you wi' Miss Lucy, I don't interfere or intrude on you—do I?

SIR L. } Ha, ha, ha!  
EVERARD. }

*Cross stage and exeunt, L.*

ROBIN. Haw, haw!—you may haw, haw, as much as you like; but I'll fight either of you, with or without clogs on, Lancashire fashion, on the grass plat yonder if you please.

*Enter MRS. WILDBRIAR, R.*

MRS. W. I'll fight you, if I hear you making such a noise in the house. What's up wi' you at all, man?

ROBIN. Well, them two stuck-up chaps were laughing at and jeering me, because they caught me give Miss What-you-call-her a buss.

MRS. W. Eh! did you give her a buss?

ROBIN. I did.

MRS. W. Buss her again, lad, if thou likes it; I didn't think thee had so much pluck in thee. Let them laugh as wins. Gie me a buss, lad; you are as good as they wi' all their parade, and I'll make thee some dumplings for thy dinner.

ROBIN. Noa, will you? Hurrah! Dumplings for ever!

*Exeunt, L.*

SCENE THIRD.—*The Central Space within a maze of shrubberies. A little fountain margined with flowers; seats set around; the termini of the paths opening on stage, and describing a crescent, the front of stage being supposed to complete the circle; some of the shrubs in blossom, others with beds of flowers underneath; small terminal statues, with parasites twined round pedestals, &c., at back above the shrubberies a side view of the house; lawn; woods beyond.*

*Enter MISS JENNY WILDBRIAR, R. 4 E.*

JENNY. Mr. Everard Digby does not seem to know his own mind, except to the extent of being in love with me—that's of course. Very innocent or very stupid he must be, if he cannot see that I am only waiting to be asked: to blush, hesitate, look aside, and say, or rather sigh, Yes.—This problem I ought to solve, will solve, shall solve. Oh! I know I shall, for I know that I'm a clever little girl, and that he's in love with me, and that I'm in love with him, and with plenty of money there can be but one solution—marriage! Bravo! clever little girl. But it's still to be wrought out:—how? Make him jealous. Yes: of whom?—the elegant but sly Sir Lionel Norman, who has seen that I am pretty and well-mannered, if not so handsome or high-bred as Miss Vavasour, and possibly may prove richer, and so spares me a little indirect attention, just sufficiently pointed, when I meet him alone, to suggest a motive, and to be an excuse for a grand avowal, if that should hereafter prove politic. Clever man; but what of that? there never was a male coquette a match at his own game for a clever little girl. Oh, he is here.

*Enter SIR LIONEL, R. 1 E.*

SIR L. One hundred thousand pounds, with a reversion of twenty-five thousand pounds at the least; and she's pretty, very pretty, and surprisingly well-mannered. Soft! she is here. Young girls like sentiment, and adore heroics. Ahem! “Is it a nymph, a naaid, or a Grace, that with her presence queens this lovely place?”

JENNY. (L.) Sir Lionel, is it you? Oh, dear! Strange too: although you have taken me by surprise, you have caught the very spirit of my day-dream, echoed the very motive of my musing.

SIR L. And “What didst thou muse on, meditating maid?” Shall I go on? “On earth thou standest, thy thoughts ascend to heaven.”

JENNY. Oh, dear, no! mine were very terrestrial thoughts. I was just thinking what a beautiful place the Woodlands is, and wishing——

SIR L. To be mistress of such another.

JENNY. Nay; it is too large a setting for a little Lancashire diamond, too extensive a kingdom to be queened with becoming dignity by such a little rustic body as myself. I should like to steal a nook out of it, like this; no grand woods, but orchards and shrubberies, and a *petite* lawn, that a couple of limes or sycamores would serve to embower, and a low, quaint, old-fashioned house, cloisteral in its outward appearance, but luxuriously elegant, and yet cozy, if I may couple the terms, within. I should feel at home there; a sort of Rosamond in her bower, or Amy Robsart at Cumnor: the Woodlands is too much of a Windsor, or a Kenilworth, for poor little me.

SIR L. What charming naïvete! Of all wildbriar roses, surely this is the prettiest.

JENNY. I have heard it said that Norman Abbey is not unlike my ideal, Sir Lionel; is it so?

SIR L. You have poetized, and yet most faithfully described my ancestral home.

JENNY. Oh! I should so like to see it.

SIR L. Would you? you may—you shall, if it so please you.

JENNY. And yet, no; for if it should realize my dream, I should be loath to leave it.

SIR L. (*aside*) I begin to think that I should be loath to let you leave.

JENNY. And you know that I should have to do that.

SIR L. (R.) I don't know any such thing; there could be no more welcome presence to the house or to the master.

JENNY. Oh! now you flatter.

SIR L. Indeed, I do not: short as our acquaintance has been, Miss Wildbriar, I assure you that it has sufficed to awaken feelings in my breast of the warmest admiration, and the most earnest respect for my new and charming friend. (*aside*) That is hinting a great deal, and not saying too much.

JENNY. And this is not a mere compliment?

SIR L. It is a profound truth.

JENNY. Heigho!

SIR L. You sigh; surely I have not offended?

JENNY. Oh, no. Have you to learn, Sir Lionel, that sighs are sometimes expressive of happiness?

SIR L. (*aside*) That is a fair challenge, but I must not go too far. May I, in remembrance, and in token of the acknowledged sympathy between us, present you with this beautiful camelia japonica?

Enter EVERARD and FRANK at back, and come down, L.

JENNY. Thank you, Sir Lionel. My cousin and Mr. Everard Digby.

SIR L. (*aside*) Confound these fellows, they seem to be ubiquitous. Yes, it is a very beautiful specimen of the genus, indeed.

JENNY. (*aside*) Oh! that is to imply that I have been showing it him, and asking his opinion; but you shant get off so, Sir Baronet. Look, Mr. Digby, at this rare camelia japonica, which Sir Lionel has just presented to me; is it not beautiful?

EVERARD. It may; I have not much taste in these matters, but it seems to me common enough. (*goes up and seats himself, R.*)

JENNY. (*aside*) That is because you look at it through green spectacles. So much the better. What think you, Mr. Hawthorne, of Sir Lionel's camelia?

FRANK. It is very pretty, but Sir Lionel is mistaken, it is not a camelia, it is a new and elegant variety of the common pansy, vulgarly termed, "two faces under a hood;" (*aside*) and the most appropriate present, as the most emblematical of himself that he could make. (*goes up and sits, L.*)

SIR L. (*R.*) As I am not a gardener, professional or amateur, I may be excused the mistake. Miss Wildbriar, I salute you for the present.

*Exit, R. 4 F.*

EVERARD. (*R.*) She was flirting with him, and he with her. Oh, woman, woman! always caught by the tinkling sound of a title. I cannot hide my anger, and yet I cannot be rude to her. I shall go.

JENNY. (*C.*) Surely you are not going, Mr. Everard, soon as you have come?

EVERARD. I came to look for Miss Vavasour, I was told that she was here, or at least in the shrubberies. Excuse me; I have some business to communicate.

*Exit, R. 3 E.*

JENNY. (*R.*) He is jealous—jealous unto vexation, and is gone to meditate revenges—deep revenges! Delightful! he'll soon come back to my feet—my very feet—and beg me to put the chain around his neck, and then for the solution, and a sly laugh at sly Sir Lionel. Bravo! clever little girl.

FRANK. (*rises, L.*) Miss Wildbriar, or rather let me call you cousin, as I would be privileged to speak seriously.

JENNY. My dear cousin, I shall be most happy to listen, for I'm in excellent spirits, and almost need a sermon to keep me from laughing.

FRANK. (*comes down, L.*) Because you have just given pain to a sincere admirer, by flirting with an affected one. Cousin of mine, that is not the pulse of the honest, unsophisticated heart of girlhood, as it should beat in the breast of an English farmer's daughter. It is the tricksy, inconstant setting of the artificial woman's, met with but in Vanity Fair, and whose

nominal heart is just as substitutive for the one she has lost, as her false locks or her false teeth are for those she has shed.

JENNY. That's very harsh.

FRANK. It is true. We are out of our place here, let us not lose here the virtues, the absence of which would make us out of our place at home.

JENNY. Cousin, you are a very superior man, but you will allow that another member of the family may be clever too—not to the same extent, for you're a great man, and I'm only a little girl, but on certain subjects clever little girls are just as wise as great men; and now let me give you a bit of advice, not in the way of retort, but out of a cousin's regard and a woman's respect for your good heart and your great talents, which she does not like to see subjected to the double grief of insult and disappointment.

FRANK. I guess—I guess; but go on—I listen.

JENNY. You are more out of your place here than I am. You love Miss Vavasour, and by the tenor of the will, despite your low birth, you are authorized to seek a return of your affection. That is hopeless. She was all but pledged previously to Sir Lionel Norman. She would have refused you at once, but was over persuaded by her mother and friends to wait the issue. She has been further persuaded to play a part likely to offend or provoke you (as your admiration has been apparent), in the hope that you would decline, and so dower her with the fortune. If she should be induced, as by Sir Lionel's doubtful conduct and her mother's persuasion she may, to accept you, it will be for the money, and not love, nor even liking. (FRANK goes up L.) Forgive me, for I see this pains you deeply; but I believe that you would rather know the truth, for all the pain of the moment, than be the dupe for life.

FRANK. (L.) You have read me rightly, and I thank you; yes, I thank you from my—my heart. My heart! no, no—not from my heart—my slavish, bruised, my coward craven heart, that cries out beneath the lash, and weeps upon its wound, but from my soul;—the man's soul that rises up within to put its heel upon that heart, and crush it out if it should groan again. (crosses to R., then back to L.) I thank you, all is well. I understand the comedy. 'Tis well—'tis well; we'll play it out, but with a change of parts. (sits, L.)

JENNY. (R.) I am almost sorry now that I have cautioned him. He has bit his lip until the blood has started; but he has a great soul, and the strife fought out 'twill gain the mastery. That's the way we English win our battles, little people as we are. Oh! here comes a goodly assemblage.

*Enter SIR LIONEL NORMAN and MISS VAVASOUR, R., HON. AUGUSTUS ADOLPHUS and MRS. WILDBRIAR, L., EVERARD DIGBY, MRS. VAVASOUR, and DR. PLAYFAIR, R.*

MRS. W. Ah, here's a bonny place, and seats too ; that's right ; for I'm right down tired, and want to rest mysen. (*sits down*)

LUCY. Yes, this, of all places in the grounds, is my treasure trove—my sanctuary. Heyday, 'tis already occupied. Mr. Hawthorne and Miss Wildbriar *tête-à-tête*. Faun and wood-nymph. Oh ! it is my turn to be jealous now.

MRS. W. Thou hast no need, lass—second cousins can't marry —first may.

LUCY. Oh, indeed—a consolatory regulation.

ADOL. (L.) To be found only in a Lancashire rubric, I should say.

LUCY. (R.) He doesn't speak ; my play begins to tell. I'm glad of it, for I tire ; and I don't want to earn his contempt, as well as his dislike.

DR. P. (R.) I should object if you did ; (*aside*) but I'm afraid you have.

MRS. W. (L.) This place must ha' cost a deal o' money.

LUCY. Yes ; it was arranged under my direction—all the shrubs and flowers are rare exotics—not more beautiful than some native to our gardens ; but then the price gives them an additional value.

DR. P. (*seated*, R.) I object to that ; in my mind, it takes away from the value.

MRS. W. (*seated*, L.) That's the only sensible word you've spoken to-day, old man. I always think more of a thing the cheaper I get it, when it's a bargain.

DR. P. I object to that ; I don't believe that you are any such exception to the general rule of your sex.

MRS. W. I don't care what you think ; I tell you it is so.

LUCY. (*seated*, R.) Dr. Playfair—a word—you spoil my play ; you must, for once, get off your hobby-horse, and leave all the objections to Mr. Hawthorne. (*aside*) Oh, for my part, I value most things by their price. I like extravagance, and think in dress, flowers, bijoutry, it is a woman's privilege. Don't you admit that, Mr. Hawthorne ?

FRANK. No.

SIR L.

ADOL.

MRS. VAVASOUR.

MRS. WILDBRIAR.

LUCY.

EVERARD.

DR. P.

JENNY.

R.

FRANK.

L.

ADOL. (*coming down, L. C.*) Only no ! I should like to have a reason for that no.

FRANK. (*L.*) Indeed ! Well, as it may add to your limited stock of ideas, I shall give you one.

ADOL. Sir!

FRANK. (*rises*) Oh, you object to drawing-room badinage in the open air, do you ?

SIR L. (*R.*) Ha, ha !—the retort courteous. Adolphus, you must accept it good humouredly.

ADOL. Oh, yes ; but nothing vexes me so much, as being accused of a paucity of wit.

FRANK. (*L.*) As the conscious insolvent is always most indignant at the suspicion of poverty. (*takes stage and back to situation*)

LUCY. (*seated, R.*) Ha, ha, ha !

SIR L. Not bad—yield him the honours, Adolphus—the Dacian is only learning to fence, and handles his foil like a club. (*they go up, R.*)

FRANK. (*overhearing, aside*) Does he ? You had best mind your fence, or it may tap at your ribs before long.

LUCY. We still lack enlightenment, Mr. Hawthorne : your reason against extravagance—woman's pet privilege.

FRANK. (*C.*) Extravagance is a waste, a vice, and a vice cannot be the privilege of either sex, much less of the weaker and more delicately organized. Over indulgence of any desire—intemperance—a riotous, inconsiderate waste of money in the gratification of any passion—the antetype of excellence, cannot be any part of refinement of taste. It is a debauchery.

SIR L. (*seated*) Oh, really this language is too bad.

MRS. V. It's insufferable !—offensive in the extreme !

LUCY. (*rises*) You have indeed made use of a shocking word, Mr. Hawthorne ;—it wounds the ear.

FRANK. I am glad of it ; but the habit of extravagance is much worse—more vicious than the word—more hideous behind any mask it may assume ; it vitiates and leaves a gangrene—a slime upon the soul.

DR. P. Truth—truth ! I can't object to that.

LUCY. But I do ; for it's a very disagreeable doctrine. Our little elegancies of costume—our delicate devices of ornament for boudoir or bower—as they improve our appearance, and shed light and fragrance on our journey through life, lift us above the level of the mere sensual wayfarers, and repay the expenditure.

FRANK. (*looking at her*) Sensuous, if not sensual. (*retires to his seat, L.*)

ADOL. That arrow sped ; the bear has retired to his den to grumble over his discomfiture.

LUCY. I shall make him come forth again, and speedily.

Do you go and talk to Sir Lionel. He's looking the other way—*(rising, and crossing to shrub opposite)* How beautifully this magnolia blossoms. I must have a sprig —*(plucks one, and then in returning to seat, deliberately throws handkerchief down)*

Mr. Hawthorne—Mr. Hawthorne, you are remiss.

FRANK. (L.) Indeed, on what account?

LUCY. (R.) Sir, do you not see my handkerchief?

FRANK. Oh, you wish it to be picked up?

SIR L. (who turns and hears) What a boor—permit me.

*(advances, C.)*

LUCY. Oh, no; having asked Mr. Hawthorne, I can receive it only from him.

FRANK. Oh, if the gentleman can acquire a merit in the performance of the office of a lacquey, by all means let him. It is a service I should never volunteer.

LUCY. Indeed! may I ask why?

FRANK. Because I could not suppose you to be so foolish as to throw your handkerchief down, for the mere purpose of having it picked up again.

LUCY. Throw it down?

FRANK. You certainly did. I saw you.

LUCY. *(aside)* So, he was watching me, for all his pretended indifference. I confess it. I was anxious to test the difference in the politeness of certain gentlemen, and I have succeeded.

*(goes to seat—SIR LIONEL picks up handkerchief, and presents it to LUCY)*

FRANK. I am glad of it; it has, doubtless, enabled you to distinguish the man from the fopling.

SIR L. Sir, you are personal.

FRANK. *(rises, L.)* Mere drawing-room badinage; and you must make allowance for the Dacian, who is only learning to fence, and handles his foil like a club.

ADOL. (R.C.) Ha! ha! the retort courteous; you must accept it good-humouredly, Sir Lionel.

SIR L. Yes; but hang it—a fopling!

FRANK. I admit your objection to be classed with the mere neophytes and tadpoles, such as your friend; and will acknowledge you to be a master in the craft—a B.A. of the foppish beau-monde. *(goes up, L. C.)*

OMNES. Ha! ha! ha!

DR. P. I can't object to anything this fellow says. I shall be obliged to avoid his company, or I shall lose the only pleasurable excitement that life affords me. *(seated)*

ADOL. (R.) He's rather a clever fellow.

SIR L. He's a d—d deal too clever; and I rather suspect that he has seen through our game from the first. *(goes to ladies, R.)*

LUCY. If so, how he must despise me—with what a sense of superiority he must look down upon this petty device.

JENNY. Bravo, cousin ; he begins to understand the game, and to play it well.

ROBIN. (*without*) Mother—where's my mother ?

MRS. W. Here, Rob. Eh ! now I shall have some one to speak English to me, and needn't sit mumchance any more. I haven't understood a word that has been spoken here for the last half hour. What does thee want, lad ?

*Enter ROBIN, L. 4 E.*

ROBIN. Eh ! all the nobs here—and Jenny, too—to frighten the thoughts out of my head, whenever I open my mouth, with her winks and nods ? Mother, I mun speak in private wi' you.

MRS. W. No, lad ; speak up—whispering ain't good behaviour in dacent company. What's got to say ?

ROBIN. What's o'clock ? my watch has gone down ; but I know by my stomach that it must be near mealtime, and them dumplings mun be done.

MRS. W. (*up L. C.*) No, lad, no ; they're big and hard, and take a deal of boiling. Eh ! the damp grass has brought my rheumatiz on again—help me up, lad.

ADOL. (*crosses to her*) Allow me.

MRS. W. No ; I dunnot want thee now. I've got my lad.

ROBIN. Get off wi' ye. (*ADOLPHUS crosses back*)

MRS. W. (*comes down*) Where's thy lass, lad ?

ROBIN. (*R. C.*) Eh ! she's gone home by hersen'—she wouldn't come here—she's sheamfaced, I suppose, by reason of these chaps laughing at her.

SIR L. Corydon without his Phillis. Ha ! ha !—Mrs. Vavasour, the gentle Euphemia has proved susceptible, and made a conquest, too, at last.

MRS. V. What mean you ?

SIR L. (*seated, R.*) Behold the Adonis who has charmed that hitherto marble heart.

ADOL. (*R. C.*) Adonis !

ROBIN. What's he calling me names for ?

ADOL. (*coming down, R. C.*) Cymon—Cymon, you mean—the veritable Cymon—"the clown who never dreamt of love," and "whistled as he went for want of thought,"—chancing at last upon his destined Iphigenia here, is about to undergo the wondrous transformation which love alone achieves on clowns.

FRANK. (*C.*) True ; whilst the ductile nature of a gentleman, self-interest, sways at will, without apparent change, to jeer the clown, and woo his mother.

SIR L. Woo the mother, eh ?

MRS. V. What's that, Adolphus ?

**ADOL.** (R.) Oh! nothing. Some more badinage, which of course I must take good-humouredly. (*aside*) Damn his quick perception! he is Argus-eyed. (*goes up, R., to LADIES*)

**FRANK.** (*coming down, L.C.*) Robin, lad! How ist thee?

**ROBIN.** Eh! you can speak Lancashire English?

**FRANK.** Yes, lad, and I needn't be ashamed, for it's getting into great favor in this quarter! Which is to take place first, thy mother's wedding, or thy own?

**ROBIN.** My mother's? Haw! haw! haw! She's none going to make such a fou of hersen.

**FRANK.** I don't know that. There's a gentleman here so much attached to you and yours, that he's anxious to become thy stepfeyther.

**ADOL.** (*comes down, R.—aside to FRANK*) Sir! sir!

**FRANK.** (*aside*) Badinage! badinage! take it good-humouredly.

**ROBIN.** A gentleman! No—eh! Shan't I have such a laugh at mother? Which be he?

**FRANK.** Oh! Of course the gentleman who accompanies her in her morning walks, and who just now was so desirous to save you the trouble of helping her from her chair.

**ROBIN.** What, that whipper-snapper? What, that chap with the Billy-goat beard? Haw! haw! haw! (*FRANK goes up*) He, my feyther! Mother! mother! thee ain't a going to make a fou of thysen, and get married again, art thee, and set all the neighbours laughing at thee!

**MRS. W.** Noa, lad. What's put that in thy head.

**ROBIN.** (R.) Because that chap yonder is making-up to thee.

**MRS. W.** It's nought o'sort!—it's nought o'sort!

**ROBIN.** He wants to be my feyther. Haw! haw! haw! What a feyther he'd be!

**MRS. W.** Get along wi' you. If I thought he wur, I'd box his ears.

**ROBIN.** It's for sure. What does he go a walking wi' you for, and a sniggling up to thee, and offering his arm? It's thy money he wants, and not thee, woman.

**OMNES.** Ha! ha! ha!

**MRS. W.** Eh! if I was sure he meant it, I'd break his head.

**DR. P.** I shouldn't object to that.

**MRS. W.** How dare he think a woman of my time of life would have the loikes of him, a laced-up dandy, wi' a waist as small as my Jenny's? Eh! if I wanted a husband, which, Heaven be thanked, I dunnot, it's summut of a man to look at I'd have, and not a hop-o'-my-thumb skipjack. He'd better not come near me agin, or I'll slap his face.

**ROBIN.** (C.) Do as you used to do to me, mother, lug and pow his hair, and it will be sure to come off, for I know it's a wig. Haw! haw! haw!

MRS. W. (L.) I'll cuff thee if thee laughs when I'm in a passion. Didst thee mean it, man—didst thee mean it? (*rushing up to ADOLPHUS*)

ADOL. No, no; I assure you, on my honor, it's all a mistake.

DR. P. I object to that; I believe he meant it, on my soul.

MRS. W. (C.) A mistake! well, I hope it is. You mun excuse me, ladies, for getting in such a passion, and making so much noise, but the idea of his making up to me! He might as well to you, Mrs., and you're older than me by long chalks.

MRS. V. (R., seated) Oh, dear no! Was there ever such a vulgar woman?

MRS. W. Oh! well, if it's displeasing to you, never mind; but it's plain to be seen, for all that. I always speaks my mind.

ROBIN. That's right, mother; so do I! no double feace about straight-forward Lancashire folk.

*Exeunt MRS. WILDBRIAR and ROBIN, L. C.*

LUCY. (*seated*) Some merit in their candour.

SIR L. (*seated*) It would be none the worse if graced by a little courtesy.

FRANK. (*comes down, c.*) True; but courtesy ceases to be a grace, when used as a cloak to deception.

SIR L. (*rises, R. C.*) The emphasis of your remark seems to level it at me, sir, but I am not pregnable to the point.

(*LUCY advances, R., JENNY, L.*)

FRANK. Achilles upright in his armour, but mine is only club wit, and boasts no point at all; and yet, abroad in the Woodlands, I thought your Arcadian reveries might have suggested a supposititious Endymion, who, in the chase of a Diana, had marked down a Hebe among the satyrs, as a prize positive, if the superlative divinity should esceape.

OMNES. Ha! ha! ha!

SIR L. Sir, this inference is impertinent.

FRANK. What, you bleed? But I forgot when Achilles knelt at Hymen's shrine, he laid aside his armour, and proved vulnerable in heel as well as heart.

SIR L. Sir, I—I—damnation. (*crosses to L.*)

FRANK. (c.) Why, I vow he's angry; my dear fellow, if you can't lightly give and take, or endure the privileged sarcasms—the badinage of drawing room society—you had really better not venture within its pale. (*goes up, R.*)

LUCY. (*comes down, R.*) Ha! ha! fairly foiled, Sir Lionel; don't be angry. I am most undeservedly complimented by the comparison, and feel honoured in being accounted first prize by the refined taste, whose second may so fairly claim the soubriquet of Hebe. Miss Wildbriar—I mean my dear Hebe—will you stroll with me, and be Diana's nymph for the nonce? Dr. Playfair, give your arm to mamma, and lead her to the house. (*crosses to C.*)

DR. P. (*aside—rises, R.*) I should like to object to that, but courtesy forbids.

LUCY. Gentlemen, adieu! don't follow, or beware the fate of Actæon. Mr. Hawthorne, we shall meet, I hope, at dinner. (*curtseys—he bows—LUCY and JENNY exeunt at back, C.—*

DR. PLAYFAIR and MRS. VAVASOUR, L.)

EVERARD. You have fairly avenged yourself.

FRANK. (L. C.) No; I have but vindicated a man from the assumption of a clique.

SIR L. (R. C.) He shall apologise, by heaven; he shall instantly, and before Digby.

ADOL. (R.) Should he refuse?

SIR L. (R. C.) Refuse—refuse; he shall not—he dare not, for the consequences. Mr. Hawthorne, you have been rude to insolence; had you been the clown you were supposed, I should have treated it with contempt. I pay you the compliment of admitting your intelligence and equality, by demanding an instant apology.

FRANK. (L. C.) I do not appreciate the compliment. Had you been the gentleman you assume to be, you never would have committed the error of premising that a stranger, however diffident, and humbly born, must of necessity be a clown. I treated that insolence with silent contempt, until it became the assailant. I have made use of its own weapons to retort, and I shall certainly not apologise, because in the contest you began I happen to have so far succeeded as to have ruffled your equanimity.

SIR L. You have taken an unfair advantage in the repetition of words not intended for your ear.

FRANK. You meant to take an unfair advantage in assailing the barbarian, as he was deemed, with the weapons of your supposed superior civilization.

SIR L. To end this, sir, I demand an apology.

FRANK. Which I decline to make.

ADOL. I thought so.

SIR L. Then, sir, you compel me to waive all further courtesy of consideration, and to seek the satisfaction usual amongst gentlemen.

FRANK. A duel? I thought that had become unusual amongst gentlemen; but I forgot, you would rather type one of the actual paladins of the past age, than be the representative of their spirit in the present. How if I refuse?

SIR L. I shall feel authorised to speak of you in public as an insolent, and a coward.

(*LUCY and JENNY pass to and fro at back*)

FRANK. A disagreeable alternative enough, although a man of sense might hope to live it down. Let me see; I heard you boast the other day that you were a capital pistol shot.

SIR L. As you may be. *(slight aside)* If not  
FRANK. I am not good enough to make it a boast. *ventriloquy*  
ADOL. *(half aside)* So much the better. *handing round*

FRANK. The assassin-like sentiment of your friend, Sir Lionel, I will suppose you are too lineal a descendant of our chivalric conquerors to echo. *softly and distinctively*

ADOL. Confound his quick ear. *that of a boy*

FRANK. You said, at the same time, that although you had been a pupil of Angelo's, from your disinclination to enlarge or afflict with ridges your characteristically small hand, you had never practised with the broadsword; neither have I, and my hand, by some extraordinary freak of nature, is as small as yours. The only shadow of a grace that can belong to a duel, is that which makes the chances equal between the belligerents. Suppose we send for a couple of Andrew Ferraras, and like doughty knights of old, cross blades, cry havoc, and lay on. *softly and distinctively*

SIR L. Sir, the proposal, if seriously meant, hath an air of complete savagery. It would sink us at once to the level of mere barbarians. No, sir, to that I cannot consent. *softly and distinctively*

FRANK. But you would level your pistol at my body, in the confidence of a skill certain to send a bullet through heart or brain. The savagery is worse, because more cold-blooded and assassin-like. *(crosses to L.)* Pshaw! appoint your time and place,—bring your pistols. *(crosses to c.)* I shall prove as good a shot as you: I fear not the skill that shrinks from an encounter with an unexpected danger: 'twill lack both physical and moral self-possession in the trial. *softly and distinctively*

SIR L. Enough, sir. To-morrow, at sunrise, beyond—

*Re-enter LUCY and JENNY.*

LUCY. (c.) No, no; this must not be, for my sake. I entreat I implore—I command! *(to SIR LIONEL)* Were you to kill him, I should hate you. *(to FRANK)* Were your hand to be stained with his blood, it—it would break my heart.

FRANK. (l. c.) True, and in either case, you could hardly become his wife. Well, well, I can risk all chance of cowardice to play the true gentleman. I own to having taken a somewhat unfair liberty with words lightly uttered, no doubt, in jest, and not meant to reach my ear, and for that I beg to offer an apology to Sir Lionel.

SIR L. Which he most readily accepts.

LUCY. *(sinking on her knees to FRANK)* Bless you! Bless you!

JENNY.

ADOLPHUS. SIR LIONEL. LUCY. FRANK. EVERARD.

*END OF ACT II.*

*Another lapse of three months is supposed to have occurred.*

## ACT III.

*SCENE.—Same as in Act I.*

*FRANK discovered, R.*

FRANK. The last day of doubt has passed ; within an hour or two must hesitation cease, and yet she gives no sign. True, since the day on which I was surprised into a betrayal of my feelings, and then goaded into a retort of her friends' scorn, her manner has changed. It is now deferential and observant, at times hesitating and nervous, as still doubtful of the result. Hopeless of inducing me to recede, and persuaded by her mother and her friends that it were better to sacrifice her feelings than the fortune, she accepts me as a fate, and is endeavouring before marriage to accommodate her manners unto mine ; a submissive baseness of soul, of which I did not think she could have been guilty. I wish that she had kept up the mask—the play ; it was finesse, but still warfare, and I could have carried into solitude a reverence for the idol of my dream, though that idol had not listened to my prayer.

*Enter DR. PLAYFAIR, L.*

DR. P. Alone, and soliloquising ? I object to that upon your wedding day.

FRANK. My wedding day ?

DR. P. Yes ;—if by twelve o'clock you are not married, the fortune either goes to the lady, or comes to you, or is locked up in trust for an indefinite number of unknown brats. I object to that, and to the principle of Chartered Charity Schools in general : their endowments—particularly if they increase in value—always become objects of peculation to trustees and governors, and in the end the greater portion is subverted from the original purpose of the investments ; schools turned into close boroughs, that there's no poking any little snub-nose into without some great influence, like a hydraulic ram at his back ;—mostly used for rich men's illegitimate, keeping fat-headed deacons in greasy sinecures, and a few unfortunate boys in a fantastic dress, that makes them ashamed of themselves for the rest of their lives.

FRANK. (R.) Ha, ha ! very true. Such has often been the issue of charitable bequests ; but rest assured the Hawthorne property will not be disposed of in that manner.

DR. P. (L.) Glad of it—was sure of it ;—wrote to Cunningham that all was right, and have been over to the Bishopric myself, and obtained a special license for the marriage of Francis Hawthorne and Lucy Vavasour, in the little parish church that neighbours the entrance to the park of the Woodlands.

FRANK. That was premature ; our formal consent to an

union should have preceded, and would have sufficed for the present.

DR. P. Your formal consent goes for nothing without the marriage, as the will is worded : thought of that ; and as you are the only man to whom I don't object, resolved to look after your interest in time.

FRANK. Well, well, I thank you, and it matters but little.

DR. P. You speak lightly, and I object to that upon so important a subject. You surely can't be careless about your wife ; you did admire, respect—did love her ; must so still.

FRANK. Yes ; no.

DR. P. I object emphatically to such a contradictory reply. People should know their own minds.

FRANK. (R.) Doctor, I have faith in you. Your very eccentricity, if a little gnarled, is still a natural growth. There is no need with you to exact a promise—to set the seal of silence upon a confidence.

DR. P. Well, I don't object to that.

FRANK. I will confess to you that I did love, and still could love, Lucy—Miss Vavasour ; that I did admire, respect, even when most consciously the object of her scorn ; but that now I cannot give my esteem, nay, have some difficulty in withholding my contempt, from the woman who seems base enough to give her heart to a title, and yet sell her person for wealth.

DR. P. (L.) I object to an argument founded like yours on assumption. Lucy's not so bad ; accustomed all her life to wealth, she must look upon it as a necessity.

FRANK. (R., sighs) True.

DR. P. (L.) She has seen so many sacrifices of feeling made for its preservation or acquirement, thinks it not a crime, but a custom ; then it is so mixed up, or rather baited with sentimental lures, tacked cleverly on by affected willing victims, and humbugging old mothers—bleeding hearts, sleepless nights, pearly tears, bliss of secret agony, romance of a strife between duty and inclination, no wonder a young girl, not quite sure of her own mind, should rather prefer to be a victim than otherwise.

FRANK. Doctor, doctor, this is special pleading. The cant of the nursery, or of the boudoir, should neither find utterance on the man's lips, nor echo in the woman's heart. No, no ; romance may heighten, beautify with its tinted light the sacrifices made for truth's sake, even as the hues of the stained window serve to enrich the twilight atmosphere of the cloister, or to soften the sunbeam on the cenotaph ; but you must not take it into the service of self-interest, or make it pander to the legalization of vice, and hope to preserve its loveliness, or to make its charms a plea for sinning. Romance risks poverty, adventures peril, to wed hands with hearts, even as natural alliances are made among the simplest, least sophisticated, and

so most civilised of the civilised races of men ; and, wanting the grand element of a natural instinct, no romance is worth the telling or the hearing, how much less, then, the acting ? (*crosses to L.*)

DR. P. Can't object to that ; he always gets the better of me in an argument. (*steps off to the right, continuing this duty*)

FRANK. But dismiss your fears on my account ; with moderate desires I can live, even without the annuity accruing to me, should I refuse a joint share in this princely inheritance.

DR. P. (R.) But you are not going to refuse ? I object to that. You owe it to your uncle's and father's memory to keep it in the name of Hawthorne.

FRANK. My dear doctor, what I shall do as yet, short as is the time, is a secret to myself. The sequel you will know almost as soon as I shall. (*DOCTOR goes up R.*)

*Enter SIR LIONEL NORMAN, R.*

SIR L. Gentlemen, good day. Mr. Hawthorne, if you are not particularly engaged, I should feel obliged by a few minutes' private conversation.

FRANK. Certainly, if Dr. Playfair will give me leave.

DR. P. Oh ! I don't object to that. (*aside*) Never shall, to get out of that over-refined gentleman's company. *Exit, L.*

FRANK. (L.) Now, Sir Lionel, I am at your service.

SIR L. (R.) Mr. Hawthorne, I must beg your allowance of the liberty I am about to take, which courtesy, even under peculiar circumstances, can alone excuse. I come to speak upon a very delicate subject, and one that requires the nicest treatment. In fact, the suggestion I am about to make could only be volunteered from one gentleman to another. (*FRANK bows*) It is, that you will not force upon Miss Vavasour the marriage prescribed by the will.

FRANK. (*aside*) Delicate with a vengeance. I do not. She is at liberty to refuse me.

SIR L. Oh, yes ; but not without an enormous sacrifice of wealth.

FRANK. Which enormous sacrifice she has sent you to suggest that I should make ?

SIR L. Oh, no ; she is not aware that I have interfered in the matter.

FRANK. Then why do you ?

SIR L. Why out of consideration for her, as she does not love you—In fact—ahem !—may be presumed to have long loved another.

FRANK. What a delicate gentleman ! (*aside*) She has said as much ?

SIR L. No, not exactly ; but it is an inference—a fact to be implied from the whole tenor of her conduct.

FRANK. Indeed ! I had thought, Sir Lionel, that the sacrifice

she is expected to make—I mean, of course, not of wealth, but of feeling—affection, was not unusual in fashionable life.

SIR L. Well, neither is it; but as you are a new man, and seem to have stricter principles in these matters, I thought your early prejudices in favour of the opposite kind of sacrifice might induce you—

FRANK. To make myself the victim, and enable Miss Vavasour to become Lady Norman, and Sir Lionel Norman lord of the Woodlands! Upon my word, Baronet, you compliment me so highly by your generous and chivalric opinion, that I should be only too happy to oblige you. But, pray, why did not this suggestion come from Mrs. Vavasour, who must have her daughter's confidence in the matter.

SIR L. Oh, because she did not think you likely to be persuaded; and, believing that the marriage must take place, she was fearful it might prejudice her daughter's future peace of mind, should it provoke your anger.

FRANK. Oh, she does not hold so high an opinion of me as you do. I am again your debtor, Sir Lionel, but at present can hold out no hope of compliance with this particular request. It is too late; wants but an hour or so of the appointed time. Egad, I must go and dress. You will be present at the ceremony, of course?

SIR L. Um! I gave him credit for more high principle: the mercantile spirit of the age has depraved even the scholar and the puritan.

*Exit into library, L.*

*Enter LUCY, with scroll of music paper, and JENNY, R.*

LUCY. And are you sure—quite sure—that Mr. Hawthorne is the author of these words?

JENNY. Am I sure? Am I a clever little girl?—Listen and judge. Yesterday, passing one of the rooms upon our side—the Montague side of the mansion—I caught the sounds of a piano; I entered, and found my cousin Romeo, I mean Frank, playing from a new score, and humming, rather than singing, the words. He was confused, apologised for having remained, and when I enquired his theme, said it was an old strain he had been endeavouring to arrange to some new words, but as the work was imperfect, he declined to submit it to my judgment. In his confusion, and the haste of his exit, he did not notice that on the table he had left a copy—the first, I should presume, from the erasures. I found it, liked, and thought it expressed a feeling that you ought to know.

LUCY. Is he not yet conscious of its being in your possession?

JENNY. I don't know—I have not seen him since; he is very sensitive, and if he has discovered its loss, I would rather slight

its importance, by not seeming to care about it, than suggest its having been the echo of a real feeling by an enquiry.

LUCY. Yes ; that is in keeping with his character.

JENNY. (R.) Oh ! you have taken some notes of that. Have I guessed rightly in believing that you have learned at last to feel a little interest about this self-willed cousin of mine ?

LUCY. The peculiarities of his character are too apparent to escape notice, even had not the relation in which we stand compelled some observance.

JENNY. That is said in the very spirit of a grand lady ; but the grand lady has a heart in her bosom, as well as the little girl ; and yours, which I am sure has not been vitiated, must be susceptible of a nearer interest than can possibly belong to mere observance about the character of your future husband.

LUCY. (L.) My future husband—who knows ?

JENNY. (R.) Love ever suggests liking in return, and he loves you.

LUCY. Nonsense, child. He dreamt of an Egeria,—an ideal mistress—but, looking on the idol, found it false—very dross and clay. Love me !—he makes no effort to win my love—he moves, speaks, and thinks, independently of all reference to me. No, no ; he accepts me as his destiny—hopeful, perhaps, that at the last moment I may refuse. It is but a fair retort ; I did the same, and earned his contempt, and my own, too. (seats herself at L. table) I know that, but he shouldn't show it so plainly—wouldn't, if he had a spark of love. Pretty wooing.

JENNY. (aside) It is excellent. I believe that he has acted in the very best way to win your love ; his instinct is almost as shrewd as my skill, clever as I know myself. (to LUCY) And, so you don't love him ? It's a sad fate to look forward to, and you might have been so happy with half the fortune, and Sir Lionel Norman.

LUCY. Sir Lionel ?—perhaps.

JENNY. You can sing at sight ; I wish you'd just try over that song for me.

LUCY. No, no ; I—I couldn't.

JENNY. Do, do ; see, here is a piano ; let me accompany you ; it's very pretty ; just listen. (plays symphony) Pray, try the words over.

LUCY. No, no. Pshaw—it's very childish.

JENNY. Then please give it back to me, as you don't like it, and I do.

LUCY. Take it ; and yet I—I should like to copy the words. (rises) No, the music, I mean ; it seems to be a quaint old style of air, but prettily arranged. I shall restore the original in the course of the day.

JENNY. (oside) If you do I shall become a nun, which I am too clever a little girl, and know my vocation too well, ever to

meditate. I shall be in attendance as your bridesmaid before the ceremony takes place ; at present mamma may want me.

*Exit, R. 1 E.*

LUCY. The ceremony—will it ever take place ? And are these his real sentiments, or is it a mere poetical fancy ? There is an air of truth in the very simplicity of the words ; they are not brain wrought, but heart sung : should I reject him, 'twere noble ; but then, how to convince him of my motive. (*crosses to R. table*) Love should cling unto the faintest hope. Let me try to sing this song ; it may reveal, as music often does, the true pulse of my heart. (*sits herself at piano—plays and sings*)

*Song.*

Though beauteously blossoms the myrtle tree,  
And the laurel a nobler shrub may be,  
Oh ! the willow's the plant that most likes me,  
For in spite of thy scorn I still love thee,  
Aye, more than thy bridegroom, whoe'er he may be ;  
Sing hey ! ho ! willow—green willow for me.

Come, kiss me, despair, and new life impart,  
Take mine, and to me give thy bold, brave heart,  
To endure, not deny, the deep, deep pain,  
And yet anger none at her high disdain ;  
For love unto pride can a true love be ;  
Sing, hey ! ho ! willow—green willow for me.

Though one glance of love from thy glorious eyes  
Far richer made me than the wealth you prize,  
'Twere better from thee in thy scorn to part,  
Than to win one false smile, and abase thy heart ;  
Oh ! no : in thy pride I can still love thee ;  
Sing, hey ! ho ! willow—green willow for me.

(at end bursts into tears ; rises, and crosses to L., then back to R.)

Weeping ? fool ! I care neither for him nor for his money ; let him keep it ; I don't want it. Pshaw ! he contemns me—can't love. Shall I stoop to woo his respect ? Never !

*Enter SIR LIONEL NORMAN, L. 3 E.*

SIR L. Pardon, Miss Vavasour, if that I intrude. I have been speaking seriously to your mother, and the result is a desire to do my duty honourably by you.

LUCY. Sir Lionel, one word first. I have not the remotest claim upon your consideration or duty, and perhaps this assurance will spare you further avowal.

SIR L. (*aside*) Strange !—can't mean it ; angry because I have not spoken before. Pardon me ; I may have seemed absent, cold of late.

LUCY. I have not noticed it, and fully pardon that which gave me no concern.

SIR L. (*aside, L.*) Still wrath? Well, Miss Vavasour, I rejoice to hear you say this, because you will have less difficulty in accomplishing the painful but necessary sacrifice of feeling you are required to make.

LUCY. What sacrifice?

SIR L. That of your feelings to your interest.

LUCY. What feelings?

SIR L. (*aside*) She wants an éclaircissement in the hope of evoking the spirit of the past, and inducing us both to make fools of ourselves.

LUCY. You do not reply.

SIR L. It is useless to particularise feelings that must of necessity be laid aside, and buried with the past.

LUCY. (*R.*) I really don't understand you.

SIR L. (*L.*) Well, then, Miss Vavasour, it is my duty honourably to inform you, that much as I esteem, truly as I admire, have loved, and still love you, were you to resign this fortune out of regard to the past, it would not be in my power to atone in some part for the sacrifice; and therefore, in a spirit of self-abnegation, I set you free. I advise you—

LUCY. To marry another man, whom you think I do not like; and yet you talk of respecting—loving me in the same breath. Oh, shame! Oh, Chivalry, thou hast indeed fled the earth, and Mammon has established his empire over the heart of youth itself, in peer and peasant. (*crosses to R. corner*)

SIR L. Pardon me, it is not for myself I speak, it is from a consideration of your welfare.

LUCY. Which you think more likely to be assured by a fortune than by your love. That is probable; but I will give you more credit than you do yourself, Sir Lionel: your advice commits no outrage upon the character of your love, which could not co-exist in the same breast with the feelings that prompted your honourable consideration for my welfare. You never loved me, nor I you, of that I have been long convinced: we moved in the same society, went to the same balls, danced in the same set of quadrilles, applauded the same operas, and being equally young and heartless, thought we were a pair, but we were not; and this act, which completes, or rather establishes, the fact of our severance, does not cost the slightest pang to either.—Good day, sir.

*Exit, R.*

SIR L. (*C.*) Mere spleen and vexation. I expected an explosion. Poor thing, she'll go and cry now. I'm sorry for her—sorry to have lost her, for I really liked her; but the man who has the dignity of a baronet to sustain upon a mortgaged estate, and who marries a poor lady, is littleless than a scoundrel: because, if he should have children, they must not work, and

they must live, so he becomes the father of a race of genteel sharpers—otherwise fortune hunters.

Enter JENNY, R. 1 E.

JENNY. Sir Lionel, I am fortunate in finding you, as from your professed friendship, I am sure of your advice on what is to me a very important subject.

SIR L. Miss Wildbriar, I am most honoured by your confidence. Command every service in my power to render you.

JENNY. You have so often noticed me, and always with so much kindness, that not having any one in my own family who is familiar with high life, or capable of advising me, I thought of you the moment I was asked to become a marchioness.

SIR L. A marchioness!

JENNY. Yes; and I said to myself, Sir Lionel, who is the very pattern of high life, the beau ideal of a fine gentleman, can best tell me whether or not I ought to accept this offer—whether I could hope to move in the fashionable world without provoking a question as to my birth and breeding.

SIR L. (L.) Upon that subject, let me, my dear Miss Wildbriar, give you the best proof of my most favourable opinion, by myself soliciting the honour and happiness of your alliance.

JENNY. You, Sir Lionel—you—why, I always thought you were in love with Miss Vavasour.

SIR L. Miss Wildbriar, I shall be candid with you, and own that for a long time I was devoted to that lady—was indeed—until your star rose over the horizon, and drew the eye of my affection after it; doubtless with more ease, because the terms of the will made it a duty, upon my part, to avert my thoughts from Miss Vavasour.

JENNY. Oh, dear me! I wish I had known this sooner; for as a baronet is not so high up as a marquis, I think I should not be so likely to lose my self-command and stumble; and the worst of it is, I have given my promise.

SIR L. Promise! This is really too bad, Miss Wildbriar. Why come to ask my advice as to what you should do, when you have already decided your fate?

JENNY. (R.) Isn't that what people always do? But don't be angry; mine was not a formal promise, it was only the half consent, that not saying "no," with women, particularly young women is, it is mostly taken for an affirmative, but they can always deny having said "yes" afterwards, if necessary. And are you really serious, Sir Lionel, in—in your proposal?

SIR L. Miss Wildbriar, I should else be worse than a scoundrel—a puppy!

JENNY. And you would make me mistress of that dear delightful place, Norman Abbey?

SIR L. And of its master, too.

JENNY. (R.) Well, then—oh! but I forgot, and perhaps you did. My mother and brother—what am I to do with them?

SIR L. Miss Wildbriar, as your mother and brother, I should respect them, at a distance. I must be candid. I could not introduce them into my circle.

JENNY. Oh! and I should never see them?

SIR L. Nay, I should not object to your visiting, and passing a day or so with them once a year.

JENNY. But they might never come to Norman Abbey?

SIR L. (L.) Certainly not, on account of the servants' remarks.

JENNY. Don't you think, Sir Lionel, that all circumstances considered, it were better for you not to risk any connection with a family you regard as likely to bring you into discredit even with your servants?

SIR L. Oh, no. The beauty and manners of Lady Norman are certain to approve Sir Lionel Norman's taste, and the wife's individuality is merged in the husband's. Not so with her family. I should marry you, not the others.

JENNY. Not though each of them was dowered with £100,000?

SIR L. No.

JENNY. Well, Sir Lionel, your honesty has a particular merit on the part of a very fine gentleman, and compels a like return of honest avowal upon my part. I would not marry a marquis who was ashamed either of me or mine. From the first moment of our acquaintance, I have seen that my mother and brother's provincialities were subjects of scorn and of ridicule to you, and to your clique, and yet each one of us has been tolerated and flattered in private, as the great people's interest suggested. While making love to Miss Vavasour you coquetted with me, and I confess that I did the like with you, for the purpose of leading you on to this proposal, and of paying back the slights put, both covertly and openly, on plain, but honest people, whose possessions are coveted by fine, but disingenuous gentlemen. Sir Lionel Norman, the little Lancashire farmer's daughter begs to decline the honour of your alliance.

SIR L. (L.) In the hope of becoming a marchioness.

JENNY. Oh, no: I suspected that jest the moment I heard it, and almost immediately satisfied myself by reference to a directory, which told me there was no such peer as the Marquis of Banterdown, but that there was a Mr. Everard Digby, barrister.

SIR L. Well, Miss Wildbriar, I am in your hands. You have gained your point; you triumph, and I seek no mercy.

JENNY. Spoken like a hero that deserves some. I am mute, Sir Lionel, from this moment, as to the past; and as I think Miss Vavasour did once like you, and may be induced again, and as my cousin is a strange man, let me advise you to keep

your own counsel, remain here, and wait the issue; who knows, the fortune may be yours yet.

SIR L. Thank you, my good fairy. (*crosses, R.*) But I cannot, with any grace of gentlemanly feeling, meditate its acquirement now. Your servant. *Exit, R.*

JENNY. Poor Sir Lionel! I think he will give over coquetry from to-day.

*Enter JAMES, L.*

JAMES. She his *halone* at last. I thought the baronite was about to *hanticipate* me, but, from the 'igh tones in which they spoke, there can have been no proposal. Miss Wildbriar, may I 'ave the *hextreme* 'appiness of *haddressing* a word to you?

JENNY. Mr. James, is it you? Certainly. What is it? A message from Miss Vavasour?

JAMES. No, Miss Wildbriar; it's a message from my 'art; it's a personal communication, which you will be pleased to consider marked private and strictly confidential.

JENNY. Dear me, you surprise me; what is its nature?

JAMES. Miss Wildbriar, let me ask you, *hare* you *haware* of my *hantecedents*, and of the 'igh position I 'ave *hever* held as a *hupper* servant in the most recherchiest establishments in Belgravia and May Fair?

JENNY. Well, no, Mr. James.

*Enter MRS. WILDBRIAR, at back.*

MRS. W. What's Jenny talking to that flunkie for? I'll listen.

JAMES. Miss Wildbriar, I *ham* *hof* a particularly sensitive nature, *hand* I meditate retiring into private life. I am proud to say not without resources. I have an account at Coutts', and credit for three oughts with a very respectable numeral before them.

JENNY. I am glad to hear it; your's will be a dignified retirement.

JAMES. I 'ope it will; but I 'ave all my life been accustomed to society, and I hope to be accompanied *hinto* privacy by a companion of the softer sex.

JENNY. Oh, you are going to be married, I presume to Miss Jemima Simpertton?

JAMES. Oh, no; I *ham* *haware* that there is a softness in that quarter, but I have had a glimpse into her bank-book, and the figure don't suit.

JENNY. Then who is to be the happy woman?

JAMES. (L.) That's a home question, and brings us to the point. The 'appy woman—and 'appy she may be, as I *hoffer* her my 'and, and my 'art—a werry unusual circumstance with *huppers*—the 'appy woman I sees before me.

JENNY. In your mind's eye, I presume ?  
 JAMES. I ham not haware that my mind has any *heye*. No ! I sees her now with the *heyes* in my 'ead.

JENNY. What, me ? Oh, this is too good.  
 JAMES. Oh, no ; I don't want to make a merit of the condescension. I have but one objection to make, that his to the other members of your family, whom I should hexpect you, as soon as the settlements are made, and your fortune secured tightly, to cut altogether.

JENNY. Kind and condescending, Mr. James—even more exacting than the baronet. Oh ! if mamma could only hear this. Mr. James, upon this subject I must refer you to mamma.

JAMES. (*falls on both knees*) I should prefer your breaking the matter to her first ; has there is a *hab*sence of sympathy between us, she might object.

MRS. W. (*coming forward, c.*) I should think she would ; why, you brazen-faced impudent flunkey, to dare to think my daughter, wi' her edication and a hundred thousand pounds, would demean hersen to wed wi' the loikes o' thee. Jenny, you ought to be ashamed of yoursen to talk to him at all.

JAMES. I perceive this must be a case of Gretna Green, Miss Wildbriar, if it is to come off at *hall*.

JENNY. Ha ! ha ! ha !  
 MRS. W. Be off wi' you, or I'll Gretna Green thee. I shall forget mysen if thee doesn't go, and shake all the flower out of your powdered nob.

JAMES. Hassaults are hactionable.  
 MRS. W. (*seated, c.*) I dunnot care ; I shouldn't mind payin' for the pleasure of beatin' thee. Away wi' you, my hands are itching to serve thee out.

JAMES. (*L. C.*) In that case I had better go.  
 JENNY. Do, Mr. James, and preserve the dignity of an upper, in the calm contemplation of a great mistake.

JAMES. That's very pointed ; she rejects and turns me into reticule—sneers at me, too.

(*sings a line or two of "Love Not," in broken voice—burlesque style.* MRS. WILDBRIAR *rises, comes down, and threatens him*)

Oh ! hagony !—oh ! hagony ! Exit, L.  
 JENNY. (*L.*) Oh ! this is delightful.—Ha ! ha ! ha !

MRS. W. For shame of thysen for laughing at, or listening to, him at all ; thou ought have boxed his ears, and thee going to wed wi' a marquis.

JENNY. Oh, dear no, mamma ; truth must out : Mr. Everard Digby is no more than a barrister.

MRS. W. Aye, to be sure ; that's his cognito.

JENNY. Ha ! ha ! mamma, the fiction of his being a marquis

was only a stupid jest, put upon you by Mr. Adolphus, and one to which Everard was never privy.

MRS. W. Eh! have they all been laughing at me for my mistakes. Well, they may call themselves ladies and gentlemen, but they couldn't do more if they were Bolton trotters; but never mind, I'm not so foolish as to make them laugh more by losing my temper. Thee shall wed wi' him all the same; and may be it's all the better, for thou mightst make a very good wife, wench, to a plain gentleman, and be but a poor catch for a marquis.

JENNY. Oh, mamma! a marquis can be no more than a gentleman. But you are right, I might falter, and trip under the weight of a coronet and an ermined robe; for I'm only a Lancashire wild rose, after all.

*Exit, R. 1 E.*

*Enter ROBIN, L.*

ROBIN. (L.) Where's my mother?—oh, she's here.

MRS. W. (R.) What is it you want, lad?

ROBIN. Well, you see, there's a lot of folks going to be wed. Jenny and her cognito—that's either a lawyer or a lord—I don't know which; and cousin and Miss Lucy; and so, ecod, I think I may as well have a turn mysen.

MRS. W. What do you mean?

ROBIN. Why, I wants to get wed, too.

MRS. W. Go on wi' you—it's too soon yet, wi' your smock face, to think of getting wed.

ROBIN. Why, I have as much right as Jenny, and more, if it comes to that; for I'm older, by a matter of two years.

MRS. W. That's nought to signify. The lad should always be a deal older than the lass. I don't mind thee flirting and sweet-hearting a bit, for lads will do it—it's only natural; but thee munnot think of getting wed these four or five years, when thee'll look summatar like a man.

ROBIN. Get off wi' ye! I mun not?

MRS. W. No; you mun not.

ROBIN. Then all fat's i' th' fire; and you mun pay damages for breach of promise.

MRS. W. Why; what hast done?

ROBIN. Why, I ha' done it.

MRS. W. What hast done?

ROBIN. Why, I dun it—axed lass to marry.

MRS. W. Well, she'll take no harm o' that, and won't die of fright.

ROBIN. No; but you told me I might gie her a buss; and when I met her again, and tried to, she wouldn't let me, and said that it was only proper between folks as wur going to wed; and so I up and axed her to wed wi' me; and she seemed struck of a heap, and couldn't answer; and that Mr. Adolphus coming

in overheard me, and advised her to take me, and told her I wur a good match—the only civil word he ever said before—and that she mightn't have such a chance again; and I said that he was right, for I wouldn't ax her or anybody else twice over.

MRS. W. That was right enough, and straight forward.

ROBIN. Well, then, she said summut about it's only being a joke, and that I wasn't in earnest; and Mr. Adolphus told me I mun write a letter, promising to marry her; and he wrote out a form, in which I promised to wed her right off, or forfeit £5,000; and I signed, and gie'd it lass, and she took it, but wouldn't gie me a buss then, till she saw you, and had your consent.

MRS. W. Eh! you soft one—I'll consent her—where is she?

ROBIN. There, outside the door, waiting till I call her in, to get your blessing.

MRS. W. Call her in. I'll give her a blessing.

ROBIN. No, will you? It's all right, then—come in, lass, mother consents.

*Enter MISS EUPHEMIA, L. 1 E. ROBIN puts her across to c.*

MRS. W. Come here, and look me in the face; thou shameless baggage, to go and take advantage of a poor, soft, ninny loike that lad, and hook him into a promise. For shame o' thysen; but thou shan't have him, nor touch a penny o' my money. I'll spend it all, to the last fraction, sooner than thou should'st get a farthing.

MISS E. (c.) What is the meaning of this?

MRS. W. To come over lad wi' your sly ways, and your coaxing looks, and your humming and hawing, and all the time you don't care the snap of my finger for him, and only want to get a tight hould of his bit o' money.

MISS E. Oh! this is too much. (*bursts into tears, crosses to L.*)

ROBIN. (c.) Eh! mother, dunnott be too hard on lass; see, thee'st made her cry.

MRS. W. (r.) Let her cry—she's only shamming—they can cry when they like—she's laughin' in her sleeve; but let her bundle out of my presence, or I'll put my mark on her—I will.

ROBIN. Na, na, mother. (*crosses to C.*) Dom me, if I stand it any longer. I'm my own measter, and I'll wed wench if I loike, and if I don't I'll go to sea, or list for a sodger, and I'll never see thee never no more; and you may gie all the money to Jenny. I'll earn my bread for mysen, for you're none behaving to me like a man—like a woman, I mean—nor a mother to me.

MRS. W. Eh! that's more than lad ever said to me before.

(*begins to cry*)

MISS E. Oh, Mr. Wildbriar, you should not make use of such language to your mother on any account. Don't let me be the cause of strife. Forget me—I make no claim—have

no right. Be ruled by your mother, she is the best guide for you, for no one can have your interest so much at heart.

MRS. W. And he talks of never seeing me, never no more, and all on account of you.

MISS E. He does not mean it; as for me, I shall not be the cause of dispute—I resign my hopes—I give him back his promise. (*crosses to c.*)

MRS. W. No, will you—the written one?

MISS E. What written one?

ROBIN. Haw! haw! haw! (*crosses to c.*) Eh! mother, didst think I was so soft, and I born in Lancashire? I wanted to try lass, and I offered to give her bond; she didn't know I was only trotting her, Bolton fashion; but she wouldn't take it.

MRS. W. Not take bond for £5,000!

ROBIN. No!

MISS E. No! for by refusing five, I made sure of a hundred.

(*aside*)

ROBIN. Nor give me a promise without your leave, and then I made up my mind to have her; but I thought it best to trot you a bit first, and I have done it nicely, too. Haw! haw! haw!

MRS. W. (R.) Eh! I dunnot mind, sin you were not so soft as I thought. Gie me a buss, lad, thou'rt thy mother's son.

ROBIN. And my feyther's, too.

MRS. W. Come here, lass, thou'rt a good wench. (ROBIN passes her to c.) And if you'll only wait five or six years—

ROBIN. Get off wi' ye, five or six years!

MRS. W. Well, then, a year or so; thou shalt have him, one hundred thousand pounds, and my blessing.

ROBIN. (L.) Hooray! hooray! And now mother and I'll both have a buss.

MRS. W. Aye, that we will. (*kisses her*) Come along, lass, and let's have a bit talk together, and get acquainted like. Thou'rt a bonny lass, too!

ROBIN. Eh! that she is, or she might ha' whistled for me.

*Exeunt, L.*

FRANK HAWTHORNE, L., dressed as for wedding, and

MRS. VAVASOUR, R., enter from different sides)

FRANK. I have been informed, that you wish to speak to me, madam.

MRS. V. Yes, Mr. Hawthorne; our mutual position, on the verge of a very close relationship, must excuse the freedom and confidential character of my speech. You appear to have taken umbrage at the little device Lucy and I put in practice in the early stage of our acquaintance with you, the motive of which was rather to elicit your character than to offend you.

FRANK. You are quite sure of that?

MRS. V. (R.) Well, I think—I'm sure that such was Lucy's idea.

**FRANK.** (*aside*) It is not true ; but on the woman's lips we forgive the white lie the mother's heart suggests.

**MRS. V.** Now, although previously Lucy may have had other prospects, of course she has of late looked forward only to her union with you, and has endeavoured to adapt herself to your ideas and views ; and it has pained me to observe that you have not seemed to appreciate her amiability in this matter.

**FRANK.** I thought the compliment was paid rather to the future fortune than to the future husband.

**MRS. V.** Oh, Mr. Hawthorne, you do yourself and my daughter, too, an injustice. Of course the fortune is an object —a great object—but we must have some little consideration for the husband as well.

**FRANK.** (*aside*) Extraordinary condescension !

**MRS. V.** Now, Mr. Hawthorne, Lucy has noticed your neglect, and, I perceive, feels it deeply. I have seen traces of tears in her eyes even this morning, and I wish that just before you depart for the church, or sign the settlements, you would say a few gentle words to Lucy, which will assuage her fears of not being liked by you, and give a little grace to the sacrifice she has made of all former views.

**FRANK.** (L.—*aside*) Sacrifice ! still sacrifice, and yet this plea. You think it possible, then, that otherwise, she might refuse me at the last moment ?

**MRS. V.** (*aside*) Refuse ! he mustn't think that. Refuse ! oh, dear, no ; she likes you too well for that, she must obey the will, she had always such a respect for your uncle ; his wish was law with her, and there is so much dependent on it, to refuse would be madness ; but she might show grief, perhaps burst into tears at the altar, and that would be such a scene—so painful, you know. A few kind words from you will spare us that, if you will be only good enough to speak them beforehand.

**FRANK.** Well, madam, I shall think the matter over.

**MRS. V.** Oh, I am sure that you will oblige me ; it will so comfort and encourage my poor child. *Exit, R.*

**FRANK.** How anxious this woman is to rose over the sacrifice of her child's feelings ; what tender care, what a delicate consideration, she has for appearances ; and with what cold-blooded determination she puts the knife into the breast of a first affection, that murmurs rebellion against the sway of self-interest ! With what surgical indifference she cuts off the superfluous growth of passion, and smiles the while the patient writhes and groans ! And yet she thinks herself a good mother, and is really acting and speaking under the instinct of a fond one. It is the Mammon worship that has perverted and corrupted in her breast that purest and most holy of all instincts, a mother's love, into a worldly policy, and made it a blight, and not a beauty—a curse, and not a blessing. (*crosses to R.*)

*Enter DR. PLAYFAIR and MR. CUNNINGHAM, L.*

DR. P. (L.) Here is old Punctuality as usual, not a minute before or after his time.

MR. C. (*crosses to C.*) Ah, Mr. Hawthorne, good day ; glad to see you; particularly as you are—toilet complete, exact to your appointment, and ready for the occasion. I congratulate you, sir, upon this business-like self-possession at such a moment ; marriage and inheritance—a lady wife, and a large fortune—very great trials for the nerves, as prosperity is harder to bear with equanimity even than adversity.

FRANK. (*aside*) Yes, for I am cool and calm, with the catastrophe of an epic foreshadowed on my heart. (*crosses to L. table*)

MR. C. Where are the other parties ?—no time to waste ; must put in appearance before twelve o'clock ; just eleven hours three minutes and fifteen seconds of the day gone ;—it will take fifteen minutes to sign settlements, &c., and another quarter of an hour to reach the church.

DR. P. I object to that—only ten minutes, as the carriages are ready at the door.

MR. C. Tut ! we must make allowance for the ladies, shawling and bonneting, sure to waste time.

DR. P. I don't object to that ; they always do. (*at L. table*) I sent word that you had arrived, and, see, our friends are here.

*Enter SIR LIONEL NORMAN, HON. AUGUSTUS ADOLPHUS, MRS. VAVASOUR, JENNY, and LUCY, R., dressed as for bridal—EVERARD DIGBY, MRS. WILDBRIAR, ROBIN, JENNY, and MISS EUPHEMIA, L.; JENNY crosses L. to LUCY.*

MR. C. Good day, good day, ladies and gentlemen. You are all aware that this is the last hour of the six months prescribed for determining the recipients or application of the large amount of the late Mr. Hawthorne's property, under his will, formally read by me. Here are two forms of assent and dissent, for Lucy Vavasour and Francis Hawthorne, either of which they will please to sign within the five minutes (*looks at watch*) that I can spare for a reconsideration of their previous determination. (*hands two forms to LUCY, ditto to FRANK—FRANK rises*)

MRS. W. (*up, c.*) What nonsense ! as if either would be so soft as to refuse.

ROBIN. (*up, L.*) Cousin won't, I hope : but no fear ; he was

MR. C. MRS. W. ROBIN. EUPHEMIA.

Table.

JENNY.

SIR L. Table. LUCY. MRS. V.

\* EVERARD.

ADOLPHUS.

FRANK. Table. DR. PLAYFAIR.

R.

L.

brought up in Lancashire, and he's got his head screwed on right way.

MRS. V. (*who has crossed to FRANK, c.*) Oh, Mr. Hawthorne, won't you say a kind word to Lucy?

FRANK. No, madam; your daughter's feelings, or her policy, must direct her choice. I shall not light one false beacon on her path, nor cast the lure of one persuasive word to tempt her into infamy.

MRS. V. Well, well, don't speak so loud, she might hear you.  
(*crossing back to LUCY*)

DR. P. (*L., to FRANK: rises*) Remember, if you make a fool of yourself, and refuse, I shall object to you all my life. (*seats himself again*)

MRS. V. Oh! Lucy! Lucy! don't refuse; don't rush into poverty. I'm sure he'll be a kind man, and let you have your own way.

LUCY. Heaven grant that now he may prove a harsh one.—But, hush! mother, hush! I am listening to my heart.

MRS. V. (*R.*) Oh! don't—don't! listen to anything but that;—listen to your mother's prayers and entreaties.

LUCY. (*R.*) He's watching us;—his mind is resolved. I know—I know his thought. Ah! a gleam of hope! I see the way. Yes, mother, yes! I, too, have resolved.

(*embraces her mother. FRANK shrugs his shoulders: she sits down to table, R.; hesitates for a moment; signs one of the papers, and then buries her face in her hands on table*)

FRANK. (*L., aside*) She has signed the consent—I am sure of it. Yes, the struggle was fierce, but short, and Mammon has prevailed. (*goes to sign, L.*)

ROBIN. Mind what you're about, lad; and don't sign wrong paper.

ADOL. (*R., aside to SIR LIONEL*) If he should, the mortgages upon the baronetcy would soon be liquidated.

FRANK. 'Tis done!

(*DR. PLAYFAIR takes paper to CUNNINGHAM, and returns to seat, L. C.*)

MR. C. Mr. Hawthorne—Miss Vavasour—the five minutes have expired. The assent forms that you have signed, if you please.

LUCY. (*to her mother*) Take it—give it—I cannot!

FRANK. (*at table, L.*) Some shame left still; even that's a virtue—a poor one—only to be prized from all the others' absence.

MRS. V. Here, here, Mr. Cunningham, is my daughter's—good child. I am so happy!

MR. C. (*reads at table, c.*) "I, Lucy Vavasour, do hereby affirm, declare, and make known, to the executors and trustees, "under the will of the late George Hawthorne, and to all parties "having an interest therein, that I accept the condition attached "to a joint inheritance with Francis Hawthorne, under said

"will ; and agree to contract the bonds of legal marriage with  
"the said Francis Hawthorne, on this day, January 6th, 1858.  
"Witness my hand and seal—**LUCY VAVASOUR.**"

**MRS. W.** (*up c.*) Good lass, and a happy wedding to thee!  
**ROBIN.** (*up c. L.*) And many of them!

**OMNES.** Ha! ha! ha!

**MRS. W.** Eh ! the lad thinks a wedding like New Year or Christmas day.

**JENNY.** Hush ! mother, hush !

**MR. C. (reads)** "I, Francis Hawthorne, do hereby affirm,  
"declare, and make known, to the executors and trustees under  
"the will of the late George Hawthorne, and to all parties  
"having an interest therein, that I——" Ahem ! eh ! bless  
my soul ! Have you mistaken the document, sir ?

**FRANK.** No.

**MR. C. (reads)** "That I decline to accept the conditions  
"attached to a joint inheritance with Lucy Vavasour, under  
"said will." (*LUCY starts up*)

**MRS. W.** Why, he's gied her all the property.

**ROBIN.** (*L.*) Eh ! the d—d fool !

**MR. C. (reads)** "And hereby formally and finally refuse to  
contract a marriage with the said Lucy Vavasour. Witness  
my hand and seal—**FRANCIS HAWTHORNE.**"

**LUCY.** (*rushing forward, and falling on her knees*) Thank  
Heaven ! (*R. C.*)

**FRANK.** (*rises, L. C.*) Aye ! thank Heaven that I have had  
more pity on thee than thou hadst upon thyself; that I have  
spared thee the equal sin and torture of an unholy marriage—  
the life of wretchedness that must have ensued from wedding  
one your heart abhorred.

**LUCY.** (*R. C., rising*) Sir ?

**FRANK.** Aye, look angrily ; it had become thee better but a  
moment before. Listen—harken all—my motive for this deed,  
not from vain-glory do I publish it, but to vindicate the act  
from any suspicion of recklessness, or want of due consideration.  
I did admire—did love this woman. I have no shame in the  
avowal, even when I knew she loved me not. I might have  
continued to love her, had she continued to make plain her  
known dislike, but tempted by this mighty wealth, she made a  
bargain with her pride—her heart—to hide themselves, till she  
had grasped some part of the golden prize.

**LUCY.** Indeed, sir ?

**FRANK.** Indeed, indeed. What, then, remained ? The sacrifice  
of wealth—vast wealth, 'tis true, and almost fabulous, or the sacri-  
fice of honesty and self-esteem, the double sacrifice between us  
—man's honor, woman's purity—those first great principles, in  
which consists the soul's true likeness to its Maker—more vast  
than time or space—the true illimitable—the eternity ! I could

not—did not hesitate, and have no pride of what I've done, save what accrues from simple self-respect preserved. I am accustomed to an humble life, can live it contentedly; you could not; and in a worldly point of view, the lesser forfeiture is mine. May it lift thee to the full height of the generous nobleness that often springs from vast possession, never doomed to companionship with pettiness of thought, a little meanness, or a wrangling envy.

SIR L. (R.) Oh, this is truly noble—truly generous.

ADOL. He's a great character.

MRS. V. (up, R.) Accept our thanks.

FRANK. Spare thanks—acknowledgments. I do not reciprocate your esteem. I have no wish to be rude, but henceforth we are strangers. (*crosses L. to DOCTOR, and then goes up stage*)

MRS. W. (*comes down, c.*) He's the man for my money. He shall have my daughter Jenny.

JENNY. Hush! No, no, mamma. (*coming down*)

EVERARD. Second cousins can't marry, you know. (*jestingly*)

MRS. W. Then I'll have him mysen, if he'll have an old woman and £50,000.

ROBIN. Get off, and sit down, do. Shut up, mother!

LUCY. (*to FRANK, who has shaken hands with DR. PLAYFAIR, and is going*) Stay, sir, one moment, if you please; we have had too much of double-dealing and stage-play. I would escape all further deception—run no risk of a snare. Is this document really formal and sufficient, Mr Cunningham?

MR. C. It needs but our attestation as witnesses, that we have seen him sign. (*FRANK comes down L. C.*)

LUCY. Let that be done, and, pray, in the gentleman's presence. (*DR. PLAYFAIR and CUNNINGHAM sign*) And now you tell me, in your character of executors and trustees, that this makes me mistress of all—that the whole of the fortune belongs to me—to me alone.

DR. P. and MR. C. It does.

LUCY. (*crossing to FRANK*) Then I shall wear the willow all my life, and have it planted on my grave, if you a second time refuse me.

FRANK. How?

LUCY. (*holding up scroll*) I know by these dear words, (*shows song*) you love me still; and I am thine—thine, heart and soul, and have been long.

FRANK. Oh, heaven! Can this be true, or is it a cruel jest?

LUCY. I knew your doubts; I guessed your proud resolve. Had I refused, all had been lost. This mighty wealth, your just inheritance, I made but mine to give it with myself to thee.

FRANK. Lucy, (*they embrace*) God bless thee!

ROBIN. Hurrah! hurrah? Lancashire for ever!

DR. P. Silence!—No, I don't object to that. Hurrah!

MRS. W. Who cares if thee did, man? The lad's our cousin, and lass mun be our cousin now, and I'm glad on it, for she's best in house.

DR. P. It was my device that brought you together—taught you to know each other. You owe all your happiness to me.

JENNY. I object to that, doctor. My cousin will own to having taken a hint from a clever little girl, and Lucy must admit being in my debt for a glimpse into her lover's heart.

LUCY. No, no; I will not admit being in debt to any one but to my husband, to whom I owed all my heart three months ago.

FRANK. My love had still an earlier date; it sprang into existence with my first glimpse of thee.

JENNY. There's ingratitude!—what selfish creatures lovers are!

DR. P. I object to that, or you and I would mind our own business.

JENNY. Why you are not in love, are you? With whom?

DR. P. I object to telling you, or anybody else.

JENNY. Never mind, I shall find out, as sure as I'm a clever little girl. I suspect already it's with my mother.

DR. P. No, no, no; I object to that.

JENNY. Ha! ha! ha! that's the very reason I believe it. Ha! ha! mamma, will you have the doctor for a beau?

MRS. W. Noa, I should object to that; no, thank you; if I wanted to make a fool of myself, I should have a better excuse for it than a cranky old body like that.

ADOL. (R.) The poor baronetcy has lost its chance of escape from the usurious clutch of the mortgagees.

SIR L. But the baronet has received a lesson that has raised him above participation in such regrets. Mr. Hawthorne, I trust you will this time accept the congratulations on your great and deserved felicity, which I most sincerely proffer.

FRANK. Manfully and generously spoken, Sir Lionel, and in the true spirit of that chivalry which has ever been, and I trust ever will be, the prevailing characteristic of an English gentleman. (*shakes hands*) And hark ye, Messrs. Executors, if not upon so great a scale as suggested by the codicil, still we shall have the school; for to be a man of the day, one must have regard to the interests of the coming man.

ADOL. (*rises and comes to R. C.*) Mr. Hawthorne, if you should feel disposed to extend your investments—

FRANK. Unfortunately, I have no overstock of modesty or of common sense, or, in charity to your need, I should lend you some, Mr. Adolphus.

DR. P. I should object to your lending him anything. Both his head and his heart are fruitless soil, and never would repay culture.

ADOL. I beg pardon ; look at my hair and whiskers. (*they all laugh*) Oh, I don't mind being laughed at by such an exceedingly happy and fortunate gentleman as Mr. Hawthorne, or even by his friends, on the occasion of his wedding ; but Dr. Playfair, I must object to being made the butt of your jests, after to-day.

DR. P. Well, I don't object to that, for I hope never to see you after to day.

*Enter JAMES, L.*

JENNY. Here comes James, to tender his resignation.

JAMES. Oh, no ; I perceive there is going to be a coalition between the *h*opposition and *h*independent parties, and as my politics are very promiscuous, I beg to say, "that I am willing to continue in *h*office, which *h*is always the grand *h*object of a *h*upper.

OMNES. Ha ! ha ! ha !

MR. C. And so the great Hawthorne property having been legitimately disposed of, and to everybody's satisfaction, ladies and gentlemen, I beg to inform you, that we have just thirty-five minutes, seven seconds, and a half left, to reach the church and get the marriage over : make haste ; even a wedding can have no greater grace than punctuality.

OMNES. Oh, yes, yes !

MR. C. Indeed I shall give you one minute and a half, to name its rivals.

SIR. L. High connexions !

ADOL. Good investments !

EVERARD. Honour and affection !

JENNY. A little shrewdness !

MRS. W. No double dealings on either side !

MISS E. Sentiment and simplicity !

ROBIN. Ay ! wedding first, and dumplings after !

DR. P. A little objection to be got over.

JAMES. *H*office and perquisites to follow.

MRS. V. A great inheritance.

LUCY. No ; the union of hearts with hands. (*giving her hand to FRANK*)

FRANK. The truth lives not alone in one grace, one virtue, but in all ; and as we are certain to lack some, to ensure happiness we should temper the conscious pride of our respective merits with a charitable consideration for their companion faults, and so preserve them from that dangerous affinity to vice, which virtue's self acquires when she runs into Extremes.

MR. C. LUCY. FRANK.

MRS. V.

MRS. W.

EVERARD.

ROBIN.

JENNY.

MISS E.

SIR L.

DR. P.

ADOL.

JAMES.

R.

L.

**Curtain.**