

SIR A. — THE SAVAGE. — DR.

— SIGNATURE OF DRASTILO. — BOCCONI OVER VORI. — VOGO  
— L'ESPRESSO DI ROMA. — LEADER OF THE

# KING RENÉ'S DAUGHTER

A LYRIC DRAMA

FROM THE DANISH OF HENRIK HERZ

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY THE

## HON. EDMUND PHIPPS

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LONDON.

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KING RENE'S DAUGHTER.

HENRIK HERZ was born in 1798, of Jewish parents, and not converted to Christianity till 1832. His prospects in life were early clouded by the total destruction of the house and property of his mother (then a widow) by the bombardment of Copenhagen in 1807. The period of his youth was, however, that of the golden age of Danish poetry. The two greatest poets since the days of Holberg, viz : Baggesen and Øehlenschläger, divided at that time the attention of their countrymen. As a boy, he knew almost by heart Øehlenschläger's tragedies, but his great delight was our Shakespeare, whom he studied in the able translation by Foersom. Beside several poetical effusions from the early age of 17, he wrote in 1830 anonymously, but with great success, pieces for the Copenhagen boards. It was not till 1832 that he made his name known, and he was very soon after, by the liberality of the Danish government, (ever ready to cultivate the public property it possesses in the genius of its sons,) enabled to improve and extend his powers by a tour through Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and France. Soon after his return he bore fruit in his most famous work, *Svend Dyring's Hüs*. Up to this time his fame had only extended (beyond the narrow limits of his own country,) into Norway and Sweden ; but upon the triumphant success of "King Rene's Daughter," in 1845, it was at once translated into German, and given with immense applause at all the principal theatres. If it have not the power and national character of *Svend Dyring's Hüs*, it has a dreamy mystery, an earnest simplicity and an originality of conception peculiarly attractive to poetical temperaments.

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This charming play has been thrice translated into English :—  
by Jane Frances Chapman, in 1845 ; by the Hon. Edmund Phipps, and by Mr. Theodore Martin, in 1848.—T. H. L.

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## KING RENÉ'S DAUGHTER.

First performed at the Theatre Royal Dublin, November 28, 1849.

Before Her Majesty at Windsor Castle.

At St. James's Theatre, April 10, 1850.

### CHARACTERS.

King René	St. James's.
Count Tristan of Vaudemont	Mr. STUART.
Sir Geoffrey of Orange, his Friend	Mr. C. KEAN.
Sir Almeric	Mr. WEBSTER.
Ebn Jahia, a Moorish Physician	Mr. B. WENTWORTH.
Bertrand	Mr. HOWE.
Iolanthé, the Blind Daughter of King René	Mr. ROGERS.
Martha, Wife of Bertrand	Mrs. CHARLES KEAN. Mrs. H. MARSTON.

The action takes place in Provence, in a valley of Vaucluse, and lasts from the afternoon to sunset.

The period is the middle of the Fifteenth Century.

### COSTUMES.

**RENE.**—Ample robes of puce velvet, trimmed with dark fur, cut square at the neck, showy habit shirt, yellow tights, ankle shoes with long peak at the toes, gold chain round the neck, sword, belt, and chain, a turban head dress. The hair was worn long on each side and at the back, but cut straight across the forehead, moustache and beard were not generally worn.

**TRISTAN.**—A gold embroidered shirt very short and full, with full sleeves, green embroidered tights, yellow morocco boots, with long pointed toes, gold chain, sword belt and sword, circular cap and feather.—*2nd. dress.*—Complete suit of plated brass and steel armour of the period (Henry VI of England.)

**GEOFFREY.**—Short full shirt trimmed with fur, scarlet tights, buff boots with pointed toes, high crowned hat (the brim straight in front, but turned back and fastened to the hat behind), gold chain, sword belt, and sword.—*2nd dress.*—Complete armour of the time.

**SIR ALMERIC.**—Same as Sir Geoffrey's first.

**EBN JAHIA.**—Dark robes, buff shoes, turban, grey hair and beard, dark complexion.

**BERTRAND.**—Brown shirt trimmed with dark fur, turban cap, ankle shoes with pointed toes, buff belt, grey hair.

**SOLDIERS.**—Half armour of the time.

**IOLANTHE.**—Dress described on page 4.

**MARTHA.**—Short-waisted dress of brown stuff, trimmed with fur, pointed shoes, coif cap of black velvet trimmed with gold lace, grey hair.

## THE DANISH AUTHOR'S REMARKS

## UPON THE REPRESENTATION OF THIS DRAMA ON THE STAGE.

THE part of Iolanthe requires great simplicity in the delivery, in fact, almost infantine innocence. The poem\* which she *improvises* in the fourth scene, is spoken with simple pathos, but with an increasing intensity. Her carriage, her step, and her movements are to be noble. Her royal descent should be evident. In the fifth scene, where the communication made by the king affects her whole previous existence, her diction, though still soft and gentle, becomes more animated; that speech in which she alludes to the creation of the universe is delivered more rapidly, almost passionately, for the experience of her whole former existence is the foundation of the feelings she expresses. In the closing speeches of this scene, where Love's influence is recognized, her impressions become more intense and lively. In the last scene of the drama, she is to appear at first overwhelmed, and, indeed, horror-struck, by the strangeness and novelty at all that she, for the first time, beholds, and only gradually to subside into peace. Her blindness is to have a natural, but never otherwise than an agreeable character. When she plucks fruit from a high tree, she is still to keep her eyes cast down; and when she would grasp at anything, (as Tristan's hand, or that of the king), her movements are to be sometimes at fault. From the listening attitude she assumes, and from the gentle stretching forth of her arms, the constant impression should be, that it is with her ears, or with her touch, her sight's defect is compensated. Her costume (at least on the Copenhagen boards) is at the same time simple and regal. A white robe of some clear transparent material, adorned at the breast, the wrists, and the bottom of the skirt, with gold embroidery, without any further ornament of a nature merely calculated to please the eye, except always such appendages of use, as a girdle of gold, brooch, &c. Over the brow and round the head passes a golden circlet, to keep the hair in its place. The costume of Ebn Jahia was (on the same stage) entirely of a Moorish character; a turban, of a shawl pattern, and (over a dark close fitting under garment) a white loose flowing robe, a short ornamented mantle finishes his costume; his complexion very dark. In his first interview with Iolanthe, in the fifth scene, he is, unperceived by her, to examine her eyes from time to time. Of the remaining characters I shall only notice Bertrand and Martha; their speeches in the first scene, from the reference they have to what is to follow, are of great importance. Martha, who is intended to be a superior person of the middle class, delivers her speeches with a not unfeminine confidence and decision. Her part is a small one, but by no means unimportant; the same may be said of that of Bertrand.

\* Omitted in representation.

*The lamented Translator of this play kindly expressed his intention of making no charge for its representation.*

## KING RENÉ'S DAUGHTER.

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SCENE.—*On the R. of the stage is a one-storied house covered with ivy and roses—Venetian blinds to the windows—at the back of the house is seen a garden flourishing in the richest Southern vegetation—near the front, on both sides, are tall palm trees; behind the garden is some rocky ground, overgrown with thick shrubs, and in L. C. of this, a door, so concealed by moss and large stones, that it is only perceived when it is opened—behind are seen in the distance very high mountains.*

BERTRAND comes out of the house R. and speaks in a subdued tone.

BERT. Some one approaches! 'Tis no doubt a messenger  
Come from the King.

*Goes to the secret door, L. C., which he opens, and admits SIR ALMERIC, but keeps him near the entrance, and prevents him advancing further.*

Sir Almeric! You here?

Nay, halt! Stand back! for no one passes hither.

ALMER. (L. C. up stage.) I may, at least.

BERT. (c. up.) Nay, sir, I am in earnest,  
For no one enters here. You did deceive me.

Hearing the wonted signal, I supposed  
It surely was Raoul.

ALMER. Raoul comes not;

The King commands me so to tell thee, Bertrand ;  
 Here is his signet ring, and here his letter to thee,  
 Of which I am the bearer.

(BERTRAND takes the ring and the letter.)

BERT. His signet ring ? where is it ? 'tis indeed  
 The King's. And this his writing ? I will read it.  
 (reads.) "Sir Almeric is to be trusted ; give him  
 Free knowledge on all points he may require."  
 That is another matter. Sir Knight,  
 Be not offended at my caution. You  
 Who know the purpose of this fair retreat,  
 Know too, that caution is to me a duty.

ALMER. I know the object of this fair retreat ?  
 Not I ! The king's behest brought me indeed  
 Through dismal valleys and o'er rugged rocks,  
 Unto this door. I am astonished here  
 To find (once past this narrow rocky clift)  
 A paradise. Nay, what is this, too, here,  
 A noble mansion, every thing so rich  
 And beauteous ! Tell me, then, what means this  
 mystery ?

BERT. (in a doubting tone.) Know you then nothing from  
 King René ?

ALMER. Nothing.

BERT. That is unfortunate ; from me, of course,  
 Still less can you expect to hear.

ALMER. Nay, Bertrand —

BERT. Not I ; 'tis my fixed purpose.

*Enter MARTHA, from house, R.*

MARTHA. Whom are you speaking with ? Sir Almeric !  
 You here ?

BERT. (to MARTHA.) He hath the king's own ring, and  
 knoweth, too,  
 The private signal how to enter here ;  
 All else is strange to him.  
 Therefore he must at once depart.

ALMER. I must ? Though sent here by the King ?

BERT. You must.

MARTHA. Stay, Bertrand, let us speak. (to ALMERIC.)  
 What was your message, sir ?

ALMER. To say that in an hour or so, the King,

With his physician, Ebn Jahia, cometh.

MARTHA. I know him well—a man of great repute.

ALMER. He comes here with the King; and yours the care,

(Such were his words,) that all be well prepared,  
As the physician had already ordered.

MARTHA. This

Was all you heard from him?

ALMER. Nay, little more:

All that he added was to me a mystery;  
First stood he deep in thought; awhile he said,  
“Remember, sir, I reckon on thy truth.  
My daughter thou wilt find where thou art going.”  
Tell me, I pray ye then, what daughter was it  
Of whom King René spake, for Margaret  
Is, as we know, in England and Iolanthe—

MARTHA. Is here!

ALMER. Is here! Iolanthe is in Spain,  
In that same convent where from her youth  
She hath been ever nurtured.

MARTHA. No, Sir Knight,  
Iolanthe liveth here. It is indeed,  
As you well say, a mystery, and one  
Of deep import. Although thus far concealed  
From all the world, the time is near at hand,  
When all must be revealed.

ALMER. Nay, but I pray  
Tell it me now.

BERT. As 'tis the king's command  
I will. You know of course the ancient feud  
Between King René and Count Vaudemont?

ALMER. I know it well, and that 'twas set at rest  
By mediation of the Duke de Burgundy,  
By which King René's daughter, Iolanthe,  
Then newly born, was to the only son  
Of Count Anton de Vaudemont betrothed.

BERT. May it all end so, but alas, Sir Knight.  
Soon after this compact, within the palace  
Broke out in midnight's gloom a sudden fire:  
Iolanthe, then an infant, hardly saved

From burning, and surrounded on all sides  
 By the hot enemy, was cast perforse,  
 As a last hope of safety, from the height  
 E'en to the lowest base of the king's palace.  
 Her life was saved, but whether from the fright,  
 Or from the headlong fall, the heavenly light  
 Of her young eyes was quenched.

**ALMER.** She lost her sight?  
**MARTHA.** Alas, she did! And now you comprehend  
 Our grief, her father's deep despair; a child  
 So full of fairest promise sunk in darkness.  
 The hopes that hung upon her life destroyed,  
 The deadly feud with Vaudemont renewed,  
 Nay, even more embittered: for the Count  
 Will hardly choose the blind one for his bride,  
 Nay may, perhaps, believe the compact made  
 In pure deceit, with one already blind.

**ALMER.** What course then did the king  
 Propose?

**BERT.** At first to keep unknown the fact  
 That she was blind; this with a child so young  
 Was easy; till at length from Cordova  
 He brought this moor, this Ebn Jahia,  
 This famous leech, who gave us counsels wise,  
 How she must nurtured be. At length he cast  
 The horoscope of her nativity.

**ALMER.** And then?

**BERT.** And then he gave us brighter hopes,  
 That if she reached sixteen she would recover  
 In the relaxed nerves, their former tone,  
 And see again. To-day, then, will she number  
 The sixteen years complete, and Ebn Jahia  
 Is with the King.  
*He says the time hath not yet come. Heav'n knows  
 If it will ever come.*

**ALMER.** (*after a pause.*) Iolanthe, how bears she the sad  
 affliction?

**MARTHA.** She knows not  
 That she is blind.

**ALMER.** Knows not that she is blind!  
 Surely you do but jest with me?

MARTHA. The truth of all I say you shall yourself  
 Experience ; yet must I charge you nearly  
 Not to put forth one word that can refer  
 To her lost sight, such caution hath been practised  
 By all that hither come. You may not mention  
 What eyesight only tells of, the broad glare  
 Of day, nor the moon's softer light, nor e'en  
 The blessed stars above ; for in her night  
 No stars e'er glimmer.

ALMER. This then alone the cause why thus remote,  
 She still has lived from the world's intercourse,  
 Which else had told of sorrows now unknown.

BERT. 'Tis even so !

She knows each nook, can pass from place to place  
 Unguarded and alone ;  
 She can work, can ply the needle,  
 Even tend her own garden, and is ever gay.

ALMER. One question more.

Living with you, thus from the world apart,  
 Believes she that this vale is all the world ?

MARTHA. Iolanthe is not in such solitude  
 As you suppose. There is beyond the mountains  
 Saint Clara's Convent, and the holy Abbess  
 Or the good nuns will oftentimes visit her.

ALMER. And thus  
 She nothing misses ; and is thus content.  
 All the rich treasures that the world can offer,  
 All its brave gauds she knows not of. Where  
 Is she now ?

MARTHA. She sleeps !

ALMER. At such an hour ?

BERT. One hour daily doth she sleep,  
 'Tis her physician's order ; but 'tis not  
 A gentle, natural slumber. I know not  
 What I should think of it ; indeed by some  
 Mysterious communion, and strange signs,  
 Can Ebn Jahia close her eyes in sleep  
 At any moment : then upon her breast  
 He lays a talisman of mighty potency.  
 And not till this be first  
 Removed, awaketh she. (*a sound of a bell is heard.*)

MARTHA. Bertrand, 'tis the bell—the King  
Approaches!

BERTRAND *exits through the secret door*, L. C.

ALMER. Comes the king often hither?

MARTHA. When he sojourns at his castle here  
We see him frequently; and then again,  
When business or far travel hinders him,  
'Tis months or ere he comes to visit us.

ALMER. Knows Iolanthe that her sire is king?

MARTHA. She knows it not, but only  
She calls him father, and with all of us  
His name is still Raymbaut, a troubadour  
Of great repute.

ALMER. Here comes the king.

*Enter the KING, EBN JAHIA, and BERTRAND, through the secret door, L. C.*

KING. How goes all with Iolanthe?

MARTHA. Thus far as we would wish.

KING. Thou knowest well  
All he hath told thee, and no doubt have followed it  
Exactly. Has Iolanthe worn each night  
The bandage on her eyes?

MARTHA. She has, sire!

KING. (*to EBN JAHIA.*) Come, then, Ebn Jahia, see  
How far your skill hath worked! Go to Iolanthe!  
Bertrand and Martha follow! be ye ready,  
Should he have need of aid!

EBN JAHIA, *accompanied by BERTRAND and MARTHA,*  
*goes into the house, R.*

KING. (c.) Well, Almeric, wast thou not full of wonder  
At the first sight of this fair, peaceful vale—  
Is it not a little Paradise?

ALMER. (R.) Truly it seems a vale of beauty and of  
happiness.

KING. Oh that my fate had been so blest that here  
I might have lived mid all I treasure most,  
Science, philosophy, and nature's charms;  
How gladly had I then resigned all else,

Naples, Lorraine, e'en to the bitter feud  
With Vaudemont.

ALMER. That feud is at an end,

Since even now the presence you await  
Of the Count Tristan here; then all must end  
In happiness.

KING. I hope it will be so.

But hush! I hear them speaking. Ebn Jahia  
Hath roused her. She hath raised her heavy eyelids.  
Listen! She speaks; but still as if she dreamed,  
While he, into her eyes, looks steadfastly.  
And now he placeth gently on her breast  
The amulet, and see she sleeps again.

ALMER. 'Tis strange.

KING. Yea, very strange, this Moorish Leech  
Posseteth pow'r that might awaken terror.  
He cometh! Leave us, Almeric. Yet first  
Betake thee to the Castle; I must tarry;  
Should any letter come from Tristan, hasten  
To bring it here. Thou know'st the private signal.

ALMER. Ay, my Liege.

*Exit. L.C.*

EBN JAHIA enters, R.

KING. (*turning to him.*) Comest thou, Ebn Jahia,  
Like the bless'd dove with olive-branch of Hope?  
Thy countenance is earnest and mysterious  
Like to thy art. I cannot well decipher  
Its mystic characters; then speak!

EBN. (c.) The best  
Of hopes I have.

KING. (R. C.) In truth? Oh, tell me then  
On what 'tis founded; what thy present plans;  
And what thy practice. Thou knowest  
How noble and how dear a part of man  
The eye. Thou never sure could'st bring thyself  
E'en to approach Iolanthe's beauteous eye  
With any cutting instrument.

EBN. Be comforted, the surgeon's aid were vain  
In such a case.

KING. What is thy purpose then?

EBN. Nay, be content. My healing art depends

On secret mysteries I may not tell.  
 'Tis not this instant's thought, but long prepared  
 From day to day. The moment is at hand  
 When it must stand the test. The day of trial  
 Is even now arrived—this day she sees—or never.

KING. This day?

EBN. When sunset's hour  
 Is come, and its bright glow hath given place  
 To milder twilight, such as best may suit  
 Eyes all unused to its meridian blaze,  
 'Tis then the instant that I seek.

KING. The time is come at last, oh! Ebn Jahia.

How I from day to day, from hour to hour,  
 Have looked and longed for it; and yet, at last,  
 When it is come, oh! my heart sinks within me,  
 So that I fain would yet the hour postpone.  
 Yet, be it so. Soon will the sun be set,  
 And with it set, perhaps too, my last hope.  
 Well, let it be. But thou art deep in thought.  
 How? Dost thou then hesitate?

EBN. No, my liege.

KING. Thou doubtest? Thou dost fear that we shall fail.  
 Is it not so?

EBN. My liege, be comforted,  
 It is not *that* I fear, there is another  
 And greater obstacle which thwarts my skill.

KING. An obstacle?

EBN. There is, my liege,  
 One that to touch, I fear you'll scarce consent.  
 Iolanthe must, before my great essay,  
 Know that, of which she now is ignorant,  
*This day she must be told that she is blind;*  
 She must be rendered conscious of her need.

KING. What say'st thou? Never, Ebn Jahia, never!  
 That shall she never hear.

EBN. It must be so,  
 Or all my art is fruitless.

KING. Never, never!  
 Could'st thou so merciless, so void of pity be.  
 What! now disturb—and oh! if now, for ever,  
 This sweet unconsciousness, on which is built

The happiness we value. Not by degrees,  
 Not with all tender caution, but at once,  
 And suddenly—must we thus tear aside  
 The veil that from herself hideth her misery.  
 And if we fail? Oh! hast thou then forgotten  
 How we for years have all our cares devoted  
 To keep the truth concealed! It is, indeed,  
 Thine own contrivance. *Thou* hast shown the way  
 We must pursue, and now thou would'st thyself  
 Dash thine own structure to the ground! And why?

EBN. The why were easily explained, my Liege,  
 Would you but calmly listen. You suppose  
 The sense of sight is lodged within the eye,  
 Whereas this eye is but the mere machine.  
 The fount of sight streams from the inmost soul,  
 And in the secret chambers of the brain,  
 The eyes' fine nerves convey each nice impression.  
 Iolanthe must exactly know her state.  
 We must arouse *the eye within* to action,  
 Ere that *without* can ope to light. The soul  
 Must wake to a conception, a desire,  
 A clear idea, a longing after light.  
 For, rest assured, Sire, nought to man is given,  
 Unless he first within his heart conceive  
 An ardent wish to gain it, and will ply  
 With earnest mind, the means by which to do so.

KING. I mean not, oh, Ebn Jahia! to measure wisdom  
 with thee. I only know  
 That pity cries aloud within my bosom,  
 And I can *not* do it—nay, 'tis impossible!

EBN. Do as you will, I have but power to counsel.  
 Hast thou not confidence enough to follow  
 That counsel, I am useless. Fare thee well,  
 I'll to the Abbey, where I'm to be found  
 Should you bethink you better; yet remember,  
 Let but the sun once set, this day be past,  
 All that my art can do is gone for ever.

*Exit at door, l. c.*

KING. (*alone.*) He seems determined,—yet at such a price  
 To purchase an uncertain hope! A hope  
 That may but disappoint! Charge in a moment

Her innocent, unconscious, pure existence  
 With sadness that may not be soothed :—to see  
 Her tender youth wither from day to day  
 By knowledge of her loss. Oh ! it is madness,  
 Pure madness ! Ebn Jahia *shall* hear reason,  
 I will not rest until he yieldeth to me.

*Exit at door, L. C.*

*Enter BERTRAND and MARTHA R.*

MARTHA. The King away, and as it seemed in anger.  
 The Leech, too, is not here ; what can have happened ?

BERT. Nay, I know not. Yet I own I like not well  
 Men of so close a nature, so mysterious,  
 So chary of their words as Ebn Jahia ;  
 I always feel a curious sort of shudder  
 With men of such a fearful power as he.  
 There lieth the poor maiden on her couch  
 As she were dead ; let him but give a sign  
 And suddenly, as by a miracle, she sinks  
 In sleep. I like it not.

MARTHA. Nay, never fear,  
 And burden not thy mind with fruitless dread.

BERT. Well, time will shew. Now let us go,  
 We can put all in order : the poor maiden  
 Is safe, and sleeps till we return.

*Exeunt behind the house, R. U. E.—a pause.*

SIR GEOFFREY. (*without, L. C.*) Take heed, 'tis dark as  
 night.

TRISTAN. (*without.*) Nay, forward, forward,  
 Here is a door.

SIR GEOFFREY. (*without.*) A door ?  
 TRISTAN. (*without.*) And here the spring,  
 'Tis open.

*Enter TRISTAN DE VAUDEMONT and GEOFFREY OF  
 ORANGE, each bearing a guitar suspended round his  
 neck, L. C.*

TRISTAN. What's this I see ?  
 SIR G. By heaven, what  
 A perfumed world of flowers !

TRISTAN. How, a garden  
Here 'mid the barren mountains? Oh, what beauty—  
What taste displays itself!

SIR G. I am amazed;

TRISTAN. But you who know the country can inform me  
Who the possessor of these sweets may be?

SIR G. Nay, I know not, for I have never dreamt  
Of such a spot.

TRISTAN. But the inhabitants?

SIR G. I can see no one,  
The garden has, methinks, been called to life  
In one short night, to be the chosen scene  
Of happy dalliance with Endymion,  
By Diana's self, who coyly would conceal  
Here, mid the lofty mountains of Vaucluse,  
From the rude world, her secret happiness:  
'Tis now once more deserted.

TRISTAN. Nay 'tis inhabited by mortals.. See,  
Fresh footsteps may be traced.

SIR G. 'Tis so, indeed,  
A dainty little foot hath formed them;  
These then shall guide us.

TRISTAN. Nay, that were too presuming, wait we rather  
Till some one comes this way, 'tis bad enough  
Thus far to have intruded.

SIR G. As you will,  
If all go well as it thus far hath done  
I am content. What better could we wish,  
Permitted, first all undisturbed to sing  
Beneath the very cloister wall, our melodies,  
Then, of a sudden, do we far below  
Desery King René as he passeth on,  
Buried in thought, with him the Leech from Cordova.  
You would avoid the King, and, in the instant,  
Drag me o'er ridge and stone, till we discover,  
At the rock's foot, an artificial passage.  
We enter, grope our way in darkness on,  
And reach at length this fair and peaceful haven.  
And yet, one thing I own doth puzzle me,  
Why you thus fly from him you came to seek,  
Entreating me with so much earnestness

To bear you company? Besides, 'tis known  
To all of us, you are betrothed to one  
Of the King's daughters.

TRISTAN. Yea, betrothed indeed;  
Scarce nine years had I numbered, when my father  
And Burgundy arranged it, and arranged,  
At the same time, their feud for fair Lorraine;  
Manhood hath crowned me since. If the compact  
By which the fruits of victory were lost  
Is hateful to me, still more hateful is  
The mode by which they sealed it; all unwilling  
Came I thus far, and all unwilling would  
A single step advance this contract.

SIR G. For the king's sake I grieve to hear it, he  
Who hath so long rejoiced at the betrothal.

TRISTAN. Perchance to him it may be full  
Of benefit, and yet— Know you his daughter?  
SIR G. I know her not. In Spain, within a convent  
She has been nurtured, whence, at your arrival,  
She will be summoned hither. But you forget  
Where we now are; 'tis true we have got in,  
And quite as true the place is beautiful;  
But the grand question is, shall we be able  
As easily to quit it when we wish?

TRISTAN. Nay, never fear for that!

SIR G. At least discover  
Whether inhabitants are here or no.  
Will you not try the door, or else shall I?

TRISTAN. (*crossing to door, r.*) Leave all to me, and if  
some evil genius  
Reigns in the place, 'tis but right  
That I who brought you here should run the risk.

(*knocks at the door, r.*)

SIR G. Try if the door yields!

TRISTAN. (*opens the door.*) Ah!  
What a sight meets my view!

SIR G. A spirit!

TRISTAN. Yes!

It is indeed a spirit, but of light.

See, see!

SIR G. (*looks in.*) A beauteous maiden, on a couch.  
She sleeps!

TRISTAN. She sleeps! Her bosom's rise and fall  
Tells of a living being: see the smile  
That plays upon her mouth.

SIR G. I pray you, Tristan, let us fly from hence—  
This lovely vision fills me with alarm:  
'Tis too entralling, too beauteous; here  
Is but some haunted castle; sprites invisible  
Hurry us into toils. Oh, let us flee!  
Tristan! why speak you not? Tristan! Oh, ye  
heavens,

He is already caught! spell-bound he stands  
As rooted to the spot. Tristan! come back!

TRISTAN. (*who is gazing in ecstacy.*)  
Speak lightly, Geoffrey, she might chance awake—  
Speak lightly—it were sinful to disturb  
The gentle calm which by her blessed slumber  
She sheds on all around.

SIR G. Nay, only hear me!

TRISTAN. Silence!—Be still, I say; this spot is holy!

(*kneels down, stretches his arm towards the open doors.*  
Oh, pardon me, that with a glance profane  
I have approached thy resting place!

SIR G. Stand up!  
It frightens me to see thee thus unmanned,  
By foul enchantment. Follow me! This vision  
Is all deceptive! Follow me!

TRISTAN. (*rising.*) I cannot!

SIR G. Stand not thus like a statue,  
If fly you will not, then arouse your spirits,  
And let us, if we can, discover who  
The maiden is, and waken her.

TRISTAN. Nay, nay,  
That were a sin.

SIR G. You will not? Then will I.

GEOFFREY enters the mansion.

TRISTAN. The reckless one—he speaks to her—he dares  
To seize her hand!

GEOFFREY comes out terrified.

SIR G. Away, away!

I cannot waken her. She is spell-bound

Under some secret devilish power! Away!

We have thrust ourselves, alas!

Into some sanctuary to court our death!

TRISTAN. A sanctuary! truly 'tis one; but 'tis

For life, and not for death; yet art thou right.

We must withdraw from off this holy ground,

Where we have but intruded. See, she sleeps,

It were unknightly to remain. *He goes in, R. 2 E.*

SIR G. He kneels!

He presseth on her hand a kiss, and gazeth.

How he doth gaze! Now from her swan-like neck

Hath he a ribbon loosed—he brings it with him—

And, Heaven be thanked, at length he comes again!

*TRISTAN comes out.*

TRISTAN. Now have I deeply on my heart engraved

Her lovely image, never to depart.

Now, let us go; yet have I sworn

To visit her again, and in her dreams.

If I were not deceived, she seemed, methought,

To smile upon that vow. This ornament

(A polished stone that lay upon her breast)

I have ta'en with me; so shall this jewel tell

The influence, that even sleeping, she

O'er my whole life has gained. Come, Geoffrey.

*He prepares to depart, with GEOFFREY, by the secret door,*

*IOLANTHE appears at the door of the house, R.—Notwithstanding Iolanthe's blindness her movements are composed and serene; only now and then, by a listening attitude or a gentle advance of the hand, as if feeling before her, does she betray her want of sight. The eyes are open but often cast down, or at least their movement is slight.*

IOLANTHE. (still at the door, R.) Martha! Bertrand!

TRISTAN. Behold! she comes.

IOLANTHE. There spoke

Some one. (goes towards TRISTAN, following the sound.) Who's there?

TRISTAN. A stranger, lady, who

Must crave forgiveness, that so bold he was  
To break the quiet peace that reigneth here.

IOLANTHE. Give me thy hand; this is the first time thou hast

Been here. Thy voice I know not. Camest thou  
To speak with Bertrand, or with Martha here?

TRISTAN. To speak with no one. Chance alone it was  
That brought me here.

SIR G. (*aside to TRISTAN.*) Ask her, who is this Bertrand?

IOLANTHE. (*listening.*) Who is it with thee now?

TRISTAN. My friend,

A troubadour, and noble knight, fair lady.

IOLANTHE. Ye both are welcome. Will ye not then enter

Into the house? 'tis cooler there.

SIR G. (*quickly.*) By your leave  
We will remain without. (*aside to TRISTAN.*) 'Tis better so.

IOLANTHE. (*who has taken TRISTAN's hand.*)

Thy hand is warm, the heat hath been oppressive.

Wait, and I will bring thee wine.

*She goes into the house, R. 2 E.*

TRISTAN. Oh! what a gracious being, what a mild

And holy gentleness, and what a noble brow.

And then her winning voice.

SIR G. 'Tis true, indeed,

One feels as if enchanted when she speaks.

She must be sure of noble birth, and yet

Caution were best. So when

The wine appears, drink it not, Tristan.

TRISTAN. From her fair hand with joy would I drink death.

IOLANTHE enters with a flask of wine and cup, R. 2 E.

IOLANTHE. Here bring I wine such as my father drinks,  
For me too potent 'tis. Will you not taste it?

*(fills the cup and hands it to TRISTAN.)*

TRISTAN. (*as he drinks it.*) All joy to you, my young and beauteous lady.

IOLANTHE. There, take the pitcher; pour too for thy friend,

If he will drink it. I, the while, will pluck  
Some fruit, the swelling grape, some dates, or such  
As you may fancy.

*(she takes a small basket and gathers fruit from the trees.)*

TRISTAN. Drink thou! *(offers the goblet to GEOFFREY.)*

SIR G. Do you feel

Nothing? No giddiness?

TRISTAN. Nay, do not fear.

SIR G. Call you this wine? By heaven 'tis Malvoisie,  
Such as King René's self might boast; my Tristan,  
I drink the wine, but all the sin be yours!

IOLANTHE. *(approaching them again.)* Here bring I fruit,  
if you would choose any.

I put them here down on the table.

SIR G. Oh, noble lady, deign to forgive the question;  
I fain would ask what noble house your birth may  
claim,

And who your father?

IOLANTHE. What! you know not that?  
I am surprised! for no one e'er comes here  
That knows him not.

SIR G. How then is he called?

IOLANTHE. The others always call him Sir Raymbaut.

SIR G. Raymbaut? Is he a knight?

IOLANTHE. A knight?

SIR G. A warrior,—

Wears he the helmet, shield, and golden spur?

What's his condition?

IOLANTHE. That have I ne'er inquired.

SIR G. Why do they then so strictly keep you?

IOLANTHE. Strictly?

SIR G. I mean so lonely.

IOLANTHE. Lonely, am I not.

There you are wrong.

SIR G. And yet there's no one here!

IOLANTHE. 'Tis true now there is not, so are you right.

I know not why—for I am ne'er alone;

But wait and I will call them. Bertrand, sure,

Will be delighted at your coming here!

*She goes into the house, R.*

SIR G. Now will it then be shown to whom belongeth  
 This valley, yet I cannot but believe  
 There is some secret purpose, which the lord  
 Of this fair garden gladly would conceal.  
 Have you remarked how carefully with moss  
 And stones the entrance is o'erlaid? once shut,  
 'Twere hardly from the rocks around, distinguished.  
 Follow my counsel, and of this same door  
 Still keep in reach. I shall go forth, and seek our  
 train; then

If danger threatens, we may avert it. (TRISTAN  
*crosses to house.*) My Tristan,

Thou dost not heed me?

TRISTAN. Yes, go, go at once.

SIR G. Ah! he is sick at heart under the spells  
 Of the young beauty.

TRISTAN. Sick, indeed, at heart,  
 Distracted in my senses am I, Geoffrey.  
 It seems me as this quiet vale were  
 The very goal I have aspired to reach,  
 As if here, haply, my ambitious soul  
 Had found the peace it needeth.

SIR G. Have you then  
 Forgotten that King René e'en now awaits thee?

TRISTAN. The King, indeed! what is the King to me?  
 Must I for that which is by right my own,  
 Gained in fair fight, enchain myself in youth  
 Unto his daughter, known to none, whom none  
 Have ever seen, while here—

SIR G. You must be mad.  
 The future must be borne, as best it may,  
 Meantime, 'tis clear you are bewitched, enchanted.  
 Restrain this sudden passion, I entreat you.

TRISTAN. (*crosses, l.*) Could I do so, then were I not  
 enchanted.

SIR G. Hist, some one comes, be silent.

*Enter IOLANTHE, r.*

IOLANTHE. Are ye here still?

SIR G. (c.) Will you not lead us to the house's master?

IOLANTHE. (*a little cast down.*) Ah! they are all away,  
and no one came,

Although I called them; they have all deserted me.

TRISTAN. Sure they will come again?

IOLANTHE. No doubt they will,  
They're at the vintage, where I too should go,

For always one is with me.

SIR G. (*aside to TRISTAN.*) You remain.

TRISTAN. (*crosses to her.*) I do.

SIR G. Then fare ye well, I go to act  
As I have said.

*Exit, l. c., first making an inclination to IOLANTHE, which she notices not.*

IOLANTHE. (*listening.*) Your friend is gone away?

TRISTAN. He goes but to return; yet with your pardon,  
I must confess a wrong I did you, which  
Must be repaired; this ornament I took  
While you were sleeping, it was but intended

As a remembrance. Here it is.

(*gives her the jewel which he had brought away with him.*)  
IOLANTHE. Where? This!

A jewel. Is it mine? Belongs it to me?

TRISTAN. As I conjecture.—

IOLANTHE. Nay, it is not mine;

I will ask Martha. (*she lays the amulet on the table.*)

TRISTAN. As a compensation,

Give me, I pray, but one of these red roses,  
Which, as your fitting image, raise their heads  
Amid these blooming flowers.

IOLANTHE. What, a rose?

With pleasure.

(*plucks and gives him a white rose from r. 1 E.*)  
TRISTAN. Ah! but 'tis a white you've pluck'd!

Give me a red one, beauteous as yourself!

IOLANTHE. How dost thou mean a red one?

TRISTAN. One of these!

(*points with the hand.*)

IOLANTHE. Take it thyself then!

TRISTAN. Rather let me have

What your fair hand has gathered as your choice,

The white rose.  
There slumbers a pale dreamy red that seems  
Like to the dreamy beauty of this garden.  
Give me one other yet ! also a white one,  
So will I then with *both* my bonnet deck,  
And think I wear your colours.

(*She plucks and gives him a red rose from R. 1 E.*)

IOLANTHE. Here is a rose, then ; was it this you meant ?  
TRISTAN. I asked a white one of you !  
IOLANTHE. Well, and this ?—  
TRISTAN. This ! this ! (*aside.*) What dire foreboding  
thought ; (*aloud.*) Say quick,

How many roses hold I in my hand ?  
(*holds up the roses together with others which he himself  
has hastily gathered.*)

IOLANTHE. (*stretching out her hand for them, without  
directing her eyes towards them.*)

Give me them, then !

TRISTAN. Nay, without touching them !

IOLANTHE. How is that possible ?

TRISTAN. (*aside.*) Ah, heaven ! then she is blind !

(*aloud, but in subdued tones full of emotion.*)  
IOLANTHE. If one desire to know a thing, its form,  
Or number, one must touch it, that is clear.

TRISTAN. (*doubtfully.*) Yes, yes, in truth you may be  
right, and yet

Sometimes, you know—

IOLANTHE. Sometimes ! Speak on, speak on !

TRISTAN. I mean that—that—there are such things

As one by colour only can distinguish,

As many sorts of flowers, many textures.

IOLANTHE. You mean their properties and forms—

Is it not so ?

TRISTAN. Nay, 'tis not merely that.

IOLANTHE. Is it so hard, then, to distinguish flowers ?

Are not the roses round, and soft, and delicate,

Soft to the touch e'en as the Zephyr's breath,

And warm and balmy like a summer evening ?

Is the carnation like the rose ? Oh, no !

Its perfume stuns one like the wine which late

I gave thee. Then the cactus ; know'st thou not

Its points are like the wind, in sharpest frost?  
TRISTAN. 'tis strange! Have you then never yet been told

That to distinguish objects from afar  
Is possible by help of—of sight?  
IOLANTHE. How? from afar? Oh yes, the little bird  
That sits on yonder roof, I can distinguish  
By its light twittering, and all who approach  
Each by his speech; so do I also know  
The bounding steed, on which I daily ride,  
Far as he may be, by his step and neighing;  
But by the help of what you call sight,  
Of that, I have heard nothing. Is it then  
Something, of artificial composition, or  
Some simple tool? I know not of this sight—

Thou canst, perhaps, tell me its use or profit?

TRISTAN, (*aside.*) Great Heav'n! she knows not then that she is blind!

IOLANTHE. Tell me, from what far country com'st thou hither.

Thou hast expressions no man uses here;  
And in thy speech there is, as I have said  
Already, so much new and strange to me.  
If, then, the valley where thy days are spent,  
Differs so much in all things from this spot,  
Tarry, I pray, yet longer here, to teach  
My mind those things it should be taught to know.

TRISTAN. Nay, fair young maiden, 'tis not in my power  
To tell you all that you do lack.

IOLANTHE. Methinks,  
Hadst thou the will, the power would not be wanting,  
And yet I have been told I'm teachable;  
And many a one that here hath visited  
Hath taught me somewhat, which I ever seem  
To comprehend so clearly. Do but try!  
I cannot be deceived. Thou surely must  
Be full of kindness, for thy voice's tone  
Is kind and friendly. Thou wilt not refuse?  
I know thou wilt not? I'll be so attentive:

TRISTAN. Alas! 'tis not enough to be attentive.  
But tell me this: have you not well remark'd

There is no portion of your corporal frame  
 That is without its use and proper office ?  
 The hand and finger grasp each varied object ;  
 Your little foot, small as it is, can bear you  
 Where'er you will with ease. The spoken word,  
 Or tone of music, fills your inmost soul,  
 Traversing first the portals of the ear.  
 A stream of eloquence flows from the lips,  
 And the light breath's fair mansion, is the breast  
 Rising and sinking with its peaceful fall.

IOLANTHE. All this I have well noted—but proceed.

TRISTAN. Tell me then, for what use do you imagine  
 Heaven hath bestowed your eyes ? What profit  
 Have you derived from the twin pair of stars,  
 Which with such brightness shine, they seem to  
 court

The rays of light to penetrate within them ?

IOLANTHE. (*moves her eyes, and remains thinking a moment.*) You ask me what the use,—how strange the question,

And yet—I never have considered that.  
 And yet—my eyes—nay, it were sure most easy  
 To tell you that; when at the evening's close  
 Fatigue hath seized me, sleep doth press them down,  
 Sealing them up in sweet oblivion,  
 And spreads, through them, its peaceful influence  
 O'er my whole frame, as is communicated  
 The touch by contact with the finger's point.  
 There, then, at once, thou hast one great advantage  
 My eyes afford me; further, hast thou not  
 Observed, too, other uses they can serve ?

As I a little rose-tree late had planted,  
 An insect stung my finger; at the pain,  
 Gushed forth my tears, and soothed it. Then, again,  
 When I myself had wearied much to think,  
 Wherefore my father so delayed to come;  
 When he *did* come, oh, how I wept for joy !  
 Through tears then, when my heart is all too full,  
 Either with joy or grief, is it relieved  
 As by a gracious overflow; and yet  
 Thou can't inquire for what use or benefit  
 The Power Almighty gives me eyes. By them  
 When I am weary, rest is given. In grief,

My grief is 'minished ; and in joy, my joy  
Ennobled and refined.

TRISTAN. Forgive me, lady,  
My question was presumptuous, for in you,  
Is such an inward clearness of the soul  
That you require no light to penetrate  
Through the eyes' portals. Oh ! fair unknown,  
If you with mortals have a common origin,  
Traced up to mother earth, if you have part  
In all the passing pleasures of this life,  
Deign to receive a knight's true homage ! Hear  
The vow he utters ; ne'er shall mortal woman,  
High as may be her birth or beauty's fame,  
Efface thy image graven on my soul.

IOLANTHE. (after a pause.) How thou dost speak ! 'Tis  
wonderful ! 'tis beauteous !  
Say, from what master hast thou learnt the art  
To fascinate the ear with words of mystery ?  
To me it seems as if I trod alone  
Some unaccustomed path, yet all thou sayest  
Is excellent, nay, 'tis almost divine.  
Speak yet again, yea, rather speak not, let me  
Still in my fancy listen to those words,  
Which at once please and puzzle me.

GEOFFREY rushes quickly in, l. c., with his sword drawn.

SIR G. (aside to TRISTAN.) Good Tristan,  
Far in the distance I have seen approaching  
A troop of armed men. Remember, here  
We are alone. Exit GEOFFREY, l. c.

TRISTAN. (to IOLANTHE.) My fair and noble maid,  
I must away.

IOLANTHE. Ah ! wherefore would'st thou go ?

TRISTAN. I come again, and soon, even to-day.  
Will you not, measure with your hand, my height,  
That when we meet again you may the better  
Remember me ?

IOLANTHE. Measure thy height ! and wherefore ?  
Know I not thy very voice's tone ?  
There is no voice, no tone in nature,  
Nor e'en in any instrument I know,  
That has so soothing, yet so full a sound,  
So honey sweet to me as is thy voice !  
Thee I should know, believe me, among all,

TRISTAN. Then fare you well, until we meet again.

IOLANTHE. Give me thy hand. Farewell! Thou comest then,

And comest quickly. I shall look for thee.

TRISTAN. (*kneeling, kisses her hand.*) Oh! doubt not I shall quickly come again,

Or that my wishes urge me. Though I go,  
I leave with thee the best part of myself

To stay with thee, and what remains to me  
Of life is wedded to thy memory. Farewell!

*Exit by the secret door, L. C.*

IOLANTHE. (*alone, listening.*) He's gone, already by the mountain's side

Where stranger foot-falls oft have met my ear.  
His light step is just audible; and now  
It is no more. Yet, hark! once more, again!  
And now 'tis past indeed. Comes he again?  
What, if like many a visitor before,  
He could come *but this once*. Nay, he has promised  
To see me yet again, even to-day.  
And now the dew is falling, night is near.  
To-day, it cannot be, perhaps to-morrow.  
Meanwhile 'tis all so lonely.

*Enter MARTHA from behind the house, R. U. E., who, on seeing IOLANTHE, approaches her quickly.*

MARTHA. How, my child, What see I? Thou'rt wakened, and art here.

IOLANTHE. Oh, Martha! thou art come to me at last.  
Where hast thou been?

*Enter KING RENÉ and EBN JAHIA through the secret door in the back-ground unnoticed, and remain listening.*

MARTHA. Among the labourers. But speak! who did awake thee?

IOLANTHE. I awoke Myself.

MARTHA. Thyself? I can remember nought Beside. But list! for I have news for thee;

I have had visitors.

MARTHA. What visitors? Two strangers, whom, however,

I know not; who have never been before.

'Tis such a pity thou wert absent.

MARTHA. Child!

What strangers? and from whence?

IOLANTHE. (interrupting her.) Nay, for the whence they came,

That I inquired not. Thou hast often said  
One should not urge with idle questioning  
A stranger guest.

MARTHA. Who was it then, my child?

IOLANTHE. Of that I know not.

MARTHA. (interrupting her.) And thou wast alone?

IOLANTHE. I called aloud to thee; thou hearest not.

MARTHA. (aside.) Merciful heaven! I'st possible? (aloud.)  
Yet tell me—

IOLANTHE. Ah, Martha, never yet was visitor

Like unto them, at least to one of them:

It cannot be, but that his residence  
Is in some far-off land, quite different  
From this our valley; for he had a power,  
And yet a mildness in his speech, so full  
Of love and friendship, just like to thyself.

MARTHA. Calm

Thy spirits, my sweet love. (aside.) What's this I  
hear?

(aloud.) Yet say, what next did he impart to thee?

IOLANTHE. Oh! much, much that was new and wonder-  
ful;

He had full knowledge of so many things  
That I, as yet, had never heard. He said,  
And yet I understood it not; he said  
That one could even at a distance truly  
Distinguish objects by the help of sight.

MARTHA. (aside.) Oh, heaven!

IOLANTHE. Dost thou conjecture what he meant?

MARTHA. (seeing the KING.) The King!

KING. (aside to EBN JAHIA.) Oh, heavens! what is this  
I hear?

She is already then informed.

(comes forward with EBN JAHIA.)

My daughter!

IOLANTHE. (falling on his neck.) My dearest father, art  
thou come again.

KING. I bring thee thy physician, Ebn Jahia.

IOLANTHE. He too here; but where is he?

EBN. (*reaching her his hand, R. of her.*) Welcome lady.

(*the KING takes MARTHA aside, L., while EBN JAHIA speaks to IOLANTHE, and without being remarked by her, examines her eyes.*)

KING. (*to MARTHA.*) What has occurred?

MARTHA. Alas, I cannot tell; During her sleep, in confident reliance She could not waken of herself, we left her. Meantime, she says, yet 'tis scarce possible, A stranger hath been here to visit her.

KING. The spring I forgot to close of yonder door. So then this stranger spake?

MARTHA. He spake, so far As I can gather, in the deep confusion In which she now is plunged, even of her blindness.

KING. Of her blindness? 'Tis then heaven's will That she should be informed of it. Thou hearest, Ebn Jahia?

EBN. Chance hath worked With us. A stranger hath awakened her, I found upon this table here, the amulet. Yet, still she comprehendeth her condition But darkly; and my counsel even now Is, that at once you should impart all to her, As you have promised.

KING. I have duly weighed The consequence, and I will risk it.

(*approaches IOLANTHE, who meantime has been talking to MARTHA.*)

Lend Your most attentive ear to me, my child; No longer now dare I conceal from thee, That an important crisis of thy life, Which all thy firmness will require, is come. Wilt thou with patience hear me, and with patience (E'en though some sad and unexpected blow Should threaten), bear that blow?

IOLANTHE. Oh! speak my father, The blow will be the lighter if announced By thy dear lips.

KING. List to me then, my child. I know not what the stranger may have told thee, But deem he has betrayed to thee, what we Thus far have anxiously concealed, the fact,

That there is wanting to thine inward soul,<sup>of T</sup>  
 One powerful aid to comprehend the world  
 In which thou livest ! this, alas ! is true.

That which is wanting is the power of sight.

IOLANTHE. That did he tell me, but I understood not.

KING. Know then a wondrous power there doth exist,

That hath the name of Light. Like the wild wind  
 Or rushing storm, it cometh from above,<sup>not</sup>  
 And travelleth, like them, with boundless speed.

To every object that it resteth on, <sup>and I named</sup>

It giveth its own shape and character.<sup>such ev</sup>  
 Oft is it in close union with the heat.

And yet, this power of sight, my darling child,  
 Thine eye did early lose. The pride and riches

Of the great world were thus shut out from thee.

All our best care could but in part supply.

The loss which childhood bore. All we could do  
 Was to diminish from that suffering.

Thou must encounter, and conceal its cause.

IOLANTHE. Full my dear father are thy words of import,

To me incomprehensible.

The stranger, who was here but even now,<sup>it but</sup>  
 Whose words into my heart sank deep, of Sight

He also spake to me. What is this Sight ?

Can I his voice, which with half pain, half pleasure  
 Struck on my soul, this voice, too, can I see?

Or say, my father, can I see the warbling  
 Of the sweet nightingale, whose trilling notes

I oft, yet still in vain, have tried to follow,

From bush to bush, in fancy ? Is his song

A flow'ret whose sweet perfume I know,

But not its shape, its stalk, nor yet its petals ?

KING. Alas ! my daughter, each of these thy questions

Pierceth me to the heart. I have a kind of Hope,

A Hope that thus far hath supported me,

That we may yet thy sight recover for thee,

That thy dear eye may yet to light be open.

Thy friend and teacher here, good Ebn Jahia,

Hath long devoted all the skill, as Leech

He hath, to find a favourable time

For his endeavours, and that hour is come.

Have confidence in him, my daughter ; go,

Go with him to thy chamber ; Martha with thee.

First gentle sleep shall seize thee, and from thence

Thou wilt (with much emotion.) perchance awake to sight; if such should be the will of Heaven!

MARTHA re-enters, R.

IOLANTHE. What fails thee, my dear father? how thou tremblest;

Art thou not pleased, that now is come the hour  
Thou hast so long attended? Say thou fearest  
That all thy Hopes may fail; yet, even then,  
Remain I but henceforward, as before,  
The daughter whom thou lovest, ever happy  
In that most precious love, and quite contented  
With this her fate. So let me then go in.

KING. My darling child.

IOLANTHE. Fear not. (RENÉ puts her gently over to R.) What my wise Teacher

Hath thought on so intensely will succeed.  
I feel it will—I have an inward presage,  
As if I could already know within me  
That wondrous power of Light thou hast described.  
Thou didst say, its power was swift,  
And that where'er it comes it lends a form  
And character peculiar, that with warmth  
It oft is close united, the heart's warmth—  
Is it not so? Oh, yes, I know it is!  
If that is the effect of light, I feel  
That it is working even now within me!  
But in one thing thou'rt wrong; not with the eye  
Doth a man see. No, down here in the heart,  
Lieth the sense of sight. 'Tis even here,  
Is treasured like an echo, the remembrance  
Of light I have already half received,  
And which I go to meet in its completeness.

Exit into the house, R., with MARTHA and EBNA JAHIA, who has meanwhile approached her.

KING. Who then can have been here? Bertrand perhaps  
Can tell me something.

Enter ALMERIC, by the door L. C.

KING. Almeric—returned!

ALMER. I bring you, sire, a letter.

KING. And from Tristan?

(opens the letter.) Yes, 'tis from him. What's this he writes me? Ha!

The contract he had formed he would resign.

**ALMER.** He would annul it?

**KING.** How strange! he freely doth confess his wrong,  
And leaves to me the compensation due.

But he rejects my daughter's hand. (*crosses R.*)

**ALMER.** Most insolent!

**KING.** 'Tis my sad fate that ever follows me,  
And seemeth at this hour an ill presage.  
Have I not still (in thought) on this betrothal,  
With all its cherished hopes, ever united  
My daughter's cure? And thus *one* hope is gone,  
As may perhaps, how shortly, be the other.  
But no! I'll not debase my mind with fear.  
Come what come may, Heaven is above all yet.  
Who was it gave the letter to thee?

**ALMER.** One  
Of Geoffrey's vassals. Tristan stays, he says,  
With Geoffrey.

**KING.** How? With him! then there may be  
Some room for hope, as he, perhaps—but hark!  
There is a sound of weapons at the entrance.

**ALMER.** (*who goes to the secret door.*)  
Some one is forcing in his way.

**KING.** By force!  
Infamous!

**ALMER.** There are here, my liege, but few  
Of our own people.

**KING.** Draw thy sword, for no one  
Shall cast a slight on René unchastised.

*Enter TRISTAN, in glittering armour, with armed SOLDIERS, who remain at the entrance. During this scene, the glow of sunset is shed over the valley, and lasts to the end of the piece.*

**TRISTAN.** Back! for your men already are subdued.  
Yield yourselves prisoners! (*crosses to L.*)

**KING.** And who art thou,

Darest in arms approach this place? Go back,  
Go back, or ere my fury strike thee down. (*crosses, c.*)

**TRISTAN.** Spare thy big words, for I am without fear,  
I well believe the devilish power of magic  
Is strong within this place, but I am armed;  
Though all the spirits of the air were with thee,  
Thou foul magician, and thy secret powers,

Thrice what they are, I fear not.

KING. Madman ! say

What brings thee here ?

TRISTAN. Answer me, art thou not

The owner of this valley ?

KING. Yes, indeed,

The owner of this valley, and much more ?

Who then art thou ?

*Enter GEOFFREY, L. C.*

SIR G. What see I, René ! (*kneels.*)

My royal master !

TRISTAN. (L.) How, the King !

KING. (R. C.) Thou, Geoffrey,

With one who thus attacks the King in arms ?

SIR G. (C.) Forgive me, he preceded me, I came  
Too late.

KING. Tell me once more, who art thou ?

TRISTAN. Tristan de Vaudemont, a name that should  
Be not unknown to thee.

KING. What ! Tristan ! Nay !

Is it indeed so ?

SIR G. Yes, my liege ! 'tis Tristan.

KING. (*after meditating.*) And was it you, that once before  
to-day

Were here ?

TRISTAN. 'Tis true, I have indeed been here ;  
Chance, not courtesy, the cause. I knew not  
That you were master of this spot.

KING. And now,

What brings you here again ?

TRISTAN. Amid this vale of flowers, among a world  
Of wonders, dwells the wonder of them all,  
A beauty, none of all the troubadours  
Of fair Provence were worthy to describe.

KING. Know you who  
This wonder is ?

TRISTAN. I do not. Yet high birth  
And natural nobility, is written  
Upon her brow.

KING. And it escaped you not,  
That while thus bountiful in other gifts,  
Nature had shown herself, one thing unto her  
Was wanting ?

TRISTAN. Ah ! that she is blind ;

But is there not enshrined within her soul

A light that far o'erbalances that want ?

KING. You know then she is blind, and yet—and yet—

TRISTAN. I am her humble suitor.

KING. By my troth,

You are the greatest wonder then of all !

You make your way, in arms, into this place,

To seize by force what is already yours,

And which you proudly have rejected.

TRISTAN. How ! How !

Is that, my King ?

KING. Know then, this dazzling beauty

Who has enchanted your senses is—my daughter.

TRISTAN. Your daughter ?

KING. Yes, young Count, the very same,

Whom by your letter you refused to marry ;

The same, of whom you have so rash a scorn,

That to escape her you renounce Lorraine.

The same, in short, you have so much enchanted,

I doubt, poor thing, if she could now resign you.

TRISTAN. Ah ! Is it true ? These words intoxicate

My senses.

KING. 'Tis indeed so.

TRISTAN. Wherefore, then,

Dwells she—

KING. Alone, within this valley. All

Shall soon be clear to you ; but know, Sir Count,

That you have chosen for your hither coming

An all-important hour. At this moment

Is my beloved child, perhaps for ever,

Condemned to darkness, or for ever blessed

By glorious vision of the light.

TRISTAN. Is't possible ?

KING. Even now is Ebn Jahia (the wise Leech

From Cordova) in anxious expectation.

There is a stir within there ! List again !

She speaks ! Oh ! Tristan, 'tis my daughter's voice !

Ah ! be they words of joy or disappointment

That pass her blessed lips ? I hear a footstep !

*EBN JAHIA comes from the door first, he leads IOLANTHE by the hand, and gives a sign to the others to withdraw*

*to the back-ground. These express in dumb show their interest and sympathy in what follows.*

IOLANTHE. Oh, whither dost thou lead me !

Oh, where, where am I ? Hold me fast—support me.

EBN. Compose thyself, my child.

IOLANTHE. Nay, hold me ! wait—

Stand still a moment. Here I ne'er have been !

What do we in this place ? So strange ! Who's there ?

Hold me ! My head is swimming—I am full

Of terror !

EBN. Calm thyself, Iolanthe. Fix thy glance

Upon that earth alone, which hath so long

Been still unknown thy friendly stay, and which

E'en now doth meet thy untaught glance so truly.

That which thou seest, it is but the garden

Which thou thyself hast planted.

IOLANTHE. This my garden ?

I know it not ; and see what fearful plants !

They bend ! they bend ! as they would fall on us.

EBN. Fear nothing. These are but the palms, whose

leaves

And fruits thou knowest long full well.

IOLANTHE. Nay, nay,

I know them not ; this brightness, too, which dazzles

Cn every side, and all the swelling clouds

That spread above so high—alas ! how high !

What is it ? Is it His Spirit,

Which, they say, doth fill the universe !

EBN. Nay, nay ; this brightness is the light's reflex.

The blue which marks the arched vault above,

That is the Heavens ; and we believe in Heaven

He hath His dwelling place.

IOLANTHE. Ah ! tell me,

Tell me, I pray tell me, what are these ?

EBN. Thou knowest them !

IOLANTHE. Alas ! I know them not !

(the KING, much moved, approaches her.)

KING. My Iolanthe ! know me—know thy father !

IOLANTHE. (falling on his breast.) My father ! Gracious

Heavens ! Thou art my father ;

Yes ! now I know thee, that is by thy voice.

Stay by me ; be my guardian and my guide.

I am so strange within this world of light,  
They have ta'en all away I used to know !

All that once made my happiness is gone !

KING. I have been seeking to provide for thee  
In this new world a guide.

IOLANTHE. Whom meanest thou ?

KING. (*pointing to TRISTAN.*) There standeth he.

IOLANTHE. That stranger !

KING. Thou knowest him—hast lately spoken with him.

IOLANTHE. With him ? With him ?

(*holds her hands before her eyes.*

Oh ! now I understand thee.

Within that noble form, methinks must dwell  
That voice I heard

So full of mingled majesty and gentleness.

(*to TRISTAN, who approaches.*) Oh speak ! but one  
word, speak as thou didst speak !

TRISTAN. My sweet and beauteous lady !

IOLANTHE. Hark ! 'tis so !

In words like these, the earliest gleam of light

Found way into my heart, there to remain

Now and for ever treasured in my soul.

TRISTAN. (*pressing IOLANTHE to his breast.*) Iolanthe,  
noble, noble creature !

KING. (*raising his hands over them.*) Blessing  
Descend upon you from that mighty Being,  
Whose gracious work we see and reverence.

### SOLDIERS.

SIR G.

TRISTAN.

IOLANTHE.

KING.

EBN.

BIRMINGHAM  
FREE  
MARTHA.

LIBRARIES  
BERTAND.

CURTAIN.