GRIEVING'S A FOLLY:

Serfoji Raja 1827

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED BY THE DRURY-LANE COMPANY,

AT THE LYCEUM THEATRE, STRAND.

BY RICHARD LEIGH, ESQ.

LONDON:

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PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1809.

PROLOGUE,

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY MR. EYRE.

WHEN with a trembling heart an author sues,
And begs protection for his Virgin Muse,
The Prologue, counsel for the plaintiff's case,
Intreats for mercy, and implores for grace.
" This is the poet's cant," I hear you say,
" An old, stale trick, practis'd before to-day,
" To make us tolerate some wretched play."
Yet, if we place before some longing guest,
Immortal *Shakespeare's intellectual* feast,
So pamper'd is the taste, so weak the head,
Some, rather would go supperless to bed,
Would rather cloy on sweets, nay, rather fast,
Than come to banquet on the rich repast—
At treats like those, few visitors are found,
For *novelty* they crave the whole year round.
Since then variety gives such delight,
Three novelties we offer here to-night—
The first, a theatre, compact and small,
Where (without glasses) you may *see* us all;
The next, a building, where we need not bawl,
For, if you listen, you may *hear* us all;
The third and last great novelty we boast,
And what will probably surprize you most,
Is, that our author—wond'rous to be told!
Is not a needy wight who writes for gold!
'Till now a stranger to the walks of fame,
Friendship and science were his only aim,
There, center'd ev'ry hope, there, ev'ry view,
'Till Fancy rais'd the thought of pleasing you,—
And with the feelings of a Patron fir'd,
He *freely* gave us what his Muse inspir'd!
Then on his efforts be not too severe,
Nor damp the ardor of a *volunteer*:
Where judgment censures let your mercy plead,—
But spare his errors for the gen'rous *deed*!
Thus bolden'd by your smiles, some future bard,
May seek, e'en here, the poet's bright reward,
May strike the lyre to some enraptur'd strain,
And breathe the notes of ancient Greece again,
Make this *Lyceum* like the one of yore,
Sacred to genius and to classic lore.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MR. HERBERT	*Mr. Siddons.*
SIR OLIVER CYPRESS	*Mr. Dowton.*
CAPTAIN CYPRESS	*Mr. De Camp.*
MR. BELFORD	*Mr. Powell.*
CHARLES SEDLEY	*Mr. Holland.*
CRAPE	*Mr. Bannister.*
O'HARROLAN	*Mr. Johnstone.*
JOE THRESHER	*Mr. Matthews.*
WOODBURN	*Mr. Fisher.*
JONATHAN	*Mr. Maddocks.*
SERVANTS . . .	*Messrs. Chatterly, Bond, &c.*
MRS. MORDAUNT	*Mrs. Powell.*
ELLEN	*Mrs. H. Siddons.*
SUSAN WOODBURN	*Miss Kelly.*

GRIEVING'S A FOLLY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Market-place of a Country Town on one side, an Inn on the other. An Upholsterer's Shop—over the door "Crape, Upholsterer, Appraiser, and Undertaker."*

WOODBURN, SUSAN, JOE, *and Country People discovered at Market.*

SUSAN.

SURELY nobody has such luck as I; market's nearly over, and I han't sold a chicken yet.

Wood. And whom may you blame for it? I have sold my corn these two hours; but you must be loitering on your way to see lady Cypress's fine funeral.

Susan. And if I did, brother, you need not twit me with that. I works hard enough all the week, and it's very odd if one isn't now and then to have a little pleasure.

Wood. Pleasure, indeed! why you silly oaf—do you suppose there's any pleasure at a funeral? or if there was, would your great folks, when a husband or wife dies, stay contented at home, and send only the tenants and the servants?

Susan. Well, I'm sure it's the finest sight we have had in our country this many a day; and for what the neighbours say, that Sir Oliver Cypress, who lives at the great house, and whose wife, Lady Lucretia Cypress, was buried to-day, was nothing but a London tailor: for my part, I believe it's all envy; and though they laugh at him, I question if there's a lord or a squire in the whole country but would be glad enough if his own wife had so fine a funeral.

Wood. Why, look'ee, sister—Sir Oliver Cypress may be a good kind of man in his way; but we farmers don't find ourselves much better for such like as he. The old family who possessed this estate (as we have heard) for three hundred years, were a comfort and blessing to all the country round, and when they left it (ill luck to the time they went to decay) the tears and prayers of the poor followed them; but these new-fangled gentry are quite different; they are like our hedge-row shoots, which spring up quick, and are rooted out without much regard, whilst we take pride in a fine spreading oak; and even when hewn down, look to the place where it grew with regret for the loss of an old friend, that once afforded us shelter and protection.

*(*JOE *behind, talking to a character in the crowd.)*

Joe. Well, then, dang it, off or on; I can't stand here all day haggling for sixpence a quarter.

Susan. Oh, that be Joe Thresher; I remember when he were cow-boy at neighbour Whippletree's, and now he be head bailey at Mr. O'Harrolan's.

Wood. I know him well, and an honest industrious lad he is as any in all the country.

(Exeunt Country People.)

Joe. (Coming forward) So that's done; and now to see if Miss Ellen have got—eh, master Woodburn, is it you?

Wood. Well met, Joe.

Joe. And Susan too—how dost girl?

Susan. I be pretty well, thank you, Mr. Joseph.

Joe. Glad to hear it *(going)*.

Wood. Why you seem in a hurry, friend Joe.

Joe. Hurry! oh, to be sure, or I were not fitting to be bailiff on such a farm as ourn.

Wood. Nay, for matter of that, I don't doubt there's plenty to do.

Joe. Plenty! ecod I fancy there is—and as

I'm the only servant in the house, I've all the indoors work beside.

Wood. Indeed?

Joe. Yes, I rub down the hunters, wash the guns, clean the gig, take care of the pointers, lay cloth, wait on company, tend pigs, milk cows, fold sheep, lock up poultry.

Wood. & Susan. Ha! ha! ha!

Joe. Why this ben't half; mayhap you think, cause you see me now and then at market, a little smartish like, that I does nothing.

Wood. And Mr. O'Harrolan never attends himself?

Joe. He come to market! bless you, it be fox-hunting day, and he would not neglect that for no business—he be such great sportsman and such capital rider—why he never goes out but he gets two or three tumbles, and values his neck no more than nothing.

Wood. Indeed! then things are much changed at Mayfield farm.

Joe. Very much changed since Mistress died. She were our Miss Ellen's mother, had lived in some great Lord's family, where she saved quite a fortune, a matter of five hundred pound, so master married her, and set up in farming line, he were then quite a sober pains-taking man, but now he rides the best horses, keeps the best pointers, visits the first company, gives fine dinners, drinks frenchified wines, sports his gig, and hired me as bailiff; Oh, I assure you, my master likes to see every thing handsome about him: but market be done, and it's time for me to see after Miss Ellen, so good day Master Woodburn.

Wood. Farewell honest Joe.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter CAPTAIN CYPRESS, SCAMP, POSTILLIONS, &c. *carrying baggage. Waiter from Inn meeting them.*

Wait. This way lads, this way, carry the luggage into the bar. *(Exeunt Postillions, &c.)* I

hope your honour feels no bad effect from your accident.

Capt. C. A slight bruise, nothing to prevent me from proceeding to Cypress Hall, so let another chaise be got ready directly.

Wait. Yes, Sir, here Will Ostler, a chaise and four for Captain Cypress, would you like to walk into a room whilst they put to.

Capt. C. 'Tis of no consequence, and your house, I see, is full.

Wait. 'Tis market-day, Sir, and then we are generally pretty full.

Capt. C. And, no doubt, the usual accompaniments to a market-table, the fumes of punch, the smell of tobacco, the discordant janglings of rival interests, or the more discordant yells, which, setting tune and time at defiance, they miscall singing; till the chaise is ready, I'll walk in the air *(Exit Waiter)* here, I may collect some tidings, or be blessed with another sight of the lovely rustic who has bewitched me at a single glance. Hey day! who have we here, like the attendants on a funeral, and one of them is certainly my old friend Crape, whom I remember the buskin'd hero of an itinerant company performing at our late quarters.

Enter CRAPE *and Attendants carrying Pall, Feathers, &c.*

Crape. Carry the things into the shop, let the pall and feathers be carefully wiped, and the cloaks brushed and laid away, I shall return directly. *(Exeunt Attendants.)* Never got thro' a part with more eclat in my life; attendants punctual; order of procession well arranged; characters in right costume; mutes—tolerably perfect; one of them rather noisy, said more than was set down in his part, ought to be forfeited: Sir Oliver Cypress, a most affectionate husband—grudged no expense to bury his wife; ordered to carry in my bill directly; take care not to fail whilst the first emotions prevail,—they are always favourable to the undertaker,—

and persons in the height of joy or sorrow, no matter which, seldom incline to a strict examination of items,—(sees *Capt. Cypress)* some stranger eyes me very attentively,—Who can he be? No matter—seems a young man of fashion,—they lead very free lives,—I'll scrape acquaintance with him,—always have an eye to business, and as the poet observes, '*Spare to speak and spare to speed they say,*' the way of the world. Sir, your servant, a fine morning, pleasant town this of ours, generally approved for the salubrity of it's air, *(Aside.)* that's no recommendation to me; been to the funeral? a stranger, perhaps, didn't hear of it.

Capt. C. A stranger, have you so soon forgotten your old acquaintance?

Crape. (Aside.) Old acquaintance, can it possibly be Captain Cypress, Sir Oliver's son, by his first wife, one of my very best friends, and the patron of my benefit at Blandford; 'tis certainly he, as Lingo says, *Exit homo.*—An agreeable surprise,—my dear Captain, I rejoice to see you, beg pardon for my inadvertence,—happy to serve you on all occasions, any thing at present wanted in my way, front row in the boxes, order for self and friend, pooh! I mean a funeral performed, all sorts of furniture made to the newest fashion, the stock of an eminent pawn-broker leaving off business, globes, scarfs, and hatbands, patent coffins, and a large assortment of hosiery.

Capt. C. Why, what is all this, your appearance is indeed much changed, but what brings you to this country? is your company performing here abouts?

Crape. Company, Oh dear, Sir, things are somewhat different with me than when you saw me last. I was then box-keeper, deputy manager, and principal tragedian of the Blandford company, I am now upholsterer, appraiser, and undertaker, in this town, and am just returned from conveying the Right Honourable Lady Lucretia Cypress, your mother-in-law, to her last earthly habitation.

Capt. C. Who, Lady Lucretia! dead!—can it be possible?

Crape. Fact, Sir, or I know my business much better than to have buried her.

Capt. C. I am now on my way to Cypress Hall, my Father's letters mentioned her indisposition, but never hinted it was of so alarming a nature.

Crape. Why, I fancy, Sir Oliver was not at all alarmed, but he thought it would be prudent to call in three Physicians, and when they arrived, he knew she was in very imminent danger.

Capt. C. 'Tis strange—so sudden too—when did her departure take place?

Crape. On Monday se'nnight, the 27th ultimo, her Ladyship, as the poets say, made her exit.—Psha! curse the poets, they are always running so in my head, beg pardon for reverting to them on so solemn an occasion, I meant to say, she shuffled off this mortal coil.

Capt. C. 'Tis odd, nor is it the least part of my surprize to find you here, and in a situation so different. I thought you wedded to your profession, what induced you to quit it?

Crape. Love, Captain, all powerful love, marriage, marriage, which most couples find the beginning of their tragedy, has put an end to mine.

Capt. C. Indeed! O, I wish you joy, when did this happy change take place.

Crape. Soon after your regiment quitted Blandford, we removed hither, company under my management, tolerably successful, audiences select and fashionable, barn sometimes overflowing; amongst others, attracted by our fame, (you remember my Hamlet, Romeo, Richard, and so on,) the widow Gloomly, the lovely relict of an upholsterer, (to divert the effects of long grief and solitude) her husband had been dead three weeks, generally attended our performance. Anxious to shew my respect for so distinguished a patroness, I always set her down for a front row; I was box-keeper; she doated upon tragedy; play'd all my tip tops, I was manager.

Capt. C. I understand you, and these tip tops, your Hamlet, Romeo, Richard, were the attraction for the widow.

Crape. Why to be sure, as the poet says, she was *not so blind as not discern a Swan among the Ravens.*—The *Stratagem*, at length, after some rehearsals, in which I flattered myself I had secured a front row in her affections, I ventured, Love my prompter, on a bold attempt; it proved successful, gained much applause from my fair auditor; I knelt, she sighed, I spake, she listened, I pressed, she gave consent; next morn I led her to the church, the priest performed his part and then the drama finished, and the curtain dropped.

Capt. C. Bravo Kit, a very spirited performance indeed.

Crape. Thus, Captain, my theatrical career ended, but my attachment to the drama will ever continue in its fullest force, and I assure you at this moment no sound could prove so grateful to my ears, as once more to hear the indulgent applause of a brilliant and overflowing house.

Capt. C. And your new business, I hope it succeeds.

Crape. Tolerably well now—to be sure on my first attempt, my debut as I may call it, I made a sad mistake.

Capt. C. What was that?

Crape. Why, the wife of a neighbour was to be buried, and whilst the ceremony was performing, and the husband, a poor weak man, rather vehement in his lamentations—I, whose theatric mind was wandering stage-struck, jumped into the grave, thinking it Ophelia's, and began shouting to the astonished husband—*what is he whose grief bears such an emphasis and phrase of sorrow. It is I, Hamlet, the Dane.*

Capt. C. A mistake indeed! but as to the family matters, little Crapes sprouting up.

Crape. Ah! Captain, there you have touched the tender chord—there, there—there alone I

am unfortunate—Heaven has not yet smiled on our mutual endeavours—amidst a profusion of happiness that blessing still withheld, as the poet says, "*makes me melancholy, dull, and heavy,*" *Love's Labour lost.*

Enter WAITER.

Wait. Sir, the horses are put to and every thing ready to proceed to Cypress Hall.

Capt. C. Very well, I'm coming.

[*Exit Waiter.*

Crape. And during your stay there, if I can be of any service.

Capt. C. Why faith, now I think of it, there is one business where it may be in your power to render me a material service.

Crape. In mine—as Hamlet says—*Haste me to know it.*

Capt. C. You, my dear Kit, must sometime have known what it is to have your senses fascinated by a dear bewitching object.

Crape. I know it well Horatio.

Capt. C. And no doubt have often inspired her with a reciprocal return of kindness.

Crape. My custom always of an afternoon.

Capt C. Did you not observe such a dear bewitching object coming out of a milliner's shop?

Crape. Oh lord! he has certainly seen Miss Ellen, the daughter of Mr. O'Harrolan; I think, Captain, I did observe the young Lady, she is daughter of a neighbouring farmer, tenant on the estate lately purchased by Sir Oliver.

Capt. C. A farmer's daughter! She's an angel; her air, manner, deportment—mark her out as fitted to adorn a higher sphere; by heavens! 'twere an act of justice to remove her from her present vulgar situation, to shine the Phœnix of Bond-street and Hyde-Park—I must attempt it.

Crape. Oh no, pray don't, the attempt may cost you dear—there's a lover in the case, a young man of spirit, I assure you; should he hear of your designs, he may say, as the poet

says, *win her and wear her, Love makes a Man; or the Fop's Fortune.*—You'll stand a chance of being run thro' the body.

Capt. C. I have no fears on his account—and this rustic beauty will give an eclat to my establishment—So, Kit, you must assist me.

Crape. I! Oh dear, no! I have done with those things, a man of reputation, a man of business, a married man, lord, Captain, what will the world think—what will the neighbours say—what will Mrs. Crape say?

Capt. C. Mrs. Crape, say! by heavens I believe the infection has spread from Cypress Hall, and petticoat usurpation sways in despite of regular conjugal authority, or it could never have been in the power of a priest to fix that roving temper.

Crape. It was not the priest, Captain, but the attorney—Some wives rely on the church for securing the husband's affections; Mrs. Crape, more prudently chose the law, and by consigning her whole property to trustees for her sole and separate use, ensured an everlasting return of love and tenderness from her most affectionate husband Christopher Crape.

Capt. C. Oh then I understand your scruples; but call on me in the morning at Cypress Hall, perhaps a way may be found to satisfy them—now the chaise is waiting, and I must proceed on my journey to the house of mourning.

Crape. And, Captain, if you should get into a scrape about the girl, or Sir Oliver fall a martyr to his feelings—hope I shall be remembered, flatter myself I have given satisfaction on the present occasion—and shall be at all times happy to be employed for any part of the Cypress family. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—*Another Street.*

Enter ELLEN *and* JOE.

Ellen. Arrears of rent unsatisfied, and debts incurred to a large amount?

Joe. Very large indeed!

Ellen. And Sir Oliver threatening to eject him from his farm?

Joe. Yes, Miss Ellen—I never tells you nothing but real truth.

Ellen. 'Tis what my fears have long foreboded—these frequent absences, this neglect of his affairs, expensive pleasures, heigho!

Joe. Heigho! indeed, I don't wonder it makes you melancholy Miss Ellen—for I'm quite so myself; when I was first hired as bailiff at Mayfield farm, I was reckon'd as sprightly a lad as any in all the country, I could laugh, or I could joke—then for a good song or a funny story, I was quite a cute one, and the gentlefolks who came to our house laughed at me and called me comical dog—but I'm quite alter'd—I can't laugh nor I can't sing—and only look at this doleful face, nobody calls me comical dog now—Oh no!—that's clean gone by.

Ellen. Faithful affectionate creature.

Joe. Ah, Miss Ellen, our'n be queer goings on, hunters, gigs, and frenchified wines be rummish sort of things for farmers—and such fine company teaching master all sort of abomination doings, and making a gentleman of him. O lord! O lord! that ever I should live to see my master a gentleman.

Ellen. Yes, Joe—'tis there has been his error.

Joe. Error! he never did so foolish a thing, since he hired me as bailiff, not but there may be now and then a difference, and in London, where your young Jemmies of fashion have fortunes ready to their hands, why making them gentlemen might be no such bad thing—but in the country, with poor farmers who have their livelihood to earn, 'tis downright ruination.

Ellen. And yet a thought occurs—something may yet be done to save him—Sir Oliver, he is rich—the loss to him were trifling—he might relent—or sure he'll not refuse a little time to my entreaties.

Joe. What, see Sir Oliver, and ax him to ex-

cuse master? will you indeed be so kind—and yet I fear 'twill be great trouble to you.

Ellen. Trouble! O tell me not of trouble! all other troubles must be surely light compared to the distresses of a parent; such has he proved to me. Married to my mother whilst I was yet an infant, what care, what duty has been wanting, but what his love supplied—when prosperous, did I not share in his good fortune, how then in his affliction can I forget the duty of a child?

Joe. I do love to hear you talk, you've such sensible notions—you thinks just as I does—but it's very hard upon you, Miss Ellen, that was always so good and so sweet temper'd and so pretty, that never did any thing to deserve it—you was not extravagant, but staid contented at home with Mrs. Mordaunt and I, you never kept no genteel company.

Ellen. And yet 'tis ever so—when once the limits of prudence are transgressed, how wide the ruin, how general the desolation, how many guiltless sufferers are involved, and, oh, would they who have little swerved, think of the woes, the wretchedness, their indiscretion leads to—pride, honour, character, all sacrificed—creditors distress'd, but clamorous, friends deceived and alienated—wives, children, wretched sharers in the ruin, would they, could they be improvident?

Joe. Not Joe Thresher I'm sure.

Ellen. But let us hasten to him—by this time his day's sport's over, he is returned, and now perhaps he pines in secret o'er his sorrows.

(O'HARROLAN *heard singing at a distance*)

"Ah at eight in the morning by most of the
"clocks,
"We rode to Kilruddery in search of a Fox."

Ellen. Sure 'tis his voice.

Joe. 'Tis, 'tis master—that be the way he generally do pine.

Enter O'HARROLAN *in a scarlet hunting Coat, dirtied Cap, Whip, &c.*

O'Har. (Sings) " Then up came Dick Dawson who cared not a pin,
" He leaped at a ditch, and all fours tumbled in, tally ho !"—
What, my darling Ellen, and is it your own sweet face I behold ?

Joe. Yes it be, and mine too, we comed over in gig,—but 'twas all to please Miss Ellen—for my part I'd at any time rather walk twice the distance than ride in one of them nasty things.

Ellen. I hope, Sir, you are not angry with me.

O'Har. Angry with you, my darling, when you know I'd rather hear your voice than the sweetest cry of hounds that ever opened—and is not a sight of your face more pleasing to my eyes than a gloomy morning in November.

Ellen. But we were just returning, not expecting to see you—did any business bring you here, sir ?

O'Har. Business, oh no! that's quite misbecoming a gentleman—'twas black Fireaway brought me, as tight a bit of blood, as any measuring fifteen two, and one of the best foxes, that ever stood a burst of forty five minutes.

Ellen. You have been enjoying then your favorite amusement ?

O'Har. You may say that—for what other can equal foxhunting ? by my soul your cudgelling and bull-baiting's all blarney to it; of a beautiful cloudy morning the hounds dashing into cover, spreading like a sky-rocket, bless their sweet throats they begin to chatter. Tally ho ! cry the sportsmen, hark forward, have at him, my good boys, hallos the huntsman; then I clap spurs in black Fireaway, and to be sure were not the tits to shew the way, and make the cockneys stare, hedge, ditch, or timber, over we go, all's one to Mr. Phelim O'Harrolan, and black Fireaway.

Joe. Yes, and shew the way into the ditches, for your coat looks as tho' it had been there.

Ellen. Oh, Sir, how you alarm me—I hope no accident.

O'Har. Devil of any accident at all at all—Nothing but a tumble from my horse, what the young squire calls a bit of a somerset, he it was persuaded me to mount this neat piece of scarlet, and turn foxhunter.

Joe. Yes, and a pretty turn you'll find it—every thing at the farm going to rack and manger, and you'll end without a sixpence.

O'Har. End without a sixpence shall I—well that will be ending just as I began, so they can't say the family estate has been much injured in my hands.

Joe. Yes it will, and we shall all be injured, and Miss Ellen and I shall be so melancholy—neglecting your business to run after men of fashion and puppy squires, and hounds, and sporting.

O'Har. And how can hunting be neglecting business? don't I see all the ploughmen and the sowers, besides getting a complete notion of hedges and ditches. Then shooting, why it's killing two birds with one stone, for tho' I generally miss the partridges, I always frighten the crows, and that's doing great service to the new sown wheats; sporting, indeed! why it's all in all in the country—now there's your lover, Mr. Charles Sedley, a very good young man, considering he's not fond of hunting, had he but attended to my instructions, what an excellent sportsman he might have been by this time.

Ellen. Alas! he thinks not of sporting, too much engrossed by the distresses of his worthy father.

O'Har. What distresses were you talking of my love?

Ellen. The loss of a dear and valued friend, supposed shipwrecked on his passage from the West Indies, and with him his every hope, the

growing infirmities of age, sickness, disappointment, and much I fear me, poverty.

O'Har. Poverty! ah that's a very fashionable complaint indeed, and as general as the influenza, I know a great many worthy men who are afflicted with that complaint.

Joe. (aside) Ecod, I could mention one or two myself,

O'Har. But set your mind at rest, Mr. Sedley's a man I've a regard for—and when a fox is to be killed, a bottle to be drunk, or a friend to be served, I fancy you'll not find Mr. O'Harrolan among the skirters.

Joe. Ah! now he have got to his plaguy generosity, and then there is no stopping him.

Ellen. Alas! and why has fortune been so niggard of her gifts, when nature blessed you with a heart so warm.

O'Har. Why, I believe it's a tolerably genteel one, it may now and then be denied to the call of a mere visiting acquaintance, but 'twill be at home to friendship, worth, and honesty, every day in the week.

Joe. And your pocket too, that will be at home I suppose.

O'Har. Damn the raps there, oh botheration, is it not a shame, when a man's heart would bound over mountains to serve a friend, that his scoundrel-like pocket should keep lagging behind and refuse to bear it company.

Ellen. Then sir, in that case, we can only lament that our abilities are so at variance with our means, for remember what my dear Mrs. Mordaunt often tells you, that amiable as generosity is, it ought ever to be preceded by justice.

O'Har. What, when you meet with a deserving object, Oh, no! for then generosity is but justice, and instead of setting one of them to outstrip the other, happy will Mr. Pharnadius O'Harrolan be, if he can only contrive just to make them go hand in hand. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—*An apartment at* SIR OLIVER'S, *hung with black escutcheons, lights burning, &c.*

Three servants discovered fixing the Portrait of a Lady.

Enter JONATHAN.

Jon. Come lads, bustle! be quick! Sir Oliver is quite impatient to get into these apartments.

1*st Serv.* One moment's patience—there—'tis done *(coming down.)*

2*d Serv.* But pray, Mr. Jonathan, what is the reason why my lady's picture is removed from the saloon, where it always hung, into this room?

Jon. Oh! I'll tell you—you all of you know how fond our good master, Sir Oliver Cypress, was of his deceased lady, who was buried to day—tho' perhaps you, Thomas, who have lived in the family but a few months, mayn't have been here long enough to discover it.

3*d Serv.* Oh yes I have. Sir Oliver was certainly a pattern for husbands—quite a Job, as a body may say, Mr. Jonathan.

1*st Serv.* That he was, and what tho' Sir Oliver and my lady used to fall out, and wish one another at old Scratch twenty times a day, I have lived in very great families, and know such things are common enough there, but it makes no difference in their love for each other.

Jon. Well then, as this is the apartment where my lady lay in state three days before her interment.—

2*d. Serv.* In state indeed! and a fine sight it was, Mr. Jonathan.

1*st Serv.* That it was, I'm sure it did my heart good to see it.

Jon. Master has determined, merely out of love for my lady, and respect to her memory, to remain till to morrow noon alone in this room, and chooses to have the picture all that time before his eyes.

2*d Serv.* Why there never was so fond a husband.

Jon. Now then lads, to your several occupations, and remember, Sir Oliver has given particular directions, that none but myself, who have been an old servant in the family, and my young master the captain, who is hourly expected, should, on any account, come into this room; so mind, if you hear the bell ring ever so often, you are to take no notice of it.

3d. Serv. O you need not fear me, Mr. Jonathan—I defy any servant south of the bar, to have a deafer ear to a parlour bell than Thomas.

1st Serv. Then suppose we all go down to the servant's hall, and when over a tankard of his honour's strong beer, the ringing must be loud indeed that disturbs us. *(Exeunt Servants.)*

Jon. This death of my lady, certainly makes a great change in the family, but I could never have supposed his honour would have taken it so much to heart, but he is here, and my young master the Captain—I'm glad however that he is arrived—his presence must be a great consolation to Sir Oliver, and truly he seems to want it—well, never sure was any thing so miserable, why he looks a perfect picture of wofulness.

Enter SIR OLIVER CYPRESS *and* CAPTAIN CYPRESS.

Sir O. Yes, Bob, this is the apartment; here will I remain, secluded—wretched.

Capt. C. What, in this melancholy room! 'tis enough to give you the horrors.

Sir O. So much the better—horrors are now familiar to me—I am in love with horrors. *(Seeing Jonathan)* Who's there? you, Jonathan?

Jon. It's only me, your honor; ah, my dear young master, what joy does old Jonathan feel to see you once more at Cypress-Hall—and I hope you will persuade his honor not to remain in this room; do try, exhort him, my dear young master; I'm sure he'll feel no pleasure here.

Sir O. Pleasure! who talks of pleasure, you, Jonathan? Oh no! my heart is cold to every

sense of that; or were it not, what pleasure could these apartments yield, when the lovely object that illumin'd them is gone?—but I see you have obey'd my orders, sweet remembrancer *(looking at the picture)*.

Jon. Yes, your honor, and I was going down stairs to the company; they are returned, and the mourners are all below.

Sir O. No, Jonathan, not all—one mourner is here—a real mourner: but by all means wait on my kind friends—and d'ye hear, attend particularly to the behaviour of the servants—let there be no riot or disorder at this mournful season.

Jon. I hope your honor has had no reason to complain hitherto?

Sir O. No, Jonathan, I do not complain; to do you all justice, since Lady Lucretia's death, I have found the house remarkably quiet.

Jon. And I'll warrant it shall continue so. Riot and disorder, indeed! at this time—why if any thing of that kind was going on, I question if my Lady would rest in her grave.

Sir O. Then pray take particular care! Not rest in her grave, Jonathan?—that would alarm me excessively. *(Exit Jonathan.)* Ah, my dear Bob! you little thought, I dare say, of finding me in such great affliction?

Capt. C. Upon my word, Sir, I did not.

Sir O. No, you never knew me so affected before.

Capt. C. Now and then, Sir, I think, when my Lady was alive.

Sir O. I never felt then as I do now.

Capt. C. Why faith, Sir, I know not what to think of all I see. These sable apartments—your mournful appearance—tears in your eyes—melancholy in your visage—when I expected to meet you hailing your deliverance from the most intolerable persecution.

Sir O. Did you really expect that?

Capt. C. I did, Sir, and therefore am I surprised. I cannot suppose these feelings excited by recollection of the happiness you enjoyed in the state.

Sir O. And why not? I enjoy'd a great deal —that is, I mean as much as most married men.

Capt. C. Indeed, Sir!

Sir O. From occasional losses in trade I got a little philosophy; attending fashionable customers, taught me patience—and they are great requisites. My lady liked her own way, so indulging her in it was prudent—it saved a world of squabbles; a few tiffs are unavoidable in the state, but ours were of no consequence, as my courage always failed before we came to a downright rupture.

Capt. C. That was fortunate, Sir.

Sir O. Yes, but I would not have this known. These country natives have such old-fashioned ideas, and I should lose all their respect if they thought me one jot short of desperation at the loss of a lady of her rank and consequence, and who, they say, condescended so much in marrying Noll Cypress the tailor.

Capt. C. Condescend, indeed! What, the daughter of the needy Lord Oldstock, through whose interest you procured a contract for army cloathing, whose necessities you supplied, whose embarrassments you relieved—your suit of course, backed by the recommendation of so powerful a friend—

Sir O. And a great many other powerful friends, whose influence had a more powerful effect, even than my Lord's.

Capt. C. A great many, Sir?

Sir O. Yes; the Governor and Company of the Bank of England—they are the most successful gay deluders of the present day.

Capt. C. To be sure her ladyship's motives may be easily guessed; not so your inducement to sacrifice your happiness, the natural consequence of such unequal matches.

Sir O. Why I was induced partly by threats and partly by soothings, as children are induced to take physic. I knew the pill was bitter, and would have rejected it, but perseverance was so opposed to my scruples, that at last I had nothing else left. I gave a great gulp, and swallowed it.

Capt. C. Threats! did you say threats, Sir?

Sir O. Why, one day, a sad unlucky one it was, Lady Lucretia, meaning no harm, I dare say, called at my house, and was sitting with me, when Lord Oldstock made his appearance —he was in a sad rage at finding us together— called me perfidious friend—said that his daughter's character was ruined, that I had undone her (I am sure I had no such naughty ideas)—that there was one way left to atone for her injuries— and I believe he hinted something about a pistol.

Capt. C. I understand—and you was timid, and declined the pistol.

Sir O. No, Bob, I was foolhardy, for I took the wife.

Re-enter JONATHAN.

(SIR OLIVER *relapses into his melancholy.)*

Jon. The gentlefolks are departed, and all is quiet; so now, perhaps, his honor will be persuaded to go down stairs.

Sir O. And is it you, Jonathan, that from all this luxury of grief would bring me back to a hated world?

Jon. Indeed it would do you good; or if you'd walk into the park, you'd find the air so reviving, and the sight of the country girls, who are all there—

Sir O. What! rustic beauty! 'tis my aversion! Dear, precious relict! thou art the only object now to charm these eyes—here will I gaze— here before thee kneel the live long night.

Capt. C. What, all night upon your knees— I'm sure you'll feel very awkward in that posture.

Sir O. No matter, retire and leave me; breathe not a murmur that may interrupt my sorrow; silence and solitude become me best.

SIR OLIVER *kneels before the picture*—JONATHAN *stands in a melancholy attitude, then retires—the* CAPTAIN *goes off, smothering a laugh—and the curtain drops*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Sir Oliver Cypress's Park Gate. The House seen at a distance, with a Hatchment over the Door.*

Enter CHARLES SEDLEY *and* ELLEN.

CHARLES SEDLEY.

NOW we approach to Cypress Hall, this is the entrance to the park, there stands the venerable mansion, once the seat of English splendor, of English hospitality, alas! how changed!

Ellen. Much am I indebted to your kindness for conducting me hither, though I think I could not have mistaken, the magnificence of the place would have sufficiently pointed out the object of my research, and the hatchment, which I see is already placed over the door.

Chas. Sed. And in the present instance no inapplicable illustration of the owner's feelings, for whilst the black exterior presents the solemn appearance assumed to impose on the world, the emblazon'd centre is an emblem only of the gaiety that reigns within.

Ellen. And as I approach, my heart sinks within me, I shan't know how to begin.

Chas. Sed. Trust to that all-directing power, who will not fail to inspire with nature's most persuasive language, the virtuous daughter, when she pleads a father's cause.

Ellen. Well, I'll do my best, but will you remain here till my return?

Chas. Sed. Have no thought of me, I can cross the park and pay another visit to my friend Mr. Herbert; and, Oh! that in the possessor of this princely mansion, you could find but such a heart as Herbert's, how easy would your task be.

Ellen. Who, Charles, is this Mr. Herbert? I never heard of him before.

Chas. Sed. He has lately become the tenant of Sir Oliver's Ivy Cottage, the violence of a sudden storm in one of my early rambles, first introduced me to his acquaintance, by compelling me to request the shelter of his roof,—a latent melancholy, the result, I fear, of some heavy affliction, seemed to have infused into him some portion of reserve, but could neither veil the refinement of his manners, nor the urbanity of his mind. When the storm abated, I took my leave, but not till I had drawn from him a wish, I would repeat my visit,—this I have frequently done, and in the retired cottage distinguished virtues that might ennoble rank! and a school! where upstart pride might learn how much the man of worth out-weighs the man of wealth.

Ellen. Well, Charles, you are very fortunate in this new acquaintance: time was, and those were happy days, when Ellen shared your confidence; our daily guest, you read, you walked, or spent the hours in cheerful converse, now we seldom see you, you have found this Mr. Herbert, this man of refined manners, no wonder the homely pleasures of a humble farm, and an untutored rustic have lost the power to charm you.

Chas. Sed. Lost the power to charm me, say, rather, charm me too much: can there be the friend, the pleasure I would not sacrifice to the possession of my Ellen? Yes, there is one thing, 'tis Ellen's happiness: my care for that bids me avoid her dear society, lest I be too tempted, and in my wretchedness involve her gentle unsuspecting mind.

Ellen. I don't comprehend you.

Chas. Sed. Well, 'tis a hard trial, but let me be explicit.

Ellen. Heaven, Charles, what can you mean?

Chas. Sed. What honor dictates: when the partiality of my uncle, Belford, destined me the heir to all his wealth, by heavens! his treasures had no charms for me unless to share them with

my Ellen; but now, that kind relation gone, his fortunes too all lost, without a home to shelter you, no means to screen you from impending poverty, your father's blessing too, denied, can happiness result from such a union? can honour justify it? Oh no! passion would prove a frail excuse where duty withholds its sanction; love, Ellen, which, with competence, can every where create a paradise, would prove a restless sojourner, where poverty hath fixed its dwelling.

Ellen. Poverty! nay, now you trifle with me, Charles.

Chas. Sed. The estate bequeathed me by my grand-father is mine no longer.

Ellen. Not yours?

Chas. Sed. 'Tis gone! 'tis sold, and the money thence accruing already nearly spent.—My father's sufferings.—

Ellen. A father's!—

Chas. Sed. The mystery that hangs over my uncle's fate, oppress'd his spirits; illness succeeded; the moderate income of a small benefice soon exhausted; necessity created debts,—and I saw him sinking to the grave without a healing hand to succour him: Oh! could I think I had the means to save him, and yet, withhold them from a father!—could I be rich, and see a father want?—Oh, no!—I parted from the estates, and gladly would have laid down life to save him; nay, I did more, I gave up all that rendered life of value; and, Ellen, love and happiness were sacrificed.

Ellen. Was this your motive?—excellent, matchless Sedley.

Chas. Sed. Ah, Ellen! 'tis a hard struggle, but honour bids me,—well, your hand however,—give me that at parting.

Ellen. (giving her hand) Oh, Charles.

Chas. Sed. Angels, bless you, and if we meet hereafter, let us meet as friends, on this rely,—this heart, true to its first attachment, shall own no other love, and should fortune ever smile on

Sedley, Ellen may then be mine, that hope, and an approving conscience, will support me.

[*Exit.*

Ellen. Heigho! now for this dreaded visit. I thought Charles's company would have given me spirits, but heaven knows, I have now little spirits, gladly would I return without accomplishing my errand,—return!—and is that your duty, Ellen? O, beloved Mrs. Mordaunt, friend of my youth, dear monitress, shall I so soon forget your valued lessons, shall the example of your patient meekness, sweet sufferer, have no avail, forbid it gratitude.

Enter CRAPE.

Crape. So much for that job, £.239. 17. 3., a successful performance, *(Observing Ellen)* Ah! the identical she, and certainly a lovely young creature.—Your servant, Miss Ellen—fine morning—hope the worthy farmer is well—happy to meet so charming a young Lady, though I believe its rather unusual at this distance from Mayfield Farm.

Ellen. Indeed, Mr. Crape, I seldom venture so far, but I have business at Cypress Hall.

Crape. Cypress Hall! this instant left it, the whole house delightfully dismal, nothing white to be seen, but the Knight's pocket handkerchief.

Ellen. Then you have seen Sir Oliver.

Crape. No Miss, he has not yet made his appearance, I only saw the Steward; 'twas the same thing, he paid me my bill, a draft on the banker, here in my hand I hold the charming manuscript,—"Pay Mr. C. Crape, or bearer, the sum of £.239. 17. 3," very different this from the fashionable London practice of dealing with tradesmen, where you may knock ten times at a great man's door before you get *sufficient* admittance into the house to allow you the honour of being kicked out of it, and as the Poet sings, "*May call, and call again, but to no use*

these frequent callings." A new way to pay old debts.

Ellen. But I am anxious to see Sir Oliver, and you, perhaps, can advise me, for mine appears so difficult a part.

Crape. Then, I'm your man; I was always famous in difficult parts.

Ellen. Indeed!

Crape. Yes, Miss, at the Blandford theatre, where I was principal tragedian, box-keeper, and deputy manager, but I've done with that, I'm married, I'm not manager now.

Ellen. With Sir Oliver, I am unacquainted; though sometime our landlord, I question if he has once visited that part of his estate since his purchase of it.

Crape. Very likely.

Ellen. And her Ladyship is so recently deceased, I fear this early intrusion will appear not sufficiently respectful to Sir Oliver's sorrows.

Crape. That will make no difference, Sir Oliver is a very sensible man.

Ellen. Alas! each moment that I stay, new difficulties arise—my fears increase—but my business cannot be delay'd—let me then on whilst I have power to do so. [*Exit.*

Crape. What an interesting creature; though by the bye, I quite forget my friend the Captain—a pretty fellow truly to be dispatched on a love embassy,—with so fair an opportunity of advancing his suit, instead of which, here have I been conversing with her on twenty other topics, and on this where I was commissioned to speak I have been as mute as a harlequin: how am I to account for this? is it the nature of the business—egad, perhaps it is so—and though I never expected any such thing, who knows but I have some little honesty at bottom, that revolts from my employment—then let the Captain seek the next interview himself—if he makes no more of it than I have done, he'll have no reason to boast—and why not? I have been in her com-

pany—have conversed with her—and many a modern man of gallantry who brags of his success with a woman—does it on no better foundation than that. [*Exit*

SCENE.—*An apartment in* SIR OLIVER'S *house hung with black, &c. &c.*

SIR OLIVER *discovered looking at his watch.*

Sir O. Twelve o'clock! the time is just expired—and a tedious one it has been; however, I think the neighbours cannot fail to hear what I have gone through, and I shall be overwhelmed with respect, as a mirror of grief and constancy *(a knocking at the door.)* *(Resumes his mournful tone)* Who's there?

Willm. (without) 'Tis me your honor—William!

Sir O. You may come in now, William.

Enter WILLIAM.

Willm. Mr. Jonathan has just stepped into the park with the Captain—and there's a young woman says she has particular business—so I come to know whether your honor could be seen.

Sir O. Seen! what, me?—why you blockhead don't you see I can't?

Willm. I told her I thought as much—but she was so very important.

Sir O. Was she?—a thought occurs—I will see her—did she say her business was important?

Willm. Very important indeed, your honor.

Sir O. And it's certainly a woman, William?

Willm. Oh yes, Sir—'tis your tenant, Mr. O'Harrolan's daughter.

Sir O. Well—let her come up. *(Exit William)* 'twill be a good opportunity—she shall be an eye witness, and I will astonish her with the excess of my grief—then I think there can be no doubt, it will be quickly known to all the neighbours—for to circulate any intelligence, a telegraph is not more expeditious than a woman's tongue—but she's here.

Enter ELLEN.

SIR OLIVER *stands in a melancholy attitude looking at the Picture.*

Sir O. Inasmuch as my servant tells me your business is important, I have yielded to your wish to see me—though heaven knows I am unfit for business now.

Ellen. (behind) What a dismal room, and how melancholy he looks.

Sir O. You may approach, young woman—don't be alarmed, these mournful apartments may strike the beholder with awe—we of elevated station have our peculiar feelings, unlike the ordinary sorrows of vulgar minds—we never grieve as they do. You see that picture—to that I've knelt and wept,—all night these walls have echoed with my groans—my tears have fallen—few would believe how many—but your business I understand is urgent.

Ellen. So much so—that as you determine—the doom of our humble family is fixed for happiness or misery.

Sir O. Then I must hear you; and if my grief permits me, if my mind can bend to other cares—if my eyes can for a moment wander from that—*(by this time Ellen has advanced to the front, and Sir Oliver catches a sight of her.)*—Oh lud! she's a devilish pretty girl.—*(during the scene Sir Oliver continues to look alternately at the Picture and Ellen.*

Ellen. I fear I'm come in an unlucky hour, and yet I thought 'twas as aptly chosen—selfish prosperity I've heard makes us unfeeling, nor mindful of the duties of humanity; but our own misfortunes must surely teach us sympathy, and the distress'd have then a double claim to our redress.

Sir O. Sweet creature! 'tis odd—eh! no, I never saw her before *(aside)*——Yes, as you say, our misfortunes—Oh I have my share of them—dear, lost, adored—lovely bewitching little devil *(aside.)*

Ellen. My father, a tenant on your estate—but you are too much agitated. I will retire—some other time—now the intrusion of a stranger is distressing to you.

Sir O. No not distressing, don't retire—bless you I'm not agitated. *(Aside)* What a shape—yes, I believe I may be somewhat agitated, but I'm not distressed; I mean, 'tis not that distresses me, 'tis that loved object whose remembrance lives in this heart, though lost, still present to these eyes, oh what eyes the rogue has—but your father.

Ellen. He has I fear fallen under your displeasure, but let not my intrusion add to it—of this he's innocent, he knew not of my coming.

Sir O. If he had I should not have been displeased with him for that—you may come again whenever you like.

Ellen. Arrears of rent too long neglected have, it seems, incurred the forfeiture of his lease, and—I do not ask remission of the debt, I ask but for a little time, and industry may save him yet—but if you are severe and urge the forfeiture, his creditors will seize his all, and Ellen must then become a wretched wanderer without a home to shelter her.

Sir O. No, for then I would shelter you in mine.

Ellen. In your's! what does he mean?

Sir O. Yes, lovely Ellen, you have quite subdued me, and spite of my grief I yield myself your willing captive, and thus on this trembling hand breathe forth the warmest, tenderest—*(Seizes Ellen's hand—kneels and kisses it.)*

Enter CAPTAIN CYPRESS *and* JONATHAN.—*Sir Oliver, seeing Jonathan, turns from Ellen and kneels to the picture—Captain Cypress appears from behind the picture.*

Sir O. Are you there, Bob?

Capt. C. Yes, Sir, I came to let you know the time of your seclusion is expired.

Sir O. Is it? *(Aside.)* Then I wish it had lasted a little longer.

Capt. C. And perhaps you may now be induced to quit that posture.

Sir O. I believe I may as well.

Jon. (Assisting Sir Oliver) Yes, we said your honour would feel very awkward in it. *(Captain laughs.)*

Sir O. He! he! he!—What the devil are you grinning at?—Sure you don't suspect any thing from finding this young lady here. Bob, I insist on't you don't run away with any such ideas —I was on my knees offering my adoration to that angel, when this young lady, who is daughter to a worthy tenant of mine, a man I've a regard for and mean to serve, came with very civil enquiries after my health, and William by mistake shewed her in here, and—and—

Capt. C. Nay, my dear Sir, your conduct to me I assure you wants no excuse, and I question if the veriest anchorite that ever indulged in grief and solitude would blame you with such an object before you, for transferring your adoration from the dead to the living angel.

Sir O. (Aside to Ellen.) Never mind them—call again some other time.

Ellen. Worlds should not bribe me again to enter these doors—Sir Oliver, had your heart possessed one spark of benevolence, you had here a glorious opportunity for happiness in succouring the unfortunate; you might have had my thanks—my blessing—but your insidious offer, which I now fully comprehend the baseness of, renders you an object fit only for my contempt.

[*Exit, followed by* JONATHAN.

SIR OLIVER *continues looking down.*—CAPTAIN *smothering a laugh.*

Sir O. Bob!

Capt. C. Sir!

Sir O. This is rather an awkward business.

Capt. C. An unfortunate discovery, and very ill-timed indeed, Sir.

Sir O. Very ill-timed; and yet it seems to give you much pleasure.

Capt. C. Indeed, Sir, you are in an error—it's one of the last things to give me pleasure.

Sir O. Yes it is, so don't be such a hypocrite as to deny it—you know, Bob, there's nothing I detest so much as hypocrisy—there, I see you are laughing at me now; well, indulge your humour, 'twill be the last time—for if ever I engage in another amour.

Capt. C. You'll take care to fasten the door and prevent another discovery—and now, Sir, I shall expect to see you in the saloon.

Sir O. Yes, I mean to leave this apartment.

Capt. C. To be sure, Sir, for what pleasure can it now afford, when the lovely object that illumined it is gone! [*Exit, laughing.*

Sir O. This interruption of Bob's was very unlucky, it quite drove the girl away; however, she shall not 'scape me so; let me see how to manage—a letter—aye, a letter—that will do. I'll write to her, and by the liberality of my offers get the better of her squeamishness—but shall I not have to encounter the ridicule and sneers of the neighbours, and lose all their respect—no matter for that—let them sneer—I have been long enough a slave to the jealous whimsies of a termagant wife—I'll now let them see Nol Cypress is his own master, and so that for their sneers, that for their grief—I'll pursue my humour—" Away with melancholy—

[*Exit, singing.*

SCENE—*An Apartment in Mr. Herbert's Cottage.*

Enter MR. HERBERT *and* SERVANT.

Mr. Her. Mr. Sedley not called to-day?

Serv. No, Sir.

Mr. Her. 'Tis past his usual time, well—his mistress's claims must be attended to, she no doubt can furnish better entertainment than the dull conversation of a melancholy recluse, and I have already too much encroached upon his hours.

Serv. Somebody is now coming thro' the garden, *(looks out.)* 'tis Mr. Sedley.

Mr. Her. 'Tis well.—Admit him.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter CHARLES SEDLEY.

Chas. Sed. Emboldened by your request, I venture here again, if my intrusion is ill-timed, a word from you corrects it.

Mr. Her. Oh, no! you are most kind, thus to seek out misfortune's humble dwelling—'tis the place few worldly ones resort to, and I have now occasion for your presence.

Chas. Sed. For me occasion?

Mr. Her. When last I saw you, you were lamenting the distresses of a friend, some neighbouring farmer— .

Chas. Sed. Tenant to Sir Oliver Cypress—his name O'Harrolan.

Mr. Her. I have enquired concerning him, and the neighbours report him a worthy man, and greatly compassionate his sufferings, although occasioned, this they unwillingly confess, by some imprudence.

Chas. Sed. 'Tis very true, for on the score of prudence I cannot quite defend him.

Mr. Her. I grieve to see it—'tis no uncommon case—to see the sons of industry spurning their useful honorable toil, sure guide to wealth —their characters degraded—their independence sacrificed for fashion's frivolous pursuits and wild profusion—the blooming rose and tender myrtle may deck the gay parterre in gaudy pride, in rough and sullen state long may the British oak usurp the forest's ample space, nor yield it's bulky strength, its hospitable shade, to empty fashion or exotic whim.

Chas. Sed. I grant him faulty, improvident, but he has goodness to atone for more than venial errors, and did you know his merits, even the Justice that condemns his follies might yet relent in pity to his sufferings.

Mr. Her. It shall do more—relieve them.

Chas. Sed. Relieve them! what, you?

Mr. Her. Why doubt me? are riches only given for vanity, for show, for empty pleasure, that you should wonder I can find this noblest, best enjoyment, when they dispense the balm that heals a good man's sorrows. Charles, you perhaps remember when chance first brought you to this cottage, you told me of your family—of a relation, whose supposed loss by shipwreck had much afflicted you; I urged your future visits, I marked you an object of my bounty, but first I sought to prove you worthy of it. Pass a few days and I shall quit this country—ere that, whate'er is wanting to your happiness within my means to grant, you may command. Nor will you wonder why I did this, when you know, that in that lost relation you named my long and valued friend.

Chas. Sed. What, my uncle, Mr. Belford, Herbert's friend?

Mr. Her. Yes, Charles, a friend indeed, thro' life my friend, a most uncommon friend; in infancy, in youth, in manhood, he never wrong'd me, was never treacherous—I have not found many such.

Chas. Sed. Can it be possible? Oh, yes it is, and now I know you, and in the humble Herbert, the melancholy recluse, I find the man I long have wished to see, long honoured though unknown, the great, the good Lord Mortimer.

Lord Mor. 'Tis Mortimer indeed, that wretch, that veriest outcast.

Chas. Sed. And is this humble cottage a habitation worthy Lord Mortimer? where are his friends, can he, lost to them, to fortune, spurning his ancient title, thus in retirement bury talents that might adorn,—virtues that might reform society.

Lord M. Friends, fortune, what are they? Ah, Charles, there was a time, this heart, which wrongs and treachery have long since rendered callous, was not insensible to love and friendship; of all the youths who owned the powerful influence of those transcendant charms, which

graced Eliza Temple, my happier lot prevailed, our hands were joined—but soon her health declined, and a milder climate became our last resource. Anxious but for her, by easy journeying, I guarded my heart's treasure to a romantic villa near Bologna—your uncle Belford, residing in the neighbouring town on mercantile concerns, was here our constant guest, and with him a young officer of distinguished family in France, Count d'Alembert—hateful name.

Chas. Sed. I have heard my uncle name that D'Alembert as in the number of your youthful friends, and the companion of your travels.

Lord Mor. He was—the air of Italy had it's desired effect—few months were passed ere my Eliza amended in her health, and gratified me with the hope of a new tie of love. 'Twas then I received letters informing me that my relation, Lord Mortimer, lay at the point of death, and urging my immediate return to England. What could I do? to disregard a friend and benefactor's last request, that gratitude forbade—but then my wife, my dear Eliza, to part from her was death or something worse, still I obeyed. His lordship's decease relieving me from long attendance—with more than lover's eagerness I hurried back to Italy; the antient title of our house was mine—wealth too I had, might gratify a miser's wish, but happiness was gone for ever—for when my tedious journey o'er, the well-known scene of former bliss again in view, I flew with rapture to meet a wife's embrace, a friendly welcome—I found my house deserted, and my wife fled with a villain.

Chas. Sed. With D'Alembert?

Lord Mor. Him! I could not err—their flight together and sudden, as fearing my return—but more, his letters left in her apartment, too plainly unfolded the damning proof of her guilt and my dishonour, and she, whose innate purity I thought had never harboured one unchaste desire, one wandering thought, whose artless modesty might check the profligate, and awe the most licen-

tious into virtue, could with gloating eyes devour the warm impassioned colourings of a seducer's lust, and yield to baseness. How did I curse those hated riches, that title, 'till then my pride; had my lot been humble poverty, I had continued happy—no cares had lured me from a tranquil home, nor had a husband's absence given fatal opportunity or leagued with persevering villainy to triumph over a woman's weakness.

Chas Sed. Did you pursue them?

Lord Mor. To Florence I traced the fugitives—of her I thought not, but from her base betrayer I sought an honourable atonement for my wrongs, when by hasty flight he baffled my revenge.

Chas. Sed. And could his dastard soul after such injuries elude your just resentment—by coward flight elude it?

Lord Mor. When was a bad man brave?

Chas. Sed. And she the lost—what shall I term her?. but sure most lost, most wretched—was she again the partner of his flight?

Lord Mor. Oh no! but 'tis a hateful tale—for now deserted in her turn, left to her infamy, even by him, the wretch who taught her to be infamous, such are the fruits of guilt, her mind distracted by bitter recollection of the past, no friend to soothe her, and in that hour which once I thought would crown my every wish, unhappy woman! she perished with her unborn innocent.

Chas. Sed. And the seducer lives unpunished—no, his are a villain's feelings, a villain's conscience his—there's punishment in that.

Lord Mor. And now you know the story, can you blame me, that this heart torn, wounded as it is, should shun the world, and in retirement shroud its unobtrusive sorrows, nor doubt, but had it been my lot to encounter common evils, I had endured, nor murmured; nay, had the stroke of death robbed me of one so dearly

prized, though sore the trial, yet even that I think I could have borne, but death with infamy, oh! that's too much.

Chas. Sed. Blame you, oh no!—and are we then so soon to part—and have I known your goodness only to make your loss more poignant?

Lord Mor. In the possession of your Ellen my loss you'll soon forget—I have stored for you a nuptial present, a small memorial of my regard—may she reward your love and crown your wishes with truth, with tenderness, and prove a virtuous loving wife, heaven's last best boon to man, which almost makes us doubt if even in a better world it has a greater blessing to bestow. [*Exeunt.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*O'Harrolan's Farm.*

The House behind—different farm buildings—a neat Stable in front.

Enter JOE.

WELL, certain sure Joe Thresher thy troubles will never have an end. Thou did'st think when thou had'st gotten a good place, thou had'st nothing to do but to lie down in clover, instead of which, plague and vexation will certainly shorten thy days: 'tis a sad thing to see every thing going to rack and manger, but how can it be otherwise with a master who is out all night and in bed half the day; fields overrun with weeds—pigs dying with meazles, sheep eat up with scab—horses without victuals, and workmen without wages; but here he comes just up, tho' it be long past noon.

Enter O'HARROLAN.

O'Har. Is that you, Joe?

Joe. Yes, its me.

O'Har. What's o'Clock?

Joe. Why it be past one.

O'Har. Faith the Squire's port is so heady, that three bottles always bother my recollection, so I never think of early rising after it—but has any body called this morning?

Joe. Oh, yes, plenty.

O'Har. Some of the fox-hunting club left their cards, I suppose.

Joe. Yes, they left these *(gives a number of bills)*.

O'Har. Bills! and have all these been here?

Joe. Yes, and more, and Sir Oliver's steward has called again about the rent.

O'Har. Well, Sir Oliver is rich and may wait; he can afford it.

Joe. Ah! but mayhaps he won't, for I assure ye steward was quite grumpish like, and made a sad rumpus about it.

O'Har. What did he say, Joe?

Joe. Say! why he said you were in debt all round the country, (that's true enough, you know) and that you ought to be ashamed of yourself, (I can't say but I agreed with him there.)

O'Har. The blackguard! but this comes of travelling for improvement—It would not have happened at sweet Ballinamuck—There they know how to respect a leading man, and could I but meet this Mr. Steward there, I'd soon ease him of his dunning, by my soul I'd take the law of him.

Joe. What, for dunning?

O'Har. Yes, I'd knock him down,

Joe. (Aside.) Oh lord, oh lord!

O'Har. Ah, Joe, you never were at Ballinamuck.

Joe. No, but I've been at Bedlam.

O'Har. Bedlam, where's that?

Joe. Why, were you never there?

O'Har. No, never.

Joe. I'm surprised at that, why its in Lunnun, I saw a mort of dainty sights in Lunnun—Change Alley, and Westminster Hall, and Beefeaters, with such fine cloaths, and such fine Ladies without any clothes—The tower of London and the great Bank, where they say they make guineas and seven shilling pieces out of soft paper.

O'Har. Guineas out of soft paper, that's certainly the land of promise.

Joe. Likely.

O'Har. (looking over the bills) A neat collection—Mr. O'Harrolan Dr. to——

Joe. Aye. D—r. be fashionable short hand

very much in use now a-days, and means owing money.

O'Har. And do you suppose your master Mr. Phelim O'Harrolan, has been in the genteel line so long without knowing what D—r. means?—But how are these to be paid, Joe?

Joe. Oh, In the gentleman way I suppose.

O'Har. What way is that?

Joe. Call again to-morrow.

O'Har. No, that won't do—let me consider now—I've hit it, I'll go to London.

Joe. To London!

O'Har. Yes, that's the place when a gentleman tumbles into the mud to be helped clean out of it—the rich people are so kind-hearted and free—and for fear the unfortunate should not hear of them, they put advertisements in the papers desiring gentlemen in distress'd circumstances, with small incomes, to come and borrow their money—so I'll go, for I've no income at all, and am completely ruined, and that must suit them to a T.

Joe. Now I'll tell you what I were thinking, if you'd sell one of your hunters.

O'Har. Part with one of my hunters!

Joe. Why, there be black Fireaway and Spindleshanks—where's the use of both of them? You can't want to ride two at a time.

O'Har. Ride two horses at a time—and would you be sinking a genteel farmer into a post-chaise driver, to please a parcel of hard-hearted creditors.

Joe. Yes, yes, I know all that; and how your fine folks, the like of you, have their conceits and their make-games about hard-hearted creditors; whereas, if they would now and then change their discourse, and talk a little about unfeeling debtors; to my mind they'd be juster by half.

O'Har. And do you mean that I am an unfeeling debtor?

Joe. Yes, I do; for t'other day I called at the carpenter's widow, 'twere he made that

jemmy stable, and there were she and five fatherless babes, setting down to what she told me, from being kept out of the money you owe her, was now their only meal, a little bread, moistened with their tears.

O'Har. (with emotion). And is this so, Joe?

Joe. Facts. Now I don't know what sort of stomachs some folks may have, who can enjoy their luxuries, though the poor tradesmen who provide them are starving; but for my part, when I was setting down to the dainty tit bits your genteel company had left, the widow came across my mind, and I felt ashamed to touch a morsel. Her meal was bad enough; but 'twas paid for; it cost nobody a heart-ache that provided it; and rot me if at that moment I did not think it the best of the two.

O'Har. (with great feeling) Joe, give me your hand; you're an honest fellow, for you felt like a man whilst your master was getting drunk like a brute. Wrong a widow with five fatherless children—no, never; for Monday is the fair, take the hunters there, and sell them both.

Joe. What, both?

O'Har. Yes, both; let them go; then carry the money to the widow; pay her what I owe her, and give her the remainder, to get a good meal and be merry with her children.

Joe. Oh, I'll go, I'll go with all the pleasure in life; I don't value the trouble a brass farthing: but you are sure you're earnest, now; you are'nt humming me; dang me if I ben't half afraid.

O'Har. Why should you be afraid? Am not I an Irishman? Our heads, to be sure, let them have the rein, like skittish tits, will sometimes run us out of the course a little; but we have hearts, I trust, to give a timely check, ere we trample on the happiness of a fellow creature.

Joe. (aside) He has not made so sensible a speech since he turned gentleman.

O'Har. And as this new line of mine don't seem likely to answer here, I cut.

Joe. Cut?

O'Har. Yes, and henceforward I'll be a farmer again.

Joe. What, a downright real earnest farmer.

O'Har. Just so.

Joe. And leave off all genteel tricks.

O'Har. Yes, hunters, pointers, gigs, guns, and ponies, shall all go, and industry come in their stead; for I'll go to work again myself.

Joe. (singing) Tol, lol, lol, &c. we shall do, we shall do; I know we shall do yet; I never felt so happy in my life—leave off gentleman and be farmer *(singing and crying)* Tol, lol, &c. —Oh, oh, I be so happy, I do declare my joy quite overcomes me.

O'Har. Then, Joe, your joy won't trouble you long, for it seems running away pretty fast out of both your eyes.

Joe. Never mind that—but work. Lord, how pleased I shall be to see my master hard at work again; and, thank heaven, there be plenty to do; you'll have no need to stand still. But what will you do first—will you scour the muddy ditch at the bottom of Six-acre, or any thing else?—you'll find I quite agreeable.

O'Har. But I see my lodger, Mrs. Mordaunt, coming this way—she wants to speak to me, and afterwards I'll go with you, Joe.

Joe. I'll be ready; and now I can go to work with a light heart; and when I go to market, I'll hold up my head as high as any of them—and if they laugh at master, or dare to call him gentleman now, ecod I'll box the best man among them for a guinea—eh! box, did I say? —no, dang it, boxing be one of your genteel accomplishments, so it won't do for Joe Thresher —but I'll pray to heaven to turn their hard hearts, that if ever they should come to misfortune, they may have less reason to reproach themselves for having been so inhuman as to insult the misfortunes of another. [*Exit Joe.*

Enter Mrs. MORDAUNT *and* ELLEN.

Mrs. M. My worthy host, most happily en-

countered: two days I have sought an opportunity of conversing with you, but your field sports have made you truant.

O'Har. And is it me, Mrs. Mordaunt, you have been after seeking?

Mrs. M. Who else—am not I your debtor?—Is it then extraordinary I should wish to see you?

O'Har. Quite out of nature to be running after me 'cause you are in my debt. Now my creditors are so polite they always save me that trouble.

Mrs. M. A quarter's lodging is due to you—*(offering a note)* here is the account—look at it, see that it is right.

O'Har. No, if you please, not now; I don't know exactly what it is, and I have no receipt ready; besides, I am going to work.

Ellen. To work, Sir!

O'Har. Yes, my dear; Joe tells me there is plenty to do, and it would be a sad thing for a farmer to neglect his business; so, if you please, Mrs. Mordaunt, we'll settle some other time, when I'm at leisure to look over the account.

Mrs. M. Surely 'tis not of so complicated a nature but you may recollect.

O'Har. Now that's just what I've no knack at: recollecting's a mighty perplexing thing, and only serves to bother the memory—so I find it saves me a deal of trouble to forget now and then.

Mrs. M. Worthy, kind-hearted friend, I understand you; nor is it the first time you have oppressed me with this intemperate kindness; but you know the terms on which only I consent to remain here—would you drive me from your house?

O'Har. St. Patrick forbid—for rather than that should happen, I'd turn a big rogue, and strip you of every shilling. [*Exit.*

Mrs. M. And now, Ellen, that we are alone, let me hear the result of your visit to Sir Oliver—has your application proved successful?

Ellen. Oh, most unfortunate; and scarcely shall I cease to regret the motive, laudable tho' it was, that urged me to the attempt.

Mrs. M. He could not, sure, refuse to see you?

Ellen. Oh no! would to heaven he had, so by his refusal I had escaped the insults of the detested interview.

Mrs. M. Insult you?—unprincipled, abandoned libertine—how I tremble for my child.

Ellen. Wherefore should you tremble—do you, then, doubt the creature of your care? When my dear mother died, fortune sent you, my better angel, with more than mother's kindness, to replace her loss; beneath your forming hand I grew; you lured me early to the love of virtue, by making it appear lovely in my eyes; you taught me, that the woman who loses that, forfeits all that is excellent in her sex, that the laws of polished society require a strict observance of its precepts; you taught me the religion that enjoins it: on this rely, your pupil will take care never to disgrace her instructor.

Mrs. M. Child of my care! well dost thou repay it. Yes, Ellen, by cruelty and injustice doomed to wander, chance brought me to this place. I found you here a little cherub, weeping, whilst scarcely conscious of your loss, a mother's death—your unprotected infancy awakened my regards; mine was the task to form your youth—to store your mind with sentiments which best might guard you from the perfidy of man; and should my efforts have taught one unsuspecting heart to 'scape the snares that lure to present guilt and future misery, 'twill be some recompence for even my wrongs.

Ellen. Wrongs! is there in nature the monster who could wrong such goodness—and can such cruelty be found in man?

Mrs. M. Can there be man, and not be cruelty? Will sacred vows, will truth, will honor bind them? Oh no! And he who should have

proved through life my faithful guide, my best protector, left a fond credulous wife, struggling with wretchedness, even with want, to spend his hours in guilty pleasures, and waste his fortune on one abandoned.

Ellen. Alas! how arduous must have been your trials; what has upheld your mind through all the severity of your unmerited sufferings?

Mrs. M. Innocence! had they been merited I had sunk indeed. Yet even this consolation my cruel persecutor grudged me, for well he judged the unerring wife might draw more censure on the erring husband, therefore was I traduced, cast off, my spotless truth exposed to obloquy to screen his vices, his crimes my fault, his guilt my accusation.

Ellen. Oh that it were in my power to soothe your sorrows, that I might know at full the mournful tale, and were I worthy of such confidence——

Mrs. M. Worthy, Ellen, you merit all my confidence, all my love, but there are weightiest reasons which impel me to defer all farther explanation—but we are interrupted, the farmer is returning.

Ellen. And Charles with him—'tis more than I expected.

Enter O'HARROLAN *(in a farmer's frock, carrying mattock and shovel.) and* CHARLES SEDLEY.

O'Har. Well, Mr. Sedley, here you are again, the compliments of a fine morning to you, and a hearty welcome to Mayfield farm—to be sure it's unlucky my business should be so ill-polite to oblige me to leave you.

Charles Sed. By no means—from the alteration in your dress, I conclude you have some necessary work in hand.

O'Har. Yes, I am going to work. A small matter betwixt me and my conscience.

Charles Sed. Conscience!

O'Har. Yes, for now I begin to perceive that, for a man to be honest to himself, is the

safest way to avoid being a rogue to other people—however, as I am obligated to leave you, here's Mrs. Mordaunt and Ellen, who I am sure will be glad of your company.

Mrs. M. Most happy; and 'tis many days since we enjoyed that pleasure.

O'Har. But my dear Ellen, here's a letter for you which was left by a servant.

Ellen. For me, sir? I know of no correspondent hereabouts, who can it possibly be from?

O'Har. I'll tell you that directly, *(breaking open the letter)* I've known a damn'd deal of mischief spring from one of these paper mines, so, lest there should be any thing unfit for you to hear, I'll read it to you myself. *(reads).*

"The impertinent intrusion of this morning prevented my expressing at full to the lovely Ellen the admiration she had inspired me with, and my ardent wish to prove myself her friend.—Bless me, however, with another interview, complete the fascination the first sight of those charms begun, and tax my friendship, my generosity to the extent of your wishes—If equipage, state, and splendor, have any value in your eyes, you command them and me—for your worthy father, be assured, he will partake of my regard—his arrears be forgiven—to confer happiness on the lovely Ellen is the greatest blessing fortune can bestow on the sincerest of her admirers and most devoted slave, Oliver Cypress." Well, though rather beyond my comprehension, I must say it's a very friendly letter, and a very worthy old gentleman: I did not think there had been so much kind-heartedness in him.

Charles Sed. Rather so much infamy.

O'Har. Infamy! devil a word of infamy is there in the whole letter, 'tis all about friendship and generosity.

Charles Sed. Yes, the generosity that lavishes for its own self-gratification—the friendship that proffers but to betray.

O'Har. Generosity that—friendship that betrays—now that's what I call a bull, and by my soul it's a wapper!

Mrs. M. Alas! my worthy friend! you know not that the wretch whose artful insinuation, backed by glittering lures, tempts the unwary maid to her undoing, is in the perverted language of the world, miscalled a friend.

O'Har. Then damn the world, if such are its ways, and were Sir Oliver ten times the man he is, and should insult a female under my protection, I would say no, for in such cases there's no more to be said about it. So Joe, Joe Thresher!

Ellen. Did you want Joe, sir?—Any thing I can do?

O'Har. You do! oh no my love, 'tis clean out of your way, *(aside)* So Joe—but hold hard Mr. O'Harrolan, aren't you forgetting yourself, and running into the gentleman line again—fighting duels is not quite the business of a father—no matter for that, protecting a woman is the duty of a man, and I don't believe there's a farmer in England but would turn gentleman on such an occasion—so Joe! Joe Thresher!

Enter JOE.

Joe. I be here, I were only stepped into wheat barn. I thought I might as well knock out a few sheaves till you were ready—but now I'll go with you.

O'Har. I'm not going to work to day.

Joe. No!

O'Har. I'm going out.

Joe. Aye, your working mind be gone out, and that's as I expected.

O'Har. So, d'ye hear, fetch the horse-pistols that hang in my room, and lay them with my things to dress.

Joe. (aside) Wheugh! I see how it is, he be gone crazy—his misfortunes have turned his

poor head, and now he mean to do himself a mischief—now dont'e master, dont'e think of any such thing—have a little compassion on your own sinful life—do'nt take the pistols—they be such cruel blood-thirsty things.

O'Har I must, my honour calls.

Joe. Then let it call again to-morrow, or don't answer it, and 'twill soon be quiet.

O'Har. 'Twill not be quiet till I have punished a seducer.

Joe. Punished who?

O'Har. Who? why this Sir Oliver Cypress—this landlord of mine, who would bring infamy on my humble fire-side, and ruin my child, my Ellen!

Joe. Shoot him by all manner of means—I'll go for pistols, and they sha'nt miss fire for want of good flints, I warrant them—ruin Miss Ellen! dang me, but I should like to have a pop at him myself. [*Exit.*

Mrs. M. (coming forward) Good heavens! did I hear rightly—pistols! my worthy friend, what is it you mean?

O'Har. Faith, Mrs. Mordaunt, were I to tell you my meaning you'd be puzzled to find it out—so I'll just go and trouble Sir Oliver for a bit of an explanation.

Mrs. M. Sir Oliver! oh, then too well I understand your fatal purport, and would you, imprudent man, already too much in his power, provoke him to your certain ruin!

Charles Sed. (who has been lost in thought) (aside) Risks his life, her father's life! oh, no! that must not be, let me prevent it. My worthy friend, be swayed by their advice, seek not Sir Oliver, 'twere certain ruin to you; at least, delay your purpose—but I have now outstayed my time, and business pressess this evening, to-morrow perhaps I may be here again. [*Exit.*

O'Har. Wheugh! what a hurry! but I guess how it is, a little nervous, so he's gone away lest I should ax him to be my second.

Mrs. M. Oh, no, my worthy friend, let not resentment sway you 'gainst Sir Oliver—promise me this, and your arrears of rent shall instantly be cleared.

Ellen. Oh, ever my better angel, will you, can you do this?

Mrs. M. Yes, Ellen, when wrongs and calumny, had driven me from my home, and ever barred its doors to my return, I sold my jewels, I have stored the produce, I thought a day might come when worldly pressure, or a friend's sufferings, would give it value, that time is now, and I will save your father, although I mar your fortunes by it.

O'Har. Why, how now! dumb founded! Mr. O'Harrolan, when your heart's so full too, that I believe all the words of your mouth have crowded into it, and not one is left behind to say I thank you.

Ellen. No wonder—thanks are for trivial favours, service like this defies expression, and gratitude is then most silent, even when it feels the most.

O'Har. Gratitude, sure enough it must be so, and I dare say that's the reason why so many noisy politicians, when they have got what they want, remain silent ever after.

Mrs. M. And now within I will prepare the means, but remember the conditions upon which 'tis given.

Ellen. And yet I almost dread some mistake, some blunder. Sure 'twere better the business were transacted by the attorney from the neighbouring village.

O'Har. An attorney! well, live and learn they say—but I never should have found out, that employing an attorney was the way to avoid blunders, and for bulls, Tipperary never produced a neater than neighbour Latitat, for t'other day I heard him insisting that Jane Groute's little boy was the son of nobody—that the dray-man who drove over old Goody Barter was guilty of

manslaughter—he maintained that the parsons were clerks, and the attorneys gentlemen. No, Mrs. Mordaunt, let me go myself, and though I know Sir Oliver to be no better than a big blackguard, depend on it, as 'tis your wish, I'll treat him with all due civility.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Lord Mortimer's Cottage.*

Enter LORD MORTIMER *and* CHARLES SEDLEY.

LORD MORTIMER.

RETURNED! who saw him! Belford return'd!—impossible!

Chas. Sed. 'Tis so indeed, my Lord, for but now returning home, I found him just arrived, and with my father.

Lord M. So near me too, I greatly feared his loss, but fortune, it seems is kinder,—since this one pang is spared me; but shall I see him?

Chas. Sed. I left him setting forth to visit you, (your agent in London had apprized him of your residence) I hastened hither to glad you with the tidings, and see, he is already here.

Enter Mr. BELFORD.

Mr. Bel. Lord Mortimer! my honoured, valued friend!

Lord M. My Belford! is it given me to have you once again? O! 'tis a healing cordial to this heart, so long a stranger to pleasurable feelings.

Mr. Bel. And is it thus I meet you? still melancholy, still secluded, I had hoped ere this time might have shed its solace o'er your sufferings, but will they never end.

Lord M. Yes, Belford, they will end, and 'tis my all of comfort, that they must end, would it were quikly; but no more of this, for I am anxious to hear of your adventures.

Chas. Sed. We were informed an agent had abused your confidence, and much embarassed your affairs; could Dormer, fostered by you in infancy, educated at your expence, become the villain to wrong his benefactor.

Mr. Bel. He did; I sought to raise his for-

tunes, he ruined mine; I was to him a father; he proved to me the worst of villains; 'tis hard, when after years of toil we find the fruits of long successful industry snatched from our plucking; to find a viper has stung us to the heart; but harder still, when we have warmed that viper in our bosom.

Lord M. Aye, that's the rub, indeed!

Mr. Bel. It seems he had long and privately adventured, till involved by unsuccessful speculations, my property was sacrificed; when landed at Barbadoes, I found our house just tottering on the verge of bankruptcy, my bills, securities to a large amount, converted into money, and Dormer, aware of my arrival, sailed for Europe, on board a vessel freighted for Leghorn; thither I sought a passage; long time his caution eluded my pursuit. Chance at length presented me a clue to trace his steps; I followed, and found him at Bologna.

Lord M. Bologna—well—no doubt, you there secured him, and restitution followed.

Mr. Bel. And yet, my loss is heavy: well, I will not complain, for here again the villain had escaped me, but that my friends were active, and I found some whom early habits had endeared me to,—one I saw.—

Lord M. Saw whom?

Mr. Bel. Oh, I have much to tell of serious import, and yet, I almost tremble to shock you with my tale, or mention a name, so justly hateful to you.

Lord M. Oh, never faulter, these nerves have stood a tougher trial than any you now can put them to; on with your tale, tell who you saw, or I perchance can spare you the recital, 'twas D'Alembert.

Mr. Bel. 'Twas D'Alembert.

Lord M. You saw him then, saw that base perfidious—but what of that? I was the victim of his treachery, mine were the wrongs, he never injured you.

Mr. Bel. The man who wrongs my friend does injury to me: but when he sent to me, imploring by the remembrance of our former friendship, by all the pity good men feel for the unhappy, to visit him once more, to hear the full avowal of one fatal secret which long had preyed upon his life, and added stings to death's.

Lord M. To death! is he then no more?

Mr. Bel. I went to him; at such a time, at such a bidding, could I refuse! and 'twas a scene to move my pity; once I loved this man, and now to see him so soon cut off, to witness his anguish, his remorse for all the evils of a life mispent, but most the injuries he did to you, hear his frantic voice, calling on you for pity and forgiveness, imploring heaven's blessings, not for himself, but you, then dying, tormented by the past, and trembling for the future.

Lord. M. Well might he tremble, and O ye fluttering insects of the moment, who think in your career of gay licentious fashion, the husband's peace, the woman's honour, the joys of wedded bliss, trifles beneath your notice, here take a lesson; that moment, teeming with fancied pleasures, now is yours, it once was D'Alembert's, but Oh, beware and tremble,—a time must come when angry heaven, which never fails to call each villain to a strict account, will to the spoiler bring his destined hour for penitence and retribution, the hour of death was D'Alembert's.

C. Sed. Ah, Sir, I see you are much moved.

Lord M. Moved, Charles! well, well, perhaps, I may be, for 'tis an awful tale; a little moved too at recollection of my wrongs from that much loved, but guilty woman.

Mr. Bel. You wrong her much to term her so.

Lord M. Wrong her to term her guilty, who fled a doating husband's arms—with a seducer

fled; Oh misery of thought, was she not indeed most false, most guilty?

Mr. Bel. Most wronged, most innocent.

Lord M. And this was the important secret, he told you, this perhaps.

Mr. Bel. He did.

Lord M. And you, it seems, believed him.—Belford, you know me well, know my nature, never prone to jealousy or weak suspicion, nor was my judgment sway'd by any idle tale, which calumny delights to propagate 'gainst the most virtuous, well knowing that he who hastily condemns, must oft condemn unjustly; but guilt so glaring, so confirmed, which eighteen years have not at all disproved, and shall I now give up my fixed belief? to the chimeras of a distemper'd fancy, the mere confession of a villain.

Mr. Bel. True, the confession of a villain, but a repentant villain, death fast approaching, and that's a time when even villains may be believed.

Lord M. And yet it cannot be, the circumstances, each so strong, so pregnant with dreadful confirmation, not one line during my absence, then their flight together, and his letters, his guilty letters found in her apartment.

Mr. Bel. All the fabrications of his villainy: long had he felt the force of her superior charms, but whilst her beauty inflamed desires, her constant virtues checked the avowal; from thence he sought to goad your minds with jealousy, to give a semblance of her disloyalty, (your absence first inspired the hope) that your quick sense of honour might cause you to desert her, and then revenge and slighted love might yield, what faith and constancy withheld.

C. Sed. Unheard of villainy!

Mr. Bel. For this, your letters to each other were suppressed, and she misled by forgery, hastened to Florence, there expecting to meet a husband, not revel with a seducer, whilst her

impatience again to see you, and the acceptance of his proffer'd service, enabled him to give an air of mystery to their departure and those letters, not seen by her, but fabricated, placed there, for the purpose, completed your delusion.

Lord. M. O yet beware, nor mock me with a hope, which gratified, were more than human bliss, but once excited and crushed again, were madness.—What! innocent! my Eliza innocent! O, if 'tis so, give me to hear it once again, and I will bless you for the tidings.

Mr. Bel. Then, on my life, 'tis true; nor does it rest alone on his confession in that awful hour, though that were much, but I bring other proofs, such as when known, must force assent. She false! Oh never,--for when deserted by you, goaded by wrongs, heart-broken, lamenting your inconstancy, she sought an humble solitude, and there died spotless as she lived.

Lord M. (Falling on Belford's neck.) Oh, Belford, Belford! excuse my weakness, I am not often thus,—I have endured affliction without a tear, nor could all my sorrows, even when my heart was rent, excite one woman's drop, but this unhoped for joy dissolves it quite in love and tenderness, and thou dear spotless saint, once more, as in thy life, my pride, accept this tribute; thy virtues proved, restore thee to my heart, and thou art mine again.

Mr. Bel. And should these tidings assuage your sorrow, and to your bosom give it's former calm, I'll not repine at loss of fortune, but bless the villainy of Dormer, which led me to Bologna.

Lord M. And you shall find me all you wish, but now a little spare me; this surprise was great, and I was unprepared for it,—soon I'll join you—when you will once again behold your former friend, or if you sometimes hear the sigh of fond regret for her untimely loss, doubt not my firmness; you have removed the greater ill, the lesser may be endured. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment at Sir Oliver's.*

Enter SIR OLIVER, CYPRESS, *and* SERVANT.

Sir O. Wants to see me, and you know not his name.

Serv. I asked him that, but he said it was enough for me if he told you his business.

Sir O. 'Tis odd! well, let him come in, *(Exit Servant)* one of my neighbours, I dare say, thinks it respectful to call on me.

Enter O'HARROLAN.

O'Har. Your most obedient very humble servant, Sir Oliver Cypress. *(Aside.)* Come, that's civil enough for a beginning.

Sir O. Why, what the devil brought you here?

O'Har. The devil! Oh no—you're out there, 'twas my family travelling equipage, and this new pair of Hoby's;—I've left off fox-hunting, so I thought I'd treat the creatures with a walk this fine day. *(Aside.)* Come—genteel again, that—I shall do.

Sir O. This is very extraordinary, you refused to tell your name, I hope your business is of sufficient importance to justify an intrusion into the presence of a man of my consequence.

O'Har. Faith! I'm told it will justify an intrusion into the presence of a man of much greater consequence.

Sir O. Indeed!

O'Har. Yes, I'm an Englishman, and come to complain of injustice.

Sir O. An Englishman you may be, but I should not have guessed that from your brogue.

O'Har. My brogue, now what's my brogue to the purpose? I did not come to complain of that, but sure I was born at Ballinamuck, in the county of Dublin, and is not that made England by act of Parliament?

Sir. O. Well, whoever you are, you might learn a little politeness I think.

O'Har. Learn politeness, and pray who taught you—for I fancy I should get but a queer lesson

from your master, 'twould be polite if you'd be axing a gentleman to take a chair after a long walk, but mayhap you hav'n't got so far in your education, so I'll hand one myself. *(takes a chair and sits down.)*

Sir O. Was there ever such insolence?

O'Har. Oh be asey, be asey, keep a civil tongue in your head, and remember decency's a mighty becoming quality whether in man or Tailor.

Sir O. Tailor! why you impudent audacious: who are you, what's your name?

O'Har. There now, see what you get by that; had you enquired with civility I'd have told you without axing, but now tho' Mr. Phelim O'Harrolan was never ashamed of his name in his life, he'd scorn to mention it in your dirty presence.

Sir O. (Aside.) O Harrolan! zounds! my Irish tenant, and the pretty Ellen's father; unlucky my not knowing him, I must soften him: you are a tenant of mine Mr. O'Harrolan?

O'Har. Mr. O'Harrolan! then he knows my name, how the devil could he find it out?

Sir O. (Taking a chair and sitting by him) You rent a tolerably good farm, and I think on easy terms; I am always happy to see a worthy tenant.

O'Har. Well, that's civil on your side, just in my own way.—Now we shall do, but it makes me clean forget my politeness when you disremember yours.

Sir O. To be sure I did not recollect you at first, and you rather forgot yourself—You have a daughter, I believe, I saw her here to day.

O'Har. You did, and then I believe, Sir Oliver, you rather forgot yourself.

Sir O. Oh, what, she has told you, read my letter mayhap.

O'Har. Every syllable.

Sir O. Then you know your daughter has attracted the particular regard of a man of consequence; think how lucky, for she'll find me a

most generous lover; always liberal where my pleasures are concerned, never stint myself there.

O'Har. You don't, don't you? and yet now I can't find out where's the luck for the soul of me.

Sir O. Why, if you're come to propose terms, you'll find me ready to agree to any thing reasonable.

O'Har. Propose terms! what, me! Oh blood and thunder—but my promise—Have I reared her from infancy, and ever loved her as a father, to have my feelings insulted, by supposing I could propose terms for my child's dishonour.

Sir O. Why, what of that, surely you must know such things are not regarded in the world.

O'Har. Ah! but I know there is a world where such things will be regarded, and whatever becomes of you, Sir Oliver Cypress, Mr. Phelim O'Harrolan will take care not to set out on his journey with such a big load upon his conscience, lest it should prove a stumbling block in his way thither.

Sir O. (Aside) Oh, I see he's one of your conscientious ones—Ah! my worthy friend, you don't see this matter in its proper light, I fear—I have great pleasure in conversing with you, your notions are so superior.

O'Har. He's struck with my politeness.

Sir O. But there are things you don't consider as you should do, now for instance, your present situation.

O'Har. Is a damn'd bad one; I made it so by turning gentleman, 'twould be making it much worse if I should mend it by turning scoundrel.

Sir O. Oh no, for in such case who could blame you for securing a powerful friend, a friend to relieve you from your embarrassments, discharge your debts, give you a new lease, only think of that, a new lease of your farm.

O'Har. And if you'd give me your whole estate you should not bribe me to do a dishonourable action, there's a little touch of Irish gentility

for you, and in spite of all my resolutions it will stick to me to the last.

Sir O. Well, I am sorry to find you so obstinately bent against your own good; to be sure it would greatly hurt my feelings to hint any thing unpleasant to one so nearly connected with the lovely Ellen: but you recollect your arrears of rent are large.

O'Har. (Aside) The blackguard!—And so, Sir Oliver, you would threaten me 'cause I'm in your debt.

Sir O. Oh no, not threaten, but you know these are hard times for landlords, taxes high, repairs expensive.

O'Har. Well, well, we'll soon set your heart at rest, and 'tis lucky I am so provided; there, *(offering notes)* there's a receipt in full of all demands in the shape of a few hundred pounds bank notes.

Sir. O. What's this! notes to the value of three hundred pounds, the whole amount of his arrears!

O'Har. Just so, you find it right, don't you? and now, that being settled, allow me to thank you Sir Oliver, for your kind offer, and to assure you with all due civility, that I despise your offer. Give me a new lease! oh you are very generous, very liberal! but it won't do for my dear Ellen; she despises your offer, and what's more, she despises you, you amorous old Cupid: so, if the fit's so hot on you, you may make love to the picture again, down on your knees you know, by my soul its the only chance left you.

Sir O. What, you presume upon being out of my power, and are growing saucy upon it; its the way with all of you, but a man of my consequence is rightly served, for demeaning himself to talk to one of your sort, when if I did right, I should order my servants to bestow on your insolence its proper reward, by a ducking in my horse pond.

O'Har. A ducking! duck Mr. Phelim Phasnasias O'Harrolan! and to be sure he wouldn't like to see the spalpeen who should attempt it. No, Mr. Contractor, you gay gallavanting tailor, Mr. Phelim O'Harrolan means to have the honour of leaving your house in a dry jacket; and as for the water in your horse pond, you'd better reserve it all for your own occasions, for by my soul the contract you have entered into with the old one, when it comes to be fulfilled hereafter, will make you wish for every drop of it, were it ten times as much. [*Aside. Exit.*

Sir O. What a savage!—How now!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. A letter for your honour, the young man who brought it did not wait for an answer.

[*Exit.*

Sir O. Seems an easy gentlemanlike hand—a civil enquiry no doubt, and in the respect of this I shall find something to atone for the insolence of that Irish barbarian *(opens the letter.)* "Sir, your rank"—aye—this begins well—here is something like respect—"your rank and "age"—age! he might as well have left that out—"ought rather to have checked"—what's this? "the offer of an ungentlemanly offence, "than screen you from the punishment due to "it"—not quite so respectful—"I have seen "the base letter you addressed to the daughter "of your worthy tenant O'Harrolan, and shall "attend in the evening at the Beech-wood, to "receive from you an honourable satisfaction "for the injuries you have meditated to an in-"nocent young woman, of whom I am proud "to avow myself the protector. Charles Sed-"ley"—Oh lord! why its a challenge! was there ever such an inhuman murderous dog! —what will become of me!—

(Enter CAPTAIN CYPRESS.)

Sir O. O my dear Bob, you never came so opportunely in all your life.

Capt. C. Indeed, Sir! but what is all this? you seem alarmed.

Sir O. Seem alarmed? I am very much alarmed.

Capt. C. Nothing surely respecting Lady Lucretia's death.

Sir O. No—but I fear 'tis respecting my own.

Capt. C. Your own, Sir.

Sir O. There—read that.

Capt. C. (taking up the letter) (aside) So, so! I find the old gentleman has not abated in his pursuit of my pretty villager—however, I'll take care he shall get into no danger—tho' for the present I'll encourage the notion, to prevent his interfering with my scheme of carrying her off this evening. Well, Sir, I see 'tis a challenge.

Sir O. Now, that I call damn'd cool—here's a letter has had almost as much effect upon me as a pistol could, and he makes as light of it as tho' 'twere an invitation to dinner—" well, Sir, I see 'tis a challenge."

Capt. C. And is there any thing so very extraordinary in that.

Sir O. Yes, I think there's something very extraordinary and very horrible too.

Capt. Have you then been so fortunate as to pass thro' life without giving or receiving an affront?

Sir O. O I have given and received a great many affronts, but I never received a challenge before.

Capt. C. No, Sir—how could you avoid it?

Sir O. Why, if I carried in my bill to a flashy customer, he would consider it an affront, and when I called again for payment he sometimes kicked me down stairs—but that I did not mind —for I had always a way of demanding satisfaction, in my next bill.

Capt. C. But now consider the difference—how low would it sink a man of fashion—a knight, to decline a gentleman's challenge.

Sir O. A pistol bullet would sink him lower.

Capt. C. Lower! impossible—for what's life without honour?

Sir O. Oh nothing to be sure—yes, what's honour without life?

Capt. C. No, Sir, not so—what's life without honour?

Sir O. Is it, Oh! I thought it had been t'other way.

Capt. C. Besides, Sir, recollect your deceased lady, had she lived, what would she have thought, had she found her husband destitute of courage?

Sir O. She might not have found it—for had Lady Lucretia lived, I dare say I should have fought with a great deal of readiness; but now, so compleatly have all my fantastic notions of honour evaporated, that instead of being at this moment a man of fashion, and a knight, to be shot at, damn me if I don't wish I was a tailor again, to be kicked down stairs.

Capt. C. But I see the time is short—what do you intend to do?

Sir O. I don't know, can't you advise me, Bob?

Capt. C. Really, Sir, 'tis difficult in so delicate a business.

Sir O. Yet there is one way I should think—my dear Bob.

Capt. C. Sir.

Sir O. Couldn't you fight him for me?

Capt. C. Would that be proper?

Sir O. Oh very proper indeed—to be sure 'twould be getting you into danger—but then don't you see, 'twould be getting me out of it.

Capt. C. Impossible, Sir!

Sir O. What, do you say impossible? O, you unnatural! not risk your life to save your father's!—not fight when I desire it—how shocking there should be such unfeeling beings in the world.

Capt. C. Could regard to your reputation sanction such an alternative, I would embrace

the risk with pleasure, but now it must not be thought of; as matters stand, my presence may be an interruption—at all events, Sir, keep up your spirits—the issue of these conflicts is often less fatal than expected—and there is always something consoling in behaving like a man of honour. [*Exit.*

Sir O. Don't leave me, Bob—Oh dear, what will become of me, who is the friend that will advise me—who will take me and hide this miserable head where it can never more be seen.

(*Enter* SERVANT.)

Servt. Mr. Crape, the undertaker, Sir.

Sir O. Don't let him come near me—I don't want him—yes I do—I'll come to him directly. (*Exit Servant*) Even his conversation will be better than my own horrid thoughts —tho' I must say his coming just at this juncture looks very ominous—was ever such an unfortunate—what had I to do with fashionable notions—gallantry too—miserable old man! here I shall be murdered, and for what?—for honour, curse upon honour—when I was a tailor I was happy, nobody then expected me to have any honour, now here I stand, insulted by my tenant, laughed at by a girl, challenged by a bumpkin, deserted by my own son, and now comes a damn'd undertaker to be ready to bury me I suppose—O what a lamentable finish for a once fashionable tailor. [*Exit.*

END OF ACT FOUR.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Country View.*

Enter CAPT. CYPRESS *and* CRAPE.

CAPT. CYPRESS.

AND you are certain she has not escaped?

Crape. I dodged her to the door myself, since which I am positive no soul has left the house.

Capt. C. By heaven! she seems to meet my wishes. By this time, I conclude, Scamp has returned with the post-chaise.

Crape. A chaise!

Capt. C. Here, then, will I wait her return; and fortune favouring, this night the lovely rustic may be mine.

Crape. (aside) Oh, lord!—then I presume, Captain, you have no farther occasion for me!

Capt. C. No farther occasion! What have you gone thus far, and mean to desert me now?

Crape. Why I begin to think I have already gone much too far; however, with Mr. Scamp's assistance, you'll do well enough—and as I don't intend to rob you of any of the honour of the enterprize, I can't say I feel very ambitious to partake of the danger.

Capt. C. And what mighty danger has your apprehension conjured up? is she not a mere rustic? poor! and her bumpkin lover being otherwise engaged, at present unprotected.

Crape. If that's the case, her being unprotected should be her best security from insult: and for her poverty, if it's a crime to rob others of their treasure, I don't see how it can be lessened by the consideration, that it's the only one in their possession.

Capt. C. Why you really astonish me; and

can this be Kit Crape, the obliging friend, the honest fellow whom once I knew?

Crape. An honest fellow!—that's a character I am not ambitious of—'tis often conferred on those who, possessing some few superficial accomplishments, deem themselves privileged to outrage decency and morality, gloss over crimes, and play the devil with impunity. The man of the world is incorrect in his dealings, careless in his concerns; but he lives well, is a facetious companion—that's enough; he's an honest fellow; he ruins his friend at the gaming table, intrigues with his wife—these are the failings of age: still he's an honest fellow. He murders his friend, but 'tis in an honourable way. Oh, he's a damn'd honest fellow: upon my word I think your honest fellow one of the greatest rogues in nature.

Capt. C. And can you suppose, that now, when fortune seems to have laboured for my success, the bright reward just in view, I am to be stopped by the absurdity of your selfish fear.

Crape. Why I am afraid they are somewhat ill-timed, as the poet says.

Capt. C. The poet, too, torturing me with their musty sentences—damn the poets.

Crape. Oh, to be sure, damn the poets, poor devils; nobody seems to care how much they're damned.

Capt. C. What, when my senses are all in a tumult of love, joy, and expectation, thinking of the happiness that must be mine—of my triumph when seated in the post-chaise.

Crape. And quite forgetting the wretchedness that will be mine, when seated in my own parlour.

Capt. C. The lovely fair one by my side—rapture and ecstacy!

Crape. My wife by mine—horror and misery!

Capt. C. She turns her beauteous eyes.

Crape. Nobody will turn beauteous eyes on me, for they'll be Mrs. Crape's.

Capt. C. At first darting a reproachful look.

Crape. There our cases will exactly tally.

Capt. C. 'Till softened by my importunity she yields consent, and then to think of the bewitching glances, melting kisses, rapture, blisses, and all the ecstatic heavenly delights of love.

Crape. Yes, and to think of the scolding, fits, tears, quarrels, curtain lectures, plague, furies, and all the infernal torments of matrimony.

Capt. C. But what brightness is this that dawns upon my sight? 'tis she by all that's lovely, and now she turns into another path—I will pursue her—nay, no retracting, you are fairly in and shall not 'scape me now.

[*Exit* CAPT. C.—CRAPE *follows reluctantly.*

Enter MR. HERBERT.

Mr. Her. How well does this sequester'd spot accord with my soul's feelings, whilst thro' the gloom of the surrounding wood the evening sun darts its still powerful rays, mingling delight with melancholy, and here have I retired from observation, even from friendship's soothing voice, to meditate on thee, Eliza, oh lost, too early lost. Had but the treachery a villain's conscience so late revealed, been timely known, then might'st thou still survive, my tender guide, my loved companion; and that thy hapless burthen which doomed thee to the grave, perhaps had blessed my age with manly virtues, or all it's mother's gentleness—but oh! be still my heart, to know her pure, to know her spotless, was all thou asked from heaven, that bliss is mine—then cease thy murmurings *(A shriek is heard)* Ha! a woman's voice as in distress, and I unarm'd—*(Another shriek.)* Again! what can this mean?—no matter—those cries denote she wants assistance, and shame betide the dastard soul, that pausing in cold unfeeling caution, with holds it from her need. [*Exi*

Re-enter CRAPE.

Crape. The Captain's eagern

has quite distanced me, and thereby enabled me to make my escape; and lucky for me I have done so, or the game would have been up with me, in this country at least. Now then just one look to witness the catastrophe and I am off to my appointment with Sir Oliver—*(looking out)* Eh! why zounds! there's a third person, a stranger! Oh lord—there'll certainly be murder —then it's time for me to be off indeed—for if this pretty transaction gets wind, I'm sure the neighbours will all join in condemning it as a vile unnatural plot of the Captain's—the part of a cursed rogue by Mr. Christopher Crape—however, let me but escape exposure on the present occasion, and I'll take care it shall be the last time of his appearing in that character. [*Exit.*

Enter MR. HERBERT, *supporting Ellen.*

Mr. Her. This way—lean on my arm, nay, fair one, calm your alarms—you are in safety now.

Ellen. O I am much alarmed; but safety, am I indeed in safety?

Mr. Her. You are—compose yourself; your persecutor has fled at my approach—Is he a stranger to you?

Ellen. I do not recollect him, he met me on my way and spoke me fair at first as you do; should you, like him, prove treacherous—ah, Sir, forgive my fears!

Mr. Her. In truth I cannot blame you: when libertines are thus presumptuous, daring; in female bosoms distrust is prudence; but, fair one, know, if there are those who can disgrace their manhood by offering insult to a woman—some there are with better feelings ready to espouse the cause of innocence, to curb the profligate, and succour the defenceless.

Ellen. 'Twere wrong to doubt you, but 'twas the weakness of my fears, will you excuse them? and now I look on you again I feel impressed a sentiment of awe and reverence, something too that bids me be assured you could not harm me.

Mr. Her. Indeed I could not; but your harrassed spirits demand repose—for fear of further danger let me conduct you to your home—is it far distant?

Ellen. A very little way—I live with my father at the adjoining farm.

Mr. Her. A farmer! his name?

Ellen. O'Harrolan, tenant to Sir Oliver Cypress.

Mr. Her. (Aside) Sedley's Ellen—how fortunate my presence at this juncture. Ah, Charles, I cannot blame you—she is indeed a wonder—now fair one let us proceed.

Ellen. Oh, I am bound to you for ever, but see, 'tis Mrs. Mordaunt, that best of friends, approaches, nor need I farther trespass on your goodness—for in her arms I fear no danger.

Enter MRS. MORDAUNT—ELLEN runs to her.

Mrs. M. My Ellen, how have I been alarmed—they told me you were struggling with a ruffian—can it be true?

Ellen. The worst of villains, and but for the protection of this generous stranger, who heard my cries and came to my relief—your Ellen had been lost for ever.

Mrs. M. Oh then, whoe'er he be—for this good deed may heaven shower down it's choicest blessings on him, worthy sir, *(Mr. H. turns to her)* Eternal powers, 'tis he.

Mr. H. What can this mean—these strong alarms, that voice, and ah, those well-known features—can this be real, it is, it is, unlooked for bliss!—She lives, she lives—Eliza, dearest Eliza.

Mrs. M. Yes, cruel Mortimer, you see once more before you, the object of your early love, the victim of your perfidy; here, after all your vows of love and constancy, traduced, deserted—yet still surviving to shame you with her wrongs.

Mr. H. No, by heavens! Eliza I never wrong'd

thee, this heart was thine alone, nor ever could another share Eliza's place there; 'twas a villain's foul contrivance, intent to separate two fond hearts, so long misled me to think thee guilty.

Mrs. M. Guilty! me guilty! a villain's foul contrivance. What! and could not all my former love, my faith, my truth, long tried, have stood a little against a villain's calumny, so hastily condemned?

Mr. H. Oh! I was blind to doubt you, but when you know the arts, the falsehood, (the tale were now too long to tell,) you scarce will wonder; the villain's dying at length revealed the whole, and this day, this blessed day, I heard the blissful tidings, knew my Eliza innocent; that, that was rapture, but little thought it had that greater blessing still in store, to find thee living.

Mrs. M. Ah Mortimer? I thought that wrongs had steeled my heart against tenderness, but this so unexpected meeting, this struggle, I find too much for me, and sure that wasted form, that care-worn countenance, betrays no symptom of joy or revelry, and have I too misjudged you?

Mr. H. Oh, we were both deceived: but guilty as thou appeared'st I mourned thy loss; without thee the world seem'd all one void, and life was valueless, but now I will forget it all, for thus restored to me, is there ought wanting to my happiness? Oh yes! there is, 'till that loved voice declares my pardon, till those dear arms give welcome to my long lost treasure.

Mrs. M. 'Twere vain contending, and had we earlier met, my wrongs yet unexplained, I fear this treacherous heart had pleaded for you, but now my doubts removed, it springs with eagerness to share your transports, and owns its master. *(they embrace)*

Mr. H. Oh ever loved, how does this blissful moment o'erpay the sufferings of an age of sorrow.

Mrs. M. My Ellen, this tumult of joy and happiness made me forget you, but patience, sweet girl, for thou wilt share it.

Mr. H. That lovely maid, your friend, it seems, was seized by ruffians, sure 'twas my good fortune brought me this way to hear her cries and fly to her relief.

Mrs. M. Oh, no! not fortune, but rather the intervention of that power who thus can make our own good deeds their best rewards, for know, that by the generous feeling which led you to protect an unknown, undefended, you have preserved your daughter.

Mr. H. and Ellen. A daughter.

Mrs. M. Yes, Mortimer, she is your daughter. When left by you, with more than mother's pangs I gave her birth, but fearful that you might rob me of my child, the story of my death was circulated to stop enquiries, and my faithful Giffard dispatched with her to England, where marrying with the farmer, our Ellen was by that worthy man adopted as his own. At length, I ventured hither, and for years my task has been to guide her youth, and by instruction form her tender mind, and well does she repay my toil; but take her to your heart, her gentle virtues deserve a place there, and her cottage lessons you'll find will not disgrace the heiress of Lord Mortimer.

Ellen. My mother! my dearest mother! blessed title!—a father too! saved by a father, for such vouchsafements, thus lowly let me bend in gratitude to heaven, and reverence to you, the authors of my being *(kneels)*

O'HARROLAN *(without)*.

O'Har. O very well, set your heart at rest, for though he have taken her to the world's end, I'll follow till I meet him.

Enter O'HARROLAN.

St. Patrick be thank'd—and have I come up

with you, honeys? Nay, my dear Ellen, don't stand kneeling there, Mr. O'Harrolan's at your elbow, and good luck to the man who should attempt to harm you.

Mr. H. What does this mean?

O'Har. Mean! Oh, I'll explain it all to you at full length—you're a villain! that's it—nay, never go to deny it, for 'tis plain written in every line of that ugly seducing face.

Mrs. M. My worthy friend, you are mistaken, you see before you no ruffian, but the protector of your Ellen.

O'Har. The protector! and sure enough I must be mistaken, for now I look again I think I never saw a more honest, good-looking countenance in all my life, and if he's the kind-hearted gentleman I take him for, he'll excuse my behaviour—for certainly my fears for Ellen made me disremember all my civility.

Mr. H. Worthy creature! feelings like yours want no excuse, though you a moment checked the full tide of joy fresh springing from this heart to new endearments, when first a father's arms are opened to enfold a daughter. *(embrace)*

O'Har. His daughter! the right owner come at last. I feared 'twould be so—and oh, Mr. O'Harrolan, what will become of you, of what use will be your industry now? your creditors may seize your all, and welcome, 'tis of little consequence when you have lost the darling of your age.

Ellen. Oh no! not lose her, she still is yours, still will you share her heart, nor shall my love, my duty to this my new-found father, make me forget how much I owe the friend who sheltered my unprotected infancy.

Enter SIR OLIVER CYPRESS *and* CRAPE, *carrying pistols.*

Sir O. Nay, pr'ythee, Mr. Crape don't walk quite so fast, why what a hurry the man's in.

Crape. To be sure 'tis the time, and the principal performer should always be ready, in busi-

ness, in pleasure; in social engagements, punctuality is dispensed with, but a gentleman must always be in a hurry when he's to murder another in cool blood.

Sir O. But do you think he'll come *(seeing Mr. Herbert)* Oh lord! he's here already, a hasty inhuman.—Oh, no, I was mistaken, 'twas Mr. Herbert.

Mr. H. Sir Oliver Cypress, you are well encountered, but how comes it that I meet with you here, and with these weapons?

Sir O. Weapons! they are pistols! Mr. Herbert; a trifling affair of honour, not my seeking I assure you—a letter of mine to that young lady has, I fear, been misunderstood, and a gentleman—I don't see him yet—a gentleman has thought proper to call on me for—sure he won't come—call on me for—and there are calls a man of honour must not be backward in answering.

Mr. H. I understand you—and to this gentleman I would address myself—your friend, as I presume.

Crape. Not absolutely friend—that were aspiring too high—though I have the honour to attend Sir Oliver on this occasion.

Mr. H. I much mistook you, sir, and ask your pardon—you attend no doubt professionally.

Sir. O. Oh dear no! the lord forbid, but the shortness of the time did not admit of my applying to any neighbour, and Mr. Crape coming just in the interim and finding me unprovided—

Mr. H. Then in that case perhaps the offer of my services might not be unacceptable.

Sir O. (aside) You're devilishly mistaken—Why to be sure it would be very kind, if you, Mr. Herbert, would act as my friend on this occasion.

Mr. H. I will act as your friend, as a friend ought to act, not he whose fiend-like nature inflames the feelings he should repress, but who, by mild persuasion assuages anger, gives passion time to cool, prompts explanation where he finds doubt, atonement, where there is error, and

brings them back to reason and humanity, but here comes your antagonist.

Sir O. 'Tis he indeed, my death warrant, by all that's terrible.

Enter CHARLES SEDLEY.

Charles Sed. Sir Oliver *(sees the company)* Lord Mortimer here, Ellen, Mrs Mordaunt too.

Mr. H. You seem surprized—our presence no doubt was unexpected.

Chas. Sed. Indeed I did not think to see you here, nor did I know your Lordship was acquainted with our meeting.

Mr. H. I have heard your purpose; you come here armed in the defence of this young lady, and, at the hazard of your life, to vindicate her injuries. Henceforth you are to know her under my protection, and to defend her person, redress her wrongs, I claim by a superior title.

Chas. Sed. You the protector of my Ellen—your's a superior title!

Mr. H. A father's.

Chas. Sed. Can it be possible—Lord Mortimer the father of my Ellen?

Sir O. What! Mr. Herbert Lord Mortimer? *(aside to Crape).*

Mr. H. Charles, my youthful friend, whose kindness has often cheered my lonely hours, will you not share the joy that now awaits me, when in this lovely girl I find a daughter—the daughter, too, of this your friend. Not Mrs. Mordaunt, but my long-lost Eliza.

Sir O. (aside to Crape) Why, I remember to have heard of Lady Mortimer; she was much talked of in the fashionable world; I was then in business; it was said she ran away from her husband, and died many years in Italy—and can this be her?

Crape. Yes, as the man in the farce says—the Dead Alive.

Sir O. Alive! after so many years, too—why at this rate a man can never be sure he is safe.

Crape. What a precious fellow the undertaker

must have been. Thank your stars, Sir Oliver, you have met with a very different man—you need feel no alarm on that head.

Chas. Sed. (to Ellen) May every earthly blessing be your lot; and when hereafter the humble Sedley no more remember'd, some happier youth obtains that greater treasure, thy dear hand, may he be found with wealth, with honor, with truth and goodness, to reward your virtues, and to deserve your love.

Mr. H. He is already found—she is your's; and my Eliza will sure approve the gift, and crown your union with a mother's blessing.

Mrs. M. Most gladly.

O'Har. Oh, ho! honies, is it so?—give you joy, Mr. Sedley—you ever had my warmest wishes—and will my dear Ellen be a bride?—then stand clear all of you, for in that case there's a way we have in Ireland *(going to salute Ellen, stops short)* oh, fie upon your forgetfulness, Mr. O'Harrolan—what maggot's got into your head, that you should presume to salute a right honourable?

Ellen. What, distant, and to your Ellen! Oh no, not so—for she will ever love you as a father *(kissing him)*.

Mr. H. And now, Eliza, let me conduct you to my cottage; there at length I will unfold each strange mysterious circumstance; and perhaps the neighbours, whom chance brought hither to witness this our meeting, may be induced to hear the tale, and share with us this night the social board.

Crape. Your Lordship does me infinite honor; tho' my trade is a melancholy one, I am no enemy to mirth and good humour, and I shall be proud to attend this good company, altho' it is not professionally.

Ellen. And with Sir Oliver I must intercede —for sure he will not refuse me, after all his kind promises, and our little party will be much honoured by the presence of a man of consequence.

Sir O. Ah, Miss Herbert! for so I find I am to call you—I begin to think I have only cursedly exposed myself—allow me, however, to congratulate you on your present happiness, and for the impertinence I was guilty of this morning sincerely to ask your pardon.

O'Har. Well, you have chosen so lucky a moment, she'll certainly forgive you without going down on your knees again.

Lord M. All, all must be forgiven—nor shall a thought of former ills intrude to mar our evening's joys—which then were perfect, restored to thee, Eliza, conferring happiness on those we love, and this our present bliss augmented by recollection of our past afflictions.

Crape. Just as the poet says—the bitter past—more welcome is the sweet—all's well that ends well.

END OF THE COMEDY.