

WALPOLE; OR, EVERY MAN HAS HIS PRICE.

A Comedy in Rhyme.—In Three Acts.

BY EDWARD BULWER, LORD LYTTON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE RT. HON. ROBERT WALPOLE, M.P., *Chancellor of the Exchequer, and First Lord of the Treasury.*
 JOHN VEASEY, M.P., *his Confidant.*
 SELDEN BLOUNT, M.P.

SIR SIDNEY BELLAIR, Bart., M.P.
 LORD NITHSDALE.
 1ST JACOBITE LORD.
 2D JACOBITE LORD.

Frequenters of Tom's Coffee-House, Servants, &c.

LUCY WILMOT.

WOMEN.

MRS. VIZARD.

Scene—LONDON, 1716. Time occupied by the Events of the Play—ONE DAY.

ACT FIRST.

SCENE. Tom's Coffee-House. In the background, gentlemen seated in different compartments, or "boxes."

Enter WALPOLE and VEASEY from opposite sides.

Veasey. Ha! good day, my dear patron.

Walpole. Good day, my dear friend;
 You can spare me five minutes?

Veasey. Five thousand.

Walpole. Attend;
 I am just from the king, and I failed not to press him
 To secure to his service John Veasey.

Veasey. God bless him!
 Walpole. George's reign, just begun, your tried
 worth will distinguish.

Veasey. Oh, a true English king!

Walpole. Tho' he cannot speak English.

Veasey. You must find that defect a misfortune, I
 fear.

Walpole. The reverse; for no rivals can get at his
 ear.

It is something to be the one public man pat in
 The new language that now governs England, dog
 Latin.

Veasey. Happy thing for these kingdoms that you
 have that gift,
 Or, alas! thro' what shoals all our counsels would
 drift.

Walpole. Yes, the change from Queen Anne to King
 George, we must own,
 Renders me and the Whigs the sole props of the
 throne.

For the Tories their Jacobite leanings disgrace,
 And a Whig is the only safe man for a place.

Veasey. And the Walpoles of Houghton, in all their
 relations,
 Have been Whigs to the backbone for three genera-
 tions.

Walpole. Ay, my father and mother contrived to
 produce

Their eighteen sucking Whigs for the family use,
 Of which number one only, without due reflection,
 Braved the wrath of her house by a Tory connection.
 But, by Jove, if her Jacobite husband be living,
 I will make him a Whig.

Veasey. How?

Walpole. By something worth giving:
 For I loved her in boyhood, that pale pretty sister;
 And in counting the Walpoles still left, I have mist
 her.

(Pauses in emotion, but quickly recovers himself.)

What was it I said?—Oh,—the State and the Guelph,
 For their safety, must henceforth depend on myself.
 The revolt, scarcely quenched, has live sparks in its
 ashes;

Nay, fresh seeds for combustion were sown by its
 flashes.

Each example we make dangerous pity bequeathes;
 For no Briton likes blood in the air that he breathes.

Veasey. Yes; at least there's one rebel whose doom
 to the block,

Tho' deserved, gives this soft-hearted people a shock.
 Walpole. Lord Nithsdale, you mean; handsome,
 young, and just wedded,

A poor head, that would do as much harm if beheaded.
 Veasey. Yet they say you rejected all prayers for his
 life.

Walpole. It is true; but in private I've talked to his
 wife:

She had orders to see him last night in the Tower.

And—

Veasey. Well?

Walpole (looking at his watch). Wait for the news—
 'tis not yet quite the hour.

Ah, poor England, I fear, at the General Election,
 Will vote strong in a mad anti-Whiggish direction.
 From a Jacobite Parliament we must defend her,
 Or the king will be Stuart, and Guelph the Pretender.
 And I know but one measure to rescue our land
 From the worst of all ills—Civil War.

Veasey. True; we stand
 At that dread turning-point in the life of a State
 When its free choice would favour what freedom
 should hate;

When the popular cause, could we poll population—
 Walpole. Would be found the least popular thing in
 the nation.

Veasey. Scarce a fourth of this people are sound in
 their reason—

Walpole. But we can't hang the other three-fourths
 for high treason.

Veasey. Tell me, what is the measure your wisdom
 proposes?

Walpole. In its third year, by law, this Whig Parlia-
 ment closes.

But the law! What's the law in a moment so critical?
 Church and State must be saved from a House Jaco-
 bitical.

Let this Parliament then, under favour of heaven,
 Lengthen out its existence from three years to seven.

Veasey. Brilliant thought! Could the State keep its
 present directors,

Undisturbed for a time by those rowdy electors,
 While this new German tree, just transplanted, takes
 root,

Dropping down on the lap of each friend golden fruit,
 Britain then would be saved from all chance of reac-
 tion

To the craft and corruption of Jacobite faction.
 But ah! think you the Commons would swallow the
 question?

Walpole. That depends on what pills may assist
 their digestion.

I could make—see this list—our majority sure,
 If by buying two men I could sixty secure,
 For as each of these two is the chief of a section
 That will vote black or white at its leader's direc-
 tion,

Let the pipe of the shepherd but lure the bell-wether,

And he folds the whole flock, wool and cry, altogether. Well, the first of these two worthy members you guess.

Veasey. Sure, you cannot mean Blount, virtuous Selden Blount?

Walpole. Yes.

Veasey. What! your sternest opponent, half Cato, half Brutus,

He, whose vote incorruptible—

Walpole. Just now would suit us; For a patriot so staunch could with dauntless effrontery—

Veasey. Sell himself?

Walpole. Why, of course, for the good of his country. True, his price will be high—he is worth forty votes. And his salary must pay for the change in their coats. Prithce, has not his zeal for his fatherland—rather Overburthened the lands he received from his father?

Veasey. Well, 'tis whispered in clubs that his debts somewhat tease him.

Walpole. I must see him in private, and study to ease him.

Will you kindly arrange that he call upon me

At my home, not my office, to-day—just at three?

Not a word that can hint at the object in view, Say some bill in the House that concerns him and you; And on which, as distinct from all party disputes, Members meet without tearing each other like brutes.

Veasey. Lucky thought—Blount and I both agree in Committee

On a bill for amending the dues of the City—

Walpole. And the Government wants to enlighten its soul

On the price which the public should pay for its coal. We shall have him, this Puritan chief of my foes.

Now the next one to catch is the chief of the Beaux; All our young members mimic his nod or his laugh; And if Blount be worth forty votes, he is worth half.

Veasey. Eh! Bellair, whose defence of the Jacobite peers—

Walpole. Thrilled the House; Mister Speaker himself was in tears.

Faith I thought he'd have beat us. [*Taking snuff.*]

Veasey. That fierce peroration—

Walpole. Which compared me to Nero—superb [*brushing the snuff from his lace lappet*] declamation!

Veasey. Yes; a very fine speaker.

Walpole. Of that there's no doubt,

For he speaks about things he knows nothing about. But I still to our party intend to unite him—

Secret Service Department—Bellair—a small item.

Veasey. Nay, you jest—for this gay maiden knight in debate

To a promise so brilliant adds fortune so great—

Walpole. That he is not a man to be bought by hard cash.

But he's vain and conceited, light-hearted and rash. Every favourite of fortune hopes still to be greater,

And a bean must want something to turn a debater. Hem! I know a Duke's daughter, young, sprightly,

and fair;

She will wed as I wish her; hint that to Bellair; Ay, and if he will put himself under my steerage,

Say that with the Duke's daughter I throw in the peerage.

Veasey. Those are baits that a vain man of wit may seduce.

Walpole. Or, if not, his political creed must be loose; To some Jacobite plot he will not be a stranger,

And to win him securely—

Veasey. We'll get him in danger.

Illist.

Enter BELLAIR, humming a tune.

SCENE 2. WALPOLE, VEASEY, BELLAIR.

Walpole. Good morning, Sir Sidney; your speech did you credit;

And whatever your party, in time you will head it. Your attack on myself was exceedingly striking.

Tho' the subject you chose was not quite to my liking. Tut! I never bear malice. You hunt?

Bellair. Yes, of late.

Walpole. And you ride as you speak?

Bellair. Well, in both a light weight.

Walpole. But light weights have the odds in their favour, I fear.

Come and hunt with my harriers at Houghton this year;

I can show you some sport.

Bellair. Sir, there's no doubt of that.

Walpole. We will turn out a fox.

Bellair (aside).

Walpole. I expect you, next autumn! Agreed then: good day. [*Exit WALPOLE.*]

SCENE 3. VEASEY—BELLAIR.

Bellair. Well, I don't know a pleasanter man in his way;

'Tis no wonder his friends are so fond of their chief.

Veasey. That you are not among them is matter for grief.

Ah, a man of such stake in the land as yourself, Could command any post in the court of the Gueiph.

Bellair. No, no: I'm appalled.

Veasey. By the king? Can you doubt him?

Bellair. I'm appalled by those Gorgons, the ladies about him.

Veasey. Good! ha, ha! yes, in beauty his taste may be wrong,

But he has what we want, sir, a government strong.

Bellair. Meaning petticoat government? Mine too is such,

But my rulers don't frighten their subjects so much.

Veasey. Nay, your rulers? Why plural? Legitimate sway

Can admit but one ruler to love—

Bellair. And obey.

What, a wife! Constitutional monarchy? Well, If I chose my own sovereign I might not rebel.

Veasey. You may choose at your will! With your parts, wealth, condition,

You, in marriage, could link all the ends of ambition.

There is a young beauty—the highest in birth,

And her father, the Duke—

Bellair. Oh, a duke!

Veasey. Knows your worth.

Listen: Walpole, desiring to strengthen the Lords With the very best men whom the country affords,

Has implied to his Grace, that his choice should be clear,

(*Carelessly.*) If you wed the duke's daughter, of course you're a peer.

Bellair. With the Lords and the lady would Walpole ally me?

Veasey. Yes! and, if I were you—

Bellair. He would certainly buy me;

But I,—being a man— (*Draws himself up haughtily.*)

Veasey. No offence. Why that frown?

Bellair (relapsing into his habitual ease). Nay, forgive me. Tho' man, I'm a man about town;

And so graceful a compliment could not offend

Any man about town, from a minister's friend.

Still, if not from the frailty of mortals exempt,

Can a mortal be tempted where sins do not tempt?

Of my rank and my fortune I am so conceited,

That I don't, with a wife, want those blessings repeated. And tho' flattered to learn I should strengthen the

Peers—

Give me still our rough House with its laughter and cheers.

Let the Lords have their chamber—I grudge not its powers;

But for badgering a Minister nothing like ours!

Whisper that to the Minister;—sir, your obedient.

[*Turns away.*]

Veasey (aside). Humph! I see we must hazard the ruder expedient.

If some Jacobite pit for his feet we can dig,

He shall hang as a Tory, or vote as a Whig.

[*Veasey retires into the background.*]

Bellair (seating himself). Oh, how little these formalist middle-aged schemers

Know of us the bold youngsters, half sages, half dreamers.

Sages half? Yes, because of the time rushing on

Part and parcel are we: *they* belong to time gone.
 Dreamers half? Yes, because in a woman's fair face
 We imagine the heaven they find in a place.
 At this moment I, courted by Whig and by Tory,
 For the spangles and tinsel which clothe me with glory,
 Am a monster so callous, I should not feel sorrow
 If an earthquake engulfed Whig and Tory to-mor-
 row;
 'What a heartless assertion!' the aged would say.
 True, the young have no heart, for they give it away.
 Ah, I love! and here—joy!—comes the man who may
 aid me.

Enter BLOUNT.

SCENE 4. BELLAIR, BLOUNT, VEASEY, &C.

Blount (to coffee-house loungers, who gather round him as he comes down the stage). Yes, sir, just from Guildhall, where the City has paid me The great honour I never can merit enough, Of this box, dedicated to Virtue—

[Coffee-house loungers gather round.

Veasey. And snuff.
Blount. Yes, sir, Higgins the Patriot, who deals in rappee,

Stored that box with pulvillio, superfluous to me; For a public man gives his whole life to the nation, And his nose has no time for a vain titillation.

Veasey. On the dues upon coal—apropos of the City— We agreed—

Blount. And were beat; Walpole bribed the Com- mittee.

Veasey. You mistake; he leans tow'rds us, and begs you to call

At his house—three o'clock.

Blount (declaining as if in Parliament). But I say, once for all,

That the dues—

Veasey. Put the case as you only can do, And we carry the question.

Blount. I'll call, sir, at two.

Veasey. He said three.

Blount. I say two, sir; my honour's at stake, To amend every motion that Ministers make.

[VEASEY retires into the background.

Blount (advancing to BELLAIR). Young debater, your hand. One might tear into shreds All your plea for not cutting off Jacobite heads; But that burst against Walpole redeemed your whole speech.

Be but honest, and high is the fame you will reach.

Bellair. Blount, your praise would delight, but your caution offends.

Blount. 'Tis my way—I'm plain spoken to foes and to friends.

What are talents but suares to mislead and pervert you,

Unless they converge in one end—Public Virtue!

Fine debaters abound: we applaud and despise them; For when the House cheers them the Minister buys them.

Come, be honest, I say, sir; away with all doubt, Public Virtue commands! Vote the Minister out!

Bellair. Public virtue when construed means pri- vate ambition.

Blount. This to me—to a Patriot—

Bellair. In fierce opposition; But you ask for my vote.

Blount. England wants every man.

Bellair. Well, tho' Walpole can't buy me, I think that you can.

Blount, I saw you last evening cloaked up to your chin;

*But I had not a guess who lay, *perdu*, within All those bales of broad cloth, when a gust of wind rose,*

And uplifting your beaver, it let out your nose.

Blount (somewhat confusedly). Yes, I always am cloaked—half disguised, when I go Certain rounds—real charity hides itself so:

For one good deed concealed is worth fifty paraded.

Bellair. Finely said. Quitting, doubtless, the poor you had aided, You shot by me, before I had time to accost you,

Down a court which contains but one house;—there I lost you.

Blount. But one house!

Bellair. Where a widow named Vizard—

Blount (aside). I tremble.

Yes—

Bellair. Resides with an angel—

Blount (aside). 'Twere best to dissemble.

With an angel! bah! say with a girl—what's her name?

Bellair. On this earth, Lucy Wilmot.

Blount. Eh!—Wilmot?

Bellair. The same.

Blount (after a short pause). And how knew you these ladies?

Bellair. Will you be my friend?

Blount. I? of course. Tell me all from beginning to end.

Bellair. Oh, my story is short. Just a fortnight ago,

Coming home tow'rds the night from my club—

Blount. Drunk?

Bellair. So, so. "Help me, help!" cries a voice—'tis a woman's—I run—

Which may prove I'd drunk less than I often have done.

And I find—but, dear Blount, you have heard the re- nown

Of a set called the Mohawks?

Blount. The scourge of the town.

A lewd band of night savages, scouring the street, Sword in hand,—and the terror of all whom they meet

Not as bad as themselves;—you were safe, sir; pro- ceed.

Bellair. In the midst of the Mohawks I saw her and freed—

Blount. You saw her—Lucy Wilmot—at night, and alone?

Bellair. No, she had a protector—tho' face of that crone.

Blount. Mistress Vizard?

Bellair. The same, yet, tho' strange it appear, When the rogues saw her face they did not fly in fear.

Brief—I came—saw, and conquered—but own on the whole

That my conquest was helped by the City Patrol.

I escorted them home—at their threshold we part— And I mourn since that night for the loss of my heart.

Blount. Did you call the next day to demand back that treasure?

Bellair. Yes.

Blount. And saw the young lady?

Bellair. I had not that pleasure: I saw the old widow, who told me politely

That her house was too quiet for visits so sprightly; That young females brought up in the school of pro- priety

Must regard all young males as the pests of society. I will spare you her lectures, she showed me the door, And closed it.

Blount. You've seen Lucy Wilmot no more?

Bellair. Pardon, yes—very often; that is, once a day. Every house has its windows—

Blount. Ah! what did you say?

Bellair. Well, by words very little, but much by the eyes.

Now instruct me in turn, from what part of the skies Did my angel descend? What her parents and race?

She is well-born, no doubt—one sees that in her face. What to her is Dame Vizard—that awful duenna,

With the look of a griffiness fed upon senna? Tell me all. Ho there!—drawer, a pottle of clary.

Blount. Leave in peace the poor girl whom you never could marry.

Bellair. Why?

Blount. Her station's too mean. In a small country town

Her poor mother taught music.

Bellair. Her father?

[DRAWER places wine and glasses on the table.

Blount. Unknown.
From the mother's deathbed, from the evil and danger
That might threaten her youth, she was brought by a
stranger

To the house of the lady who—

Bellair. Showed me the door?

Blount. Till instructed to live, like her mother be-
fore,
As a teacher of music. My noble young friend
To a match so unmeet you could never descend.
You assure me, I trust, that all thought is dismiss
Of a love so misplaced.

Bellair. No (*filling Blount's glass*)—her health!

Blount. You persist?

Dare you, sir, to a man of my tenets anstere
Ev'n to hint your designs if your suit persevere?
What!—you still would besiege her?

Bellair. Of course, if I love.

Blount. I am Virtue's defender, sir—there is my
glove.

[*Flings down his glove—rises, touching his
sword hilt.*]

Bellair. Noble heart! I esteem you still more for
this heat.

In the list of my sins there's no room for deceit;
And to plot against innocence helpless and weak—
I'd as soon pick a pocket!

Blount. What mean you then? Speak.

Bellair. Blount, I mean you to grant me the favour
I ask.

Blount. What is that?

Bellair. To yourself an agreeable task.

Since you know this Dame Vizard, you call there to-
day,

And to her and to Lucy say all I would say.
You attest what I am—fortune, quality, birth,
Adding all that your friendship allows me of worth.
Blount, I have not a father; I claim you as one;
You will plead for my bride as you'd speak for a son.
All arranged—to the altar we go in your carriage,
And I'll vote as you wish the month after my mar-
riage.

Blount (aside). Can I stifle my fury?

Enter NEWSMAN with papers.

Newsman. Great news!

Bellair. Silence, ape!

[*Coffee-house loungers rise and crowd around
the NEWSMAN. VEASEY snatching the paper.*]

Omnes. Read.

Veasey (reading). "Lord Nithsdale, the rebel, has
made his escape.

His wife, by permission of Walpole last night,
Saw her lord in the Tower"—[*Great sensation.*]

Bellair (to Blount). You will make it all right.

Veasey (continuing). "And the traitor escaped in her
mantle and dress."

Bellair (to Blount). Now my fate's in your hands—I
may count on you?

Blount. Yes.

ACT SECOND.

SCENE 1. A room in WALPOLE'S House. Pictures on
the wall. A large table with books, papers, &c.

WALPOLE and VEASEY seated.

Walpole. And so Nithsdale's escaped! His wife's
mantle and gown;

Well—ha, ha! let us hope he's now out of this town,
And in safer disguise than my lady's attire,
Gliding fast down the Thames—which he'll not set on
fire.

Veasey. All your colleagues are furious.

Walpole. Ah yes; if they catch him,
Not a hand from the crown of the martyr could snatch
him!

Of a martyr so pitied the troublesome ghost
Would do more for his cause than the arms of a host.
These reports from our agents, in boro' and shire,
Show how slowly the sparks of red embers expire.
Ah! what thousands will hail in a general election
The wild turbulent signal for—

Veasey. Fresh insurrection.
Walpole (gravely). Worse than that;—Civil War!—
at all risk, at all cost,

We must carry this bill, or the nation is lost.

Veasey. Will not Tory and Roundhead against it
unite?

Walpole. Every man has his price. I must bribe left
and right.

So you've failed with Bellair—a fresh bait we must try.
As for Blount—

Enter SERVANT.

Servant. Mr. Blount.

Walpole. Pray admit him. Good-bye.
[*Exit VEASEY.*]

SCENE 2. WALPOLE—BLOUNT.

Blount. Mr. Walpole, you ask my advice on the ducs
Which the City imposes on coal.

Walpole. Sir, excuse

That pretence for some talk on more weighty a theme,
With a man who commands—

Blount (aside). Forty votes.

Walpole. My esteem.

You're a patriot, and therefore I courted this visit.

Hark! your country's in danger—great danger, sir.

Blount (dryly). Is it?

Walpole. And I ask you to save it from certain per-
dition.

Blount. Me!—I am—

Walpole. Yes, at present in hot opposition.

But what's party? Mere cricket—some out and some
in;

I have been out myself. At that time I was thin,
Atrabilious; sir—jaundiced; now, rosy and stout,
Nothing pulls down a statesman like long fagging out.
And to come to the point—now there's nobody by,
Be as stout and as rosy, dear Selden, as I.
What, when bad men conspire, shall not good men
combine?

There's a place—the Paymastership—just in your line;
I may say that the fees are ten thousand a-year,
Besides extras—not mentioned. (*Aside.*) The rogue
will cost dear.

Blount. What has that, sir, to do with the national
danger

To which—

Walpole. You're too wise to be wholly a stranger.
Need I name to a man of your Protestant true heart
All the risks we yet run from the Pope and the Stuart?
And the indolent public is so unenlightened
That 'tis not to be trusted, and scarce to be frightened.
When the term of this Parliament draws to its close:
Should King George call another—'tis filled with his
foes.

Blount. You pay soldiers eno' if the Jacobites rise—

Walpole. But a Jacobite house would soon stop their
supplies.

There's a General, on whom you must own, on reflec-
tion,

The Pretender relies.

Blount. Who?

Walpole. The General Election.

Blount. That election must come; you have no other
choice.

Would you juggle the People and stifle its voice?

Walpole. That is just what young men fresh from
college would say,

And the People's a very good thing in its way.

But what is the People?—the mere population?

No, the sound-thinking part of this practical nation,

Who support peace and order, and steadily all poll

For the weal of the land!

Blount (aside). In plain words, for Bob Walpole.

Walpole. Of a people like this I've no doubts nor
mistrustings,

But I have of the fools who vote wrong at the hus-
tings.

Sir, in short, I am always frank-spoken and hearty,
England needs all the patriots that go with your party.

We must make the three years of this Parliament
seven,

And stave off Civil War. You agree?

Blount. Gracious heaven! Thus to silence the nation, to baffle its laws, And expect Selden Blount to defend such a cause! What could ever atone for so foul a disgrace?

Walpole. Everlasting renown—(aside)—and the Paymaster's place.

Blount. Sir, your servant—good day; I am not what you thought;—

I am honest—

Walpole. Who doubts it?

Blount. And not to be bought.

Walpole. You are not to be bought, sir—astonishing man!

Let us argue that point. If creation you scan You will find that the children of Adam prevail O'er the beasts of the field but by barter and sale. Talk of coals—if it were not for buying and selling, Could you coax from Newcastle a coal to your dwelling?

You would be to your own fellow-men good for nought, Were it true, as you say, that you're not to be bought. If you find men worth nothing—say, don't you despise them?

And what proves them worth nothing?—why, nobody buys them.

But a man of such worth as yourself!—nonsense—come,

Sir, to business; I want you; I buy you—the sum?

Blount. Is corruption so brazen? are manners so base?

Walpole (aside). That means he don't much like the Paymaster's place.

(*With earnestness and dignity.*)

Pardon, Blount, I spoke lightly; but do not mistake,—

On mine honour, the peace of the land is at stake.

Yes, the peace and the freedom! Were Hampden himself

Living still, would he side with the Stuart or Guelph? When the Cæsars the freedom of Rome overthrew, All its forms they maintained—'twas its spirit they slew!

Shall the freedom of England go down to the grave?

No! the forms let us scorn, so the spirit we save.

Blount. England's peace and her freedom depend on your bill?

Walpole (seriously). Thou know'st it—and therefore—

Blount. My aid you ask still?

Walpole. Nay, no longer I ask, 'tis thy country petitions.

Blount. But you talked about terms.

Walpole (pushing pen and paper to him). There, then, write your conditions.

[*BLOUNT writes, folds the paper, gives it to WALPOLE, bows, and exit.*]

Walpole (reading). "Amongst the men who are bought to save England inscribe me,

And my bribe is the head of the man who would bribe me."

Eh, my head! That ambition is much too high-reaching;

I suspect that the crocodile hints at impeaching.

And he calls himself honest! What highwayman's worse?—

Thus to threaten my life when I offer my purse.

Hem! he can't be in debt, as the common talk runs, For the man who scorns money has never known duns.

And yet have him I must! Shall I force or entice?

Let me think—let me think; every man has his price.

[*Exit WALPOLE.*]

SCENE 3. *A room in Mrs. Vizard's house. At the back a large window opening on a balcony. In one angle of the room a small door, concealed in the wainscoting. In another angle folding doors, through which the visitors enter. At each of the side-scenes in front, another door.*

Enter Mrs. VIZARD.

Mrs. Vizard. 'Tis the day when the Jacobite nobles bespeak

This safe room for a chat on affairs once a-week.

(*Knock without.*)

Ah, they come.

Enter two JACOBITE LORDS and NITHSDALE, disguised as a woman.

1st Jacobite Lord. Ma'am, well knowing your zeal for our king,

To your house we have ventured this lady to bring. She will quit you at sunset—nay, haply, much sooner, For a voyage to France in some trusty Dutch schooner. Hiss! her husband in exile she goes to rejoin, And our homes are so watched—

Mrs. Vizard. That she's safer in mine. Come with me, my dear lady, I have in my care A young ward—

1st Jacobite Lord (hastily). Who must see her not! Till we prepare

Her departure, conceal her from all prying eyes; She is timid, and looks on new faces as spies. Send your servant on business that keeps her away Until nightfall;—her trouble permit me to pay.

(*Giving a purse.*)

Mrs. Vizard. Nay, my Lord, I don't need—

1st Jacobite Lord. Quick; your servant release.

Mrs. Vizard. I will send her to Kent with a note to my niece. [*Exit Mrs. VIZARD.*]

1st Jacobite Lord (to NITHSDALE). Here, you're safe; still, I tremble until you are freed.

Keep sharp watch at the window—the signal's agreed. When a pebble's thrown up at the pane, you will know

'Tis my envoy;—a carriage will wait you below.

Nithsdale. And if, ere you can send him, some peril befall?

1st Jacobite Lord. Risk your flight to the inn near the steps at Blackwall.

Re-enter Mrs. VIZARD.

Mrs. Vizard. She is gone.

1st Jacobite Lord. Lead the lady at once to her room.

Mrs. Vizard (opening door to right of side-scene). No man dares enter here.

Nithsdale (aside). Where she sleeps, I presume.

[*Exeunt Mrs. VIZARD and NITHSDALE.*]

2d Jacobite Lord. You still firmly believe, tho' revolt is put down,

That King James is as sure to recover his crown?

1st Jacobite Lord. Yes, but wait till this Parliament's close is decreed,

And then up with our banner from Thames to the Tweed. (*Knock at the street door.*)

Who knocks? Some new friend?

Enter Mrs. VIZARD.

Mrs. Vizard (looking out of the window). O! quick—quick—do not stay;

It is Blount.

Both Lords. What!—the Roundhead?

Mrs. Vizard (opening concealed door in the angle). Here—here—the back way. [*Exit Mrs. VIZARD.*]

1st Jacobite Lord (as they get to the door). Hush, and wait till he's safe within doors.

2d Jacobite Lord. But our foes She admits?

1st Jacobite Lord. By my sanction,—their plans to disclose.

[*Exeunt JACOBITE LORDS just as enter BLOUNT and Mrs. VIZARD.*]

SCENE 4. *Mrs. VIZARD—BLOUNT.*

Mrs. Vizard. I had sent out my servant; this is not your hour.

Blount. Mistress Vizard.

Mrs. Vizard. Sweet sir. (*Aside.*) He looks horribly sour.

Blount. I enjoined you, when trusting my ward to your care—

Mrs. Vizard. To conceal from herself the true name that you bear.

Blount. And she still has no guess—

Mrs. Vizard. That in Jones, christened John, 'Tis the great Selden Blount whom she gazes upon.

Blount. And my second injunction—
Mrs. Vizard. Was duly to teach her
 To respect all you say, as if said by a preacher.

Blount. A preacher!—not so; as a man she should
 rather

Confide in, look up to, and love as—
Mrs. Vizard. A father.
Blount. Hold! I did not say 'Father.' You might,
 for you can,

Call me—
Mrs. Vizard. What?

Blount. Hang it, madam, a fine-looking man.
 But at once to the truth which your cunning secretes,
 How came Lucy and you, ma'am, at night in the
 streets?

Mrs. Vizard. I remember! Poor Lucy so begged
 and so cried—

On that day, a year since—

Blount. Well!
Mrs. Vizard. Her poor mother died;
 And all her wounds opened, recalling that day;
 She insisted—I had not the heart to say nay—
 On the solace religion alone can bestow;
 So I led her to church,—does that anger you?

Blount. No!

But at nightfall—
Mrs. Vizard. I knew that the church would be dark;
 And thus nobody saw us, not even the clerk.

Blount. And returning—
Mrs. Vizard. We fell into terrible danger.
 Sir, the Mohawks—

Blount. I know; you were saved by a stranger.
 He escorted you home; called the next day, I hear.

Mrs. Vizard. But I soon sent him off with a flea in
 his ear.

Blount. Since that day the young villain has seen
 her.

Mrs. Vizard. Oh no!

Blount. Yes.

Mrs. Vizard. And where?

Blount. At the window.

Mrs. Vizard. You do not say so!

What deceivers girls are! how all watch they befooled!
 One should marry them off, ere one sends them to
 school!

Blount. Ay, I think you are right. All our plans
 have miscarried.

Go; send Lucy to me—It is time she were married.

(*Exit Mrs. Vizard by door to left of side-scene.*)

When I first took this orphan, forlorn and alone,
 From the poor village inn where I sojourned unknown,
 My compassion no feeling more sensitive masked.
 She was grateful; that pleased me; was more than I
 asked.

'Twas in kindness I screened myself under false
 names,

For she told me her father had fought for King James,
 And, embred in the Jacobite's pestilential error,
 In a Roundhead she sees but a bugbear of terror.

And from me, Selden Blount, who invoked our free
 laws

To behead or to hang all who side with that cause,
 She would start with a shudder! O fool! how above
 Human weakness I thought myself! This, then, is
 love!

Heavens! to lose her—resign to another those charms!
 No, no! never! Why yield to such idle alarms?

What's that fop she has seen scarcely once in a way
 To a man like myself, whom she sees every day?

Mine she must be! but how!—the world's laughter I
 dread.

Tut, the world will not know, if in secret we wed.

Enter Lucy by door left of side-scene.

SCENE 5. BLOUNT—LUCY.

Lucy. Dear sir, you look pale. Are you ill?

Blount. Ay, what then?

What am I in your thoughts?

Lucy. The most generous of men.

Can you doubt of the orphan's respectful affection,
 When she owes ev'n a home to your sainted protec-
 tion?

Blount. In that home I had hoped for your youth to
 secure

Safe escape from the perils that threaten the pure;
 But, alas! where a daughter of Eve is, I fear
 That the serpent will still be found close at her ear.

Lucy. You alarm me!

Blount. I ought. Ah, what danger you ran.
 You have seen—have conversed with—

Lucy. Well—well.

Blount. A young man.

Lucy. Nay, he is not so frightful, dear sir, as you
 deem;

If you only but knew him, I'm sure you'd esteem.

He's so civil—so pleasant—the sole thing I fear
 Is—high—ho! are fine gentlemen always sincere?

Blount. You are lost if you heed not the words that
 I say.

Ah, young men are not now what they were in my
 day!

Then their fashion was manhood, their language was
 truth,

And their love was as fresh as a world in its youth.
 Now they fawn like a courtier, and fib like his flunkies,

And their hearts are as old as the faces of monksies.

Lucy. Ah, you know not Sir Sidney—

Blount. His nature I do,
 For he owned to my friend his designs upon you.

Lucy. What designs?

Blount. Of a nature too dreadful to name.

Lucy. How! His words full of honour—

Blount. Veiled thoughts full of shame.

Heard you never of wolves in sheep's clothing? Why
 weep?

Lucy. Indeed, sir, he don't look the least like a
 sheep.

Blount. No, the sheepskin for clothing much finer
 he trucks;

Wolves are nowadays clad not as sheep—but as bucks.
 'Tis a false heart you find where a fine dress you see,

And a lover sincere is a plain man like me.

Dismiss then, dear child, this young beau from your
 mind—

A young beau should be loathed by good young wo-
 mankind.

At the best he's a creature accustomed to roam;
 'Tis at sixty man learns how to value a home.

Idle fancies throng quick at your credulous age,
 And their cure is companionship, cheerful, but sage;

So, in future, I'll give you much more of my own.
 Weeping still!—I've a heart, and it is not of stone.

Lucy. Pardon, sir, these vain tears; nor believe that
 I mourn

For a false-hearted—

Blount. Coxcomb, who merits but scorn.
 We must give you some change; purer air, livelier
 scene,

And your mind will soon win back its temper serene.
 You must quit this dull court with its shocking look
 out.

Yes, a cot is the home of contentment, no doubt—
 A sweet cot with a garden—wall'd round—shall be
 ours,

Where our hearts shall unite in the passion—for flow-
 ers.

Ah! I know a retreat, from all turmoil remote,
 In the suburb of Lambeth—soon reached by a boat.

So that every spare moment to business not due
 I can give, my sweet Lucy, to rapture and you.

Lucy. What means he? His words and his looks
 are alarming;

Mr. Jones, you're too good!

Blount. What?—to find you so charming?

Yes, tho' Fortune has placed my condition above
 you,

Yet Love levels all ranks. Be not startled—I love
 you.

From all dreams less exalted your fancies arouse;
 The poor orphan I raise to the rank of my spouse.

Lucy. What! His spouse! Do I dream!

Blount. Till that moment arrives
 Train your mind to reflect on the duty of wives.

I must see Mistress Vizard, and all things prepare;
 To secure our retreat shall this day be my care.

And—despising the wretch who has caused us such sorrow—

Our two lives shall unite in the cottage to-morrow.

Lucy. Pray excuse me—this talk is so strangely—

Blount. Delightful!

Lucy (aside). I am faint; I am all of a tremble: how frightful!

Blount. Good; my mind overawes her! From fear love will grow,

And by this time to-morrow a fig for the bean.

[*Calling out.*

Enter MRS. VIZARD.

SCENE 6. BLOUNT—MRS. VIZARD.

Blount. Guard well my dear Lucy to-day, For to-morrow I free you, and bear her away.

I agree with yourself—it is time she were married,

And I only regret that so long I have tarried.

Eno!—I've proposed.

Mrs. Vizard. She consented?

Blount. Of course;

Must a man like myself get a wife, ma'am, by force?

Newsman (without, ringing a bell). Great news.

Mrs. Vizard (running to the window, listening and repeating). What! "Lord Nithsdale escaped from the Tower."

(*Nithsdale peeps through the door of his room.*)
"In his wife's clothes disguised!—the gown grey, with red flower,

Mantle black, trimmed with ermine." My hearing is hard.

Mr. Blount, Mr. Blount—Do you hear the reward?

Blount. Yes; a thousand—

Mrs. Vizard. What!—guineas?

Blount. Of course; come away.

I go now for the parson—do heed what I say.

(*Nithsdale shakes his fist at Mrs. Vizard, and retreats.*)

We shall marry to-morrow—no witness but you:

For the marriage is private. I'm Jones still. Adieu!

[*Exit BLOUNT.*

(*Lucy peeps out.*)

Mrs. Vizard. Ha! a thousand gold guineas!

[*Locks NITHSDALE'S door.*

Re-enter BLOUNT.

Guard closely my treasure. That's her door; for precaution, just lock it.

Mrs. Vizard. With pleasure.

[*As she shows out BLOUNT, Lucy slips forth.*

Lucy. Eh, locked up! No, I yet may escape if I hide.

[*Gets behind the window-curtains.*

Re-enter MRS. VIZARD.

Mrs. Vizard. Shall I act on this news? I must quickly decide.

Surely Nithsdale it is! Grey gown, sprigg'd with red; Did not walk like a woman—a stride, not a tread.

(*Locks Lucy's door.*)
Both my lambs are in fold. I'll steal out and inquire;—

Robert Walpole might make the reward somewhat higher.

[*Exit MRS. VIZARD.*

Lucy (looking out from the window). She has locked the street door. She has gone with the key,

And the servant is out. No escape; woe is me! How I love him! And yet I must see him with loathing.

Why should wolves be disguised in such beautiful clothing?

Nithsdale (knocking violently). Let me out. I'll not perish entrapped. From your snare

Thus I break—

(*Bursts the door, and comes out brandishing a poker.*)

Treacherous hag!

SCENE 7. LUCY—NITHSDALE.

Lucy. 'Tis the wolf. Spare me; spare!

[*Kneeling, and hiding her face.*

Nithsdale. She's a witch, and has changed herself!

Lucy. Do not come near me.

Nithsdale. Nay, young lady, look up!

Lucy.

'Tis a woman!

Nithsdale.

Why fear me?

Perchance, like myself, you're a prisoner?

Lucy.

Ah yes!

Nithsdale. And your kinsfolk are true to the Stuart,

I guess.

Lucy. My poor father took arms for King James.

Nithsdale.

So did I.

Lucy. You!—a woman! How brave!

Nithsdale.

For that crime I must die

If you will not assist me.

Lucy.

Assist you—how? Say?

Nithsdale. That she—Judas will sell me, and goes to

betray.

Lucy. Fly! Alas, she has locked the street door!

Nithsdale.

Lady fair,

Does not Love laugh at locksmiths? Well, so does

Despair!

(*Glancing at the window.*)

Flight is here. But this dress my detection ensures.

If I could but exchange hood and mantle for yours!

Dare I ask you to save me?

Lucy.

Nay, doubt not my will;

But my own door is locked.

Nithsdale (raising the poker).

And the key is here

still.

[*Bursts the door of Lucy's room, and enters.*

Lucy. I have read of the Amazons. This must be one.

Nithsdale (coming from the door with hood, gown, and mantle on his arm). I have found all I need for the risk I must run.

Lucy. Can I help you?

Nithsdale. Heaven bless thee, sweet Innocence, no.

Haste, and look if no back way is open below.

Stay, your father has served the king over the water;

And this locket may please your brave father's true

daughter—

The grey hair of poor Charles, intertwined with the

pearl.

Go; vouchsafe me this kiss.

(*Kissing her hand, and exit within the door.*

Lucy. What a wonderful girl!

SCENE 8. *The exterior of Mrs. Vizard's House. Large window. Balcony, area rails below. A court. Dead walls for side-scenes, with blue posts at each end, through which the actors enter.*

Enter BLOUNT.

Blount. For the curse of celebrity nothing atones. The sharp parson I call on, as simple John Jones,

Has no sooner set eyes on my popular front,

Than he cries, "Ha! the Patriot, the great Selden

Blount."

Mistress Vizard must hunt up some priest just from

Cam,

Who may gaze on these features, nor guess who I am.

(*Knocks.*)

Not at home. Servant out too! Ah! gone forth, I

guess,

To enchant the young bride with a new wedding

dress.

I must search for a parson myself.

Enter BELLAIR from the opposite side.

SCENE 9. BLOUNT—BELLAIR.

Bellaire (slapping him on the shoulder). Blount, your news?

Blount. You! and here, sir! What means—

Bellaire.

My impatience excuse.

You have seen her?

Blount.

I have.

Bellaire. And have pleaded my cause;

And of course she consents, for she loves me? You pause.

Blount. Nay, alas, my dear friend—

Bellaire.

Speak, and tell me my fate.

Blount. Quick and rash though your wooing be, it is

too late;

She has promised her hand to another. Bear up!

Bellaire.

There is many a slip 'twixt the lip and the

cup.

Ah! my rival I'll fight. Say his name if you can.

Blount. Mr. Jones. I am told he's a fine-looking man.

Bellair. His address?

Blount. Wherefore ask? You kill her in this duel—Slay the choice of her heart!

Bellair. Of her heart; you are cruel. But if so, why, heaven bless her!

Blount. My arm—come away!

Bellair. No, my carriage waits yonder. I thank you. Good day. *[Exit.]*

Blount. He is gone. I am safe. *(Shaking his left hand with his right.)* Wish you joy, my dear Jones. *[Exit.]*

[NITHSDALE, disguised in LUCY's dress and mantle, opens the window.]

Nithsdale. All is still. How to jump without breaking my bones?

(Trying to flatten his petticoats, and with one leg over the balcony.)

Curse these petticoats! Heaven, out of all my lost riches,

Why couldst thou not save me one thin pair of breeches!

Steps! *[Gets back—shuts the window.]*

Re-enter BELLAIR.

Bellair. But Blount may be wrong. From her own lips alone

Will I learn. *(Looking up at the window.)*

I see some one; I'll venture this stone.

[Picks up and throws a pebble at the window.]

Nithsdale (opening the window). Joy!—the signal!

SCENE 10. BELLAIR—NITHSDALE.

Bellair. 'Tis you; say my friend was deceived. *(NITHSDALE makes an affirmative sign.)*

You were snared to this—

Nithsdale. Hush!

Bellair. Could you guess how I grieved! But oh! fly from this jail; I'm still full of alarms.

I've a carriage at hand: trust yourself to these arms. *(NITHSDALE tucks up his petticoats, gets down the balcony backwards, setting his foot on the area rail.)*

Powers above!—What a leg!

(LORD NITHSDALE turns round on the rail, rejects BELLAIR's hand, and jumps down.)

O my charmer! one kiss.

Nithsdale. Are you out of your senses!

Bellair (trying to pull up her hood). With rapture!

Nithsdale (striking him). Take this.

Bellair. What a fist! If it hits one so hard before marriage,

What would it do after?

Nithsdale. Quick, where is the carriage?

Now, sir, give me your hand.

Bellair. I'll be hanged if I do

Till I snatch my first kiss.

(Lifts the hood and recoils astounded.)

Who the devil are you?

(NITHSDALE tries to get from him. A struggle.)

BELLAIR prevails.)

I will give you in charge, or this moment confess

How you pass as my Lucy, and wear her own dress.

Nithsdale (aside). What! His Lucy? I'm saved. To

her pity I owe

This last chance for my life; would you sell it, sir?

Bellair. No.

But your life! What's your name? Mine is Sidney

Bellair.

Nithsdale. Who in Parliament pleaded so nobly to

spare

From the axe—

Bellair. The chiefs doomed in the Jacobite rise?

Nithsdale (with dignity). I am Nithsdale. Quick,

sell me or free me—time flies.

Bellair. Come this way. There's my coach. I will

take you myself

Where you will;—ship you off.

Nithsdale. Do you side with the Guelph?

Bellair. Yes. What then?

Nithsdale. You would risk your own life by his

laws,

Did you ship me to France! They who fight in a

cause
Should alone share its perils. Farewell, generous

stranger.
Bellair. Pooh! no gentleman leaves a young lady

in danger;
You'd be mobbed ere you got half a yard through the

town,
Why, that stride and that calf—let me settle your

gown.
(Clinging to him, and half spoken without.)

No, no. I will see you at least to my carriage.
(Behind scene.)

To what place shall it drive?
Nithsdale. To Blackwall.

Enter LUCY from the window.

Lucy. Hateful marriage!
But where's that poor lady? What!—gone? She is

free!
Could she leap from the window? I wish I were she.

[Retreats.]

SCENE 11. BELLAIR—LUCY.

Bellair. Now she's safe in my coach, on condition,
I own,

Not flattering, sweet creature, to leave her alone.

Lucy (peeping). It is he!

Bellair. Ah, if Lucy would only appear!

(Stoops to pick up a stone, and in the act to fling

as LUCY comes out.)

O my Lucy!—mine angel!

Lucy. Why is he so dear?

Bellair. Is it true? From that face am I evermore

banished?

In your love was the dream of my life! Is it van-

ished?

Have you pledged to another your hand and your

heart?

Lucy. Not my heart. Oh, not that.

Bellair. But your hand? By what art—

By what force are you won heart and hand to disserve,

And consent to loathed nuptials that part us for ever?

Lucy. Would that pain you so much?

Bellair. Can you ask? Oh, believe me,

You're my all in the world!

Lucy. I am told you deceived me;

That you harbour designs which my lips dare not

name,

And your words full of honour veil thoughts full of

shame.

Ah, sir, I'm so young and so friendless—so weak!—

Do not ask for my heart if you take it to break.

Bellair. Who can slander me thus? Not my friend,

I am sure.

Lucy. His friend!

Bellair. Can my love know one feeling impure

When I lay at your feet all I have in this life—

Wealth and rank, name and honour—and woo you as

wife?

Lucy. As your wife! All about you seems so much

above

My mean lot—

Bellair. And so worthless compared to your love.

You reject, then, this suitor?—my hand you accept?

Lucy. Ah! but do you not see in what prison I'm

kept?

And this suitor—

Bellair. You hate him!

Lucy. Till this day, say rather—

Bellair. What?

Lucy. I loved him.

Bellair. You loved!

Lucy. As I might a grandfather.

He has shielded the orphan;—I had not a notion

That he claimed from me more than a grandchild's

devotion!

And my heart ceased to beat between terror and sor-

row

When he said he would make me his wife, and to-

morrow.

Bellair. Fly with me, and at once!

Lucy. She has locked the street door.

Bellair. And my angel's not made to jump down from that floor.
Listen; quick; I hear voices:—I save you; this night I arrange all we need both for wedlock and flight. At what time after dark does your she-dragon close her sweet eyes, and her household consign to repose?
Lucy. About nine in this season of winter. What then?
Bellair. By the window keep watch. When the clock has struck ten
A slight stone smites the casement;—below I attend. You will see a safe ladder; at once you descend. We then reach your new home, priest and friends shall be there,
Proud to bless the young bride of Sir Sidney Bellair. Hush! the steps come this way; do not fail! She is won.
Lucy. Stay:—I tremble as guilty. Heavens! what have I done?

ACT THIRD.

SCENE 1. *St. James's Park. Seats, &c. Time—Sunset.**Enter BLOUNT.*

Blount. So the parson is found and the cottage is hired—
Every fear was dispelled when my rival retired. Ev'n my stern mother country must spare from my life
A brief moon of that honey one tastes with a wife! And then strong as a giant, recruited by sleep, On corruption and Walpole my fury shall sweep. 'Mid the cheers of the House I will state in my place How the bribes that he proffered were flung in his face.
Men shall class me amid those examples of worth Which, alas! become daily more rare on this earth; And Posterity, setting its brand on the front Of a Walpole, select for its homage a Blount.

Enter BELLAIR, singing gaily.

SCENE 2. BLOUNT—BELLAIR.

Bellair. "The dove builds where the leaves are still green on the tree—" *Blount (rising).* Ha!
Bellair. "For May and December can never agree."
Blount. I am glad you've so quickly got over that blow.
Bellair. Fallala!
Blount (aside). What this levity means I must know. The friend I best loved was your father, Bellair—Let me hope your strange mirth is no laugh of despair.
Bellair. On the wit of the wisest man it is no stigma If the heart of a girl is to him an enigma; That my Lucy was lost to my arms you believed—Wish me joy, my dear Blount, you were grossly deceived.
She is mine!—What on earth are you thinking about? Do you hear?

Blount. I am racked!*Bellair.**Blount.*

What?

A twinge of the gout.
(Re-seating himself.)

Pray excuse me.

Bellair. Nay, rather myself I reproach For not heeding your pain. Let me call you a coach.
Blount. Nay, nay, it is gone. I am eager to hear How I've been thus deceived—make my blunder more clear.
You have seen her?

Bellair. Of course. From her own lips I gather That your good Mr. Jones might be Lucy's grandfather.
Childish fear, or of Vizard—who seems a virago—Or the old man himself—

Blount. Oh!*Bellair.* You groan?

Blount. The lumbago!
Bellair. Ah! they say gout is shifty—now here and now there.

Blount. Pooh;—continue. The girl then—

Bellair. I found in despair.
But no matter—all's happily settled at last.

Blount. Ah! eloped from the house?

Bellair. No, the door was made fast. But to-night I would ask you a favour.

Blount. What? Say.
Bellair. If your pain should have left you, to give her away.

For myself it is meet that I take every care That my kinsfolk shall hail the new Lady Bellair. I've induced my two aunts (who are prudish) to grace With their presence my house, where the nuptials take place.

And to act as her father there's no man so fit As yourself, dear old Blount, if the gout will permit.

Blount. 'Tis an honour—*Bellair.* Say pleasure.*Blount.* Great pleasure! Proceed.

How is she, if the door is still fast, to be freed?

Is the house to be stormed?

Bellair. Nay; I told you before

That a house has its windows as well as its door.

And a stone at the pane for a signal suffices,

While a ladder—

Blount. I see. *(Aside.)* What infernal devices!

Has she no maiden fear—

Bellair. From the ladder to fall?

Ask her that—when we meet at my house in White-

hall.

Enter 1st JACOBITE LORD.

SCENE 3. BLOUNT, BELLAIR, 1ST JACOBITE, afterwards VEASEY.

Jacobite Lord (giving note to BELLAIR). If I err not, I speak to Sir Sidney Bellair?

Pray vouchsafe me one moment in private.

*(Draws him aside.)**Blount.* Despair!

How prevent?—how forestall? Could I win but delay,

I might yet brush this stinging fly out of my way.

*(While he speaks, enter VEASEY in the background.)**Veasey.* Ha! Bellair whispering close with that

Jacobite lord—

Are they hatching some plot?

*(Hides behind the trees—listening.)**Bellair (reading).* So he's safely on board—*Jacobite Lord.* And should Fortune shake out other

lots from her urn,

We, poor friends of the Stuart, might serve you in

turn.

You were talking with Blount—Selden Blount—is he

one

Of your friends?

Bellair. Ay, the truest.*Jacobite Lord.* Then warn him to shun

That vile Jezabel's mau-trap—I know he goes there.

Whom she welcomes she sells.

Bellair. I will bid him beware.*(Shakes hands. Exit JACOBITE LORD.)**Bellair (to BLOUNT).* I have just learned a secret, 'tis

fit I should tell you.

Go no more to old Vizard's, or know she will sell you.

Nithsdale hid in her house when the scaffold he fled.

She received him, and went for the price on his head;

But—the drollest mistake—of that tale by-and-by—

He was freed; is safe now!

Blount. Who delivered him?*Bellair.* I.*Blount.* Ha!—you did!*Bellair.* See, he sends me this letter of thanks.*Blount (reading).* Which invites you to join with the

Jacobite ranks.

And when James has his kingdom—

Bellair. That chance is remote;*Blount.* Hints an earldom for you.*Bellair.* Bah!*Blount.* Take care of this note.*(Appears to thrust it into BELLAIR'S coat-pocket**—lets it fall, and puts his foot on it.)**Bellair.* Had I guessed that the hag was so greedy

of gold,

Long ago I had bought Lucy out of her hold;

But to-night the dear child will be free from her power.
Adieu. I expect you then.

Blount. Hold! at what hour?

Bellair. By the window at ten, self and ladder await her:

The wedding—eleven; you will not be later. *(Exit.*

Blount (picking up the letter). Nithsdale's letter.

Bright thought!—and what luck! I see Veasey.

Re-enter BELLAIR.

Bellair. Blount, I say, will old Jones be to-morrow uneasy?

Can't you fancy his face?

Blount. Yes; ha! ha!

Bellair. I am off. *(Exit.*

SCENE 4. BLOUNT—VEASEY.

Blount. What, shall I, Selden Blount, be a popinjay's scoff?

Mr. Veasey, your servant.

Veasey. I trust, on the whole,

That you've settled with Walpole the prices of coal.

Blount. Coals be—lighted below! Sir, the country's in danger.

Veasey. To that fact Walpole says that no patriot's a stranger.

Blount. With the safety of England myself I will task,

If you hold yourself licensed to grant what I ask.

Veasey. Whatsoever the terms of a patriot so staunch, Walpole gives you—I speak as his proxy—*carte blanche.*

Blount. If I break private ties where the Public's at stake,

Still my friend is my friend: the condition I make is to keep him shut up from all share in rash strife, And secure him from danger to fortune and life.

Veasey. Blount; agreed. And this friend? Scarce a moment ago

I marked Sidney Bellair in close talk with—

Blount. I know.

There's a plot to be checked ere it start into shape.

Hark, Bellair had a hand in Lord Nithsdale's escape!

Veasey. That's abetment of treason.

Blount. Read this, and attend.

(Gives NITHSDALE'S note to BELLAIR, which VEASEY reads.)

Snare atrocious are set to entrap my poor friend In an outbreak to follow that Jacobite's flight—

Veasey. In an outbreak! Where?—when?

Blount. Hush! in London to-night.

He is thoughtless and young. Act on this information.

Quick!—arrest him at once; and watch over the nation.

Veasey. No precaution too great against men disaffected.

Blount. And the law gives you leave to confine the suspected.

Veasey. Ay, this note will suffice for a warrant. Be sure,

Ere the clock strike the quarter, your friend is secure. *(Exit VEASEY.)*

Blount. Good; my rival to-night will be swept from my way,

And John Jones shall wake easy ere the next day.

This girl do I love? No, my hate is so strong, That to me, whom she mocks, she alone shall belong.

I need trust to that salable Vizard no more.

Ha! I stand as Bellair the bride's window before.

Oh, when love comes so late how it maddens the brain,

Between shame for our folly, and rage at our pain.

(Exit.

SCENE 5. Room in WALPOLE'S House. Lights.

Enter WALPOLE.

Walpole. So Lord Nithsdale's shipped off. There's an end of one trouble;

When his head's at Boulogne the reward shall be double.

(Seating himself, takes up a book—glances at it, and throws it down.)

Stuff! I wonder what lies the Historians will tell

When they babble of one Robert Walpole! Well, well,

Let them sneer at his blunders, declaim on his vices, Cite the rogues whom he purchased, and rail at the prices,

They shall own that all lust for revenge he withstood; And, if hush of gold, he was sparing of blood;

That when England was threatened by France and by Rome,

He forced Peace from abroad, and encamped her at home,

And the Freedom he left, rooted firm in mild laws, May o'ershadow the faults of deeds done in her cause!

Enter VEASEY.

SCENE 6. WALPOLE—VEASEY.

Veasey (giving note). Famous news! See, Bellair has delivered himself

To your hands. He must go heart and soul with the Guelph,

And vote straight, or he's ruined.

Walpole (reading). This note makes it clear That he's guilty of Nithsdale's escape.

Veasey. And I hear

That to-night he will head some tumultuous revolt,

Unless chained to his stall like a mischievous colt.

Walpole. Your informant?

Veasey. Guess! Blount; but on promise to save His young friend's life and fortune!

Walpole. What Blount says is grave. He would never thus speak if not sure of his fact.

(Signing warrant.)

Here then, take my State warrant: but cautiously act. Bid Bellair keep his house—forbid exits and entries:—

To make sure, at his door place a couple of sentries. Say I mean him no ill; but these times will excuse

Much less gentle precautions than those which I use. Stay, Dame Vizard is waiting without: to her den Nithsdale fled. She came here to betray him.

Veasey. What then?

Walpole. Why, I kept her, perforce, till I sent, on the sly,

To prevent her from hearing Lord Nithsdale's good-bye.

When my agent arrived, I'm delighted to say, That the cage-wires were broken,—the bird flown away;

But he found one poor captive imprisoned and weeping;

I must learn how that captive came into such keeping.

Now off—pay, a moment; you would not be loth Just to stay with Bellair?—I may send for you both.

Veasey. With a host more delightful no mortal could sup,

But a guest so unlooked for—

Walpole. Will cheer the boy up! *(Exit VEASEY.)*

Walpole (ringing hand-bell).

(Enter SERVANT.)

Usher in Mrs. Vizard.

SCENE 7. WALPOLE—MRS. VIZARD.

Walpole. Quite shocked to detain you, But I knew a mistake, if there were one, would pain you.

Mrs. Vizard. Sir, mistake there is not; that vile creature is no man.

Walpole. But you locked the door?

Mrs. Vizard. Fast.

Walpole. Then, no doubt, 'tis a woman, For she slipped through the window.

Mrs. Vizard. No woman durst!

Walpole. Nay.

When did woman want courage to go her own way?

Mrs. Vizard. You jest, sir. To me 'tis no subject of laughter.

Walpole. Do not weep. The reward?—we'll discuss that hereafter.

Mrs. Vizard. You'd not wrong a poor widow who brought you such news?

Walpole. Wrong a widow!—there's oil to put in her cruze.
(Giving a pocket-book.)
 Meanwhile, the tried agent despatched to your house, In that trap found a poor little terrified mouse, Which called itself "Wilmot"—a name known to me. Say, how in your trap did that mouse come to be?
Mrs. Vizard (hesitatingly). Sir, believe me—
Walpole. Speak truth—for your own sake you ought.
Mrs. Vizard. By a gentleman, sir, to my house she was brought.
Walpole. Oh, some Jacobite kinsman perhaps?
Mrs. Vizard. Bless you, no;
 A respectable Roundhead. You frighten me so!
Walpole. A respectable Roundhead entrust to your care
 A young girl, whom you guard as in prison!—Beware: 'Gainst decoy for vile purpose the law is severe.
Mrs. Vizard. Fie, you libel a saint, sir, of morals austere.
Walpole. Do you mean Judith Vizard?
Mrs. Vizard. I mean Selden Blount.
Walpole. I'm bewildered! But why does this saint (no affront)
 To your pious retreat a fair damsel confide?
Mrs. Vizard. To protect her as ward till he claims her as bride.
Walpole. 'Faith, his saintship does well until that day arrive
 To imprison the maid he proposes to wive.
 But these Roundheads are wont but with Roundheads to wed,
 And the name of this lady is Wilmot, she said.
 Every Wilmot I know of is to the backbone
 A rank Jacobite; say, can that name be her own?
Mrs. Vizard. Not a doubt; more than once I have heard the girl say
 That her father had fought for King James on the day
 When the ranks of the Stuart were crushed at the Boyne.
 He escaped from the slaughter, and fled to rejoin
 At the Court of St. Germain's his new wedded bride.
 Long their hearth without prattlers; a year ere he died,
 Lucy came to console her who mourned him, bereft
 Of all else in this world.
Walpole (eagerly). But the widow he left:
 She lives still?
Mrs. Vizard. No; her child is now motherless.
Walpole (aside). Fled!
 Fled again from us, sister! How stern are the dead!
 Their dumb lips have no pardon. Tut! shall I build grief
 On a guess that perchance only fools my belief?
 This may not be her child. *(Rings.)*

(Enter SERVANT.)

My coach waits?

Servant. At the door.
Walpole. Come; your house teems with secrets I long to explore.
[Exeunt WALPOLE and MRS. VIZARD.]

SCENE 8. *MRS. VIZARD'S HOUSE. A lamp on the table.*
Enter LUCY from her Room.
Lucy. Mistress Vizard still out!

(Looking at the clock.)
 What—so late? O my heart!—
 How it beats! Have I promised in stealth to depart?
 Trust him—yes!—but will he, ah!—long after this night,
 Trust the wife wooed so briefly, and won but by flight?
 My lost mother! *(Takes a miniature from her breast.)*
 Oh couldst thou yet counsel thy child!
 No, this lip does not smile as it yesterday smiled.
 From thine heaven can no warning voice come to mine ear?
 Save thy child from herself;—'tis myself that I fear.

Enter WALPOLE and MRS. VIZARD through the concealed door.

Mrs. Vizard. Lucy, love, in this gentleman (curtsey, my dear)
 See a friend.

Walpole. Peace, and leave us. *[Exit MRS. VIZARD.]*

SCENE 9. WALPOLE—LUCY.

Walpole. Fair girl, I would hear
 From yourself, if your parents—

Lucy. My parents, O say
 Did you know them?—my mother?

Walpole. The years roll away.
 I behold a grey hall, backed by woodlands of pine;
 I behold a fair face—eyes and tresses like thine—
 By her side a rude boy full of turbulent life,
 All impatient of rest, and all burning for strife—
 They are brother and sister. Unconscious they stand—
 On the spot where their paths shall divide—hand in hand.

Hush! a moment, and lo! as if lost amid night,
 She is gone from his side, she is snatched from his sight.

Time has flowed on its course—that wild boy lives in me;

But the sister I lost. Does she bloom back in thee?
 Speak—the name of thy mother, ere changing her own
 For her lord's?—who her parents?

Lucy. I never have known.
 When she married my father, they spurned her, she said,

Bade her hold herself henceforth to them as the dead.

Slandered him in whose honour she gloried as wife,
 Urged attain on his name, plotted snares for his life;
 And one day when I asked what her lineage, she sighed,

"From the heart they so tortured their memory has died."

Walpole. Civil war slays all kindred—all mercy, all ruth.

Lucy. Did you know her?—if so, was this like her in youth?

Walpole. It is she; the lips speak! Oh, I knew it!—thou art

My lost sister restored!—to mine arms, to mine heart.
 That wild brother the wrongs of his race shall atone;
 He has stormed his way up to the foot of the throne.
 Yes! thy mate thou shalt choose 'mid the chiefs of the land.

Dost thou shrink?—heard I right?—is it promised, this hand,

And to one, too, of years so unsuited to thine?

Lucy. Dare I tell you?

Walpole. Speak, sure that thy choice shall be mine.

Lucy. When my mother lay stricken in mind and in frame,

All our scant savings gone, to our succour there came
 A rich stranger, who lodged at the inn whence they sought

To expel us as vagrants. Their mercy he bought;

Ever since I was left in the wide world alone,

I have owed to his pity this roof—

Walpole. Will you own

What you gave in return?

Lucy. Grateful reverence.

Walpole. And so

He asked more!

Lucy. Ah, that more was not mine to bestow.

Walpole. What! your heart some one younger already had won.

Is he handsome?

Lucy. Oh yes!

Walpole. And a gentleman's son.

Lucy. Sir, he looks it.

Walpole. His name is—

Lucy. Sir Sidney Bellair.

Walpole. Eh! that brilliant Lothario? Dear Lucy, beware;

Men of temper so light may make love in mere sport.

Where on earth did you meet?—in what terms did he court?

Why so troubled? Why turn on the timepiece your eye?

Orphan, trust me.

Lucy. I will. I half promised to fly—

Walpole. With Bellair. *(Aside.)* He shall answer for this with his life.

Fly to-night as his—what?

Lucy. Turn your face—as his wife.
[Lucy sinks down, burying her face in her hands.]
Walpole (going to the door). Jasper—ho!
(Enter SERVANT as he writes on his tablets.)
 Take my coach to Sir Sidney's, Whitehall.
Mr. Veasey is there; give him this—that is all.
(Tearing out the leaf from the tablet and folding it up.)
 Go out the back way; it is nearest my carriage.*
(Opens the concealed door, thro' which Exit SERVANT.)
 I shall very soon know if the puppy means marriage.
Lucy. Listen; sir, that's his signal!
Walpole. A stone at the pane!
 But it can't be Bellair—he is safe.
Lucy. There, again!
Walpole (peeps from the window). Ho!—a ladder!
 Niece, do as I bid you; confide
 In my word, and I promise Sir Sidney his bride!
 Ope the window and whisper, "I'm chained to the floor;
 Pray, come up and release me!"
Lucy (out of the window). "I'm chained to the floor;
 Pray, come up and release me."
Walpole. I watch by this door.
[Enters LUCY's room and peeping out.]
BLOUNT enters through the window.

SCENE 10. BLOUNT, LUCY, WALPOLE at watch unobserved.

Lucy. Saints in heaven, Mr. Jones!
Walpole (aside). Selden Blount, by old Nick.
Blount. What! you are not then chained! Must each word be a trick?
 Ah, you looked for a gallant more dainty and trim;
 He deposes me to say he abandons his whim;
 By his special request I am here in his place—
 Saving him from a crime and yourself from disgrace.
 Still, ungrateful, excuse for your folly I make—
 Still the prize he disdains to my heart I can take.
 Fly with me, as with him you would rashly have fled;—
 He but sought to degrade you, I seek but to wed.
 Take revenge on the false heart, give bliss to the true!
Lucy. If he's false to myself, I were false to you,
 Could I say I forget him.
Blount. You will, when my wife.
Lucy. That can never be—
Blount. Never!
Lucy. One love lasts thro' life!
Blount. Traitor! think not this insult can tamely be borne—
 Hearts like mine are too proud for submission to scorn.
 You are here at my mercy—that mercy has died,
 You remain as my victim or part as my bride.
(Locks the door.)
 See escape is in vain, and all others desert you;
 Let these arms be your refuge.
Walpole (tapping him on the shoulder). Well said,
 Public Virtue!

[Blount, stupefied, drops the key, which WALPOLE takes up, stepping out into the balcony, to return as BLOUNT, recovering himself, makes a rush at the window.]
Walpole (stopping him). As you justly observed,
 'See escape is in vain,'—
 I have pushed down the ladder.
Blount (with his hand on his sword). 'Sdeath, draw, sir!
Walpole. Abstain
 From that worst of all blunders—a profitless crime!
 Cut my innocent throat? Fie, one sin at a time.
Blount. Sir, mock on, I deserve it; expose me to shame,

* In obeying this instruction the servant would not see the ladder, which (as the reader will learn by what immediately follows) is placed against the balcony in the front of the house.

I've o'erthrown my life's labour,—an honest man's name.

Lucy (stealing up to BLOUNT). No, a moment of madness can not sweep away
 All I owed, and—forgive me—have failed to repay:
(to WALPOLE.)

Be that moment a secret.

Walpole. If woman can keep one,
 Then a secret's a secret. Gad, Blount, you're a deep one.
[Knock at the door; WALPOLE opens it.]

Enter BELLAIR and VEASEY, followed by MRS. VIZARD.
 SCENE 11. WALPOLE, LUCY, BLOUNT, VEASEY, BELLAIR,
 MRS. VIZARD in the background.

Bellair (not seeing WALPOLE, who is concealed behind the door which he opens, and hurrying to BLOUNT.)
 Faithless man, canst thou look on my face undismayed!

Nithsdale's letter disclosed, and my friendship betrayed!

What! and here too! Why here?

Blount (aside). I shall be the town's scoff.
Walpole (to BELLAIR and VEASEY). Sirs, methinks
 that you see not that lady—hats off.

I requested your presence, Sir Sidney Bellair,
 To make known what you owe to the friend who
 stands there.

For that letter disclosed, your harsh language recant—
 It's condition your pardon;—full pardon I grant.
 He is here, you ask why, 'tis to save you to night
 From degrading your bride by the scandal of flight.

(Drawing him aside.)
 Or—hist!—did you intend (whisper close in my ear)
 Honest wedlock with one so beneath you? I fear
 You of lineage so ancient—

Bellair. Must mean what I say.
 Do their ancestors teach the well-born to betray?

Walpole. Wed her friendless and penniless?

Bellair. Ay.

Walpole. Strange caprice!
 Deign to ask, then, from Walpole the hand of his
 niece.

Should he give his consent, thank the friend you
 abuse.

Bellair (embracing BLOUNT). Best and noblest of
 men, my blind fury excuse!

Walpole. Hark, her father's lost lands may yet serve
 for her dower.

Bellair. All the earth has no lands worth the bloom
 of this flower.

Lucy. Ah, too soon fades the flower.

Bellair. True, I alter the name.
 Be my perfect pure chrysolite—ever the same.

Walpole. Hold, I know not a chrysolite from a car-
 buncle,
(With insinuating blandishment of voice and look.)

But my nephew in law should not vote out his uncle.
Bellair. Robert Walpole, at last you have bought
 me, I fear.

Walpole. Every man has his price. My majority's
 clear.

If,—

(Crossing quickly to BLOUNT.)

Dear Blount, did your goodness not rank with
 the best,

What you feel as reproach, you would treat as a jest.

Raise your head—and with me keep a laugh for the ass

Who has never gone out of his wits for a lass:

Live again for your country—reflect on my bill.

Blount (with emotion, grasping WALPOLE'S hand). You
 are generous; I thank you. Vote with you?—I
 will!

Veasey. How dispersed are the clouds, seeming late-
 ly so sinister!—

Walpole. Yes, I think that the glass stands at Fair—
 for the Minister.

Veasey. Ah! what more could you do for the People
 and Throne?

Walpole. Now I'm safe in my office, I'll leave well
 alone.

A CHAT ON BELLS.

"Why ring not out the bells?"

SHAKESPEARE.

MUCH as we know of the public and domestic life of the ancients, there is one point on which we are still almost entirely ignorant, and that is the manner in which they announced the time of the day and the beginning of ceremonies or public exhibitions. Various instruments, it is true, have been found which it is supposed were used for the purpose, but whether they had bells like those of our day has never yet been satisfactorily decided. An epigram of Martial speaks of the *æs therma-rum*, which may have been a bell announcing the opening of public baths at the ninth hour in winter and at the eighth in summer; and Pliny speaks in like manner of the hour for baths being "announced." But that is all we know of it; and the use of bells becomes all the more doubtful from the fact that the early Christians had none, even long after their meetings had become sufficiently public to require some kind of public announcement. It was not until the fourth century that the *tuba* was used in Egyptian convents for the purpose of summoning the inmates to their stated assemblies; and this method, evidently borrowed from the directions given by Moses, remained for some time in force. The nuns managed it much more simply; in the convents of Bethlehem, at least, the first sister who awoke in the morning sang aloud hallelujah! and at once all the others were required to rise and pray. Gradually, however, mechanical means were preferred; and in the eighth century a few bells are mentioned, by the side of the almost universal sonorous boards, which were struck for the purpose of giving the desired signals. It is well known that these sacred boards are still exclusively used in the East. They consist of a long thin plank, which the priest balances before him with his left arm, while he strikes it with a hammer in a certain rhythm, producing higher and lower sounds according to the place where the instrument falls. The same quaint device is mentioned by Marco Polo as in common use among the Chinese to announce the hours of the day and the occurrence of fires, and has since been found, either of wood or of iron, in almost every Eastern country.

St. Gregory of Tours is probably the first author who speaks, in the sixth century, of a *signum* or a bell, which was struck at the beginning of Divine service and to announce the canonical hours. Later authors inform us, at great length, that bells are an Italian invention, having been first made in the town of Nola, in Campania, and that they obtained from this circumstance the names of Campana, when of large size, and of Nola, when smaller. This derivation is, however, more than doubtful, although Campania was famous in times of antiquity already for the perfection to which the

two arts most needed in casting bells were carried there—the art of making all kinds of copper utensils, and that of making large vessels of burned clay. At all events, bells must have been of early use in the Christian Church, for they are frequently mentioned by French ecclesiastic writers toward the end of the sixth century; and St. Columba had one as early as 599 in his famous convent, on the remote Scottish island of Iona.

How rare they must, nevertheless, have been for some time appears from the use made of one belonging to St. Stephen's, in the city of Sens, in Burgundy. When the town was besieged by King Clotharius, we are told, the bishop went to his church and rang the bell, whereupon the enemy, terribly frightened, ran away and abandoned the siege. England, also, had bells very early; at least St. Cuthbert, one of the pupils of the Venerable Bede, sent a bell to a Bishop Lullas in Germany, and uses in his letter of explanation for the first time the Latin word *clocca*, which has survived in all languages except our own.

In Spain bells had the rare good fortune of becoming martyrs. The Christians enjoyed, even under Moorish yoke, the right of worshipping God after their own manner; but this did not exempt them from much obloquy, and the faithful followers of Mohammed ridiculed especially their fashion of summoning the devout to church by the ringing of bells; and when the excessive zeal of some Christian fanatics provoked the wrath of the calif, he ordered the bells, together with the roofs of the churches, to be taken down. For there, as in Germany, and in some cases in England, the single bell, of which a church boasted, was suspended between two pillars, built in the western gable-end, and running up to some little height above the roof. When several bells became desirable, special belfries began to be built, first, merely above the crest of the roof, and, finally, as separate structures, either quite apart from the holy edifice, as in Italy, or in the Gothic style, forming part of the church itself.

Toward the middle of the ninth century bells became general, not only in convents and cities, but especially in villages, for the purpose of summoning distant parishioners. It was then that bells made their way even to the East, for we read of a Venetian duke who, in 865, presented Michael, Emperor of Greece, with twelve magnificent brass bells, which found a place in a belfry built specially for them by the side of St. Sophia. Godfrey of Bouillon introduced them in Jerusalem; but, with the exception of such isolated cases, the Orient adhered pertinaciously to the ancient sounding-board, and after the conquest of Constantinople the strong prejudice of Turks and Jews against bells banished them nearly altogether from Eastern lands.

What they lost in foreign lands they seem, however, quickly to have regained by the increasing reverence with which they were looked