

MUSIC HATH CHARMS.

A Comedy,

IN ONE ACT.

BY

DAVID FISHER, COMEDIAN,

(Member of the Dramatic Author's Society.)

AUTHOR OF

'Heart Strings and Fiddle Strings,' " The Enemy's NoteBook," &c.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,

89, STRAND, LONDON.

MUSIC HATH CHARMS.

*First performed at the Royal Princess's Theatre, under
the management of Mr. Charles Kean, on July 7 th, 1856.*

* * Played upwards of 300 Nights at the Princess's and Adelphi
Theatres.

Characters.

MR. POPPLETON PERTINAX..... Mr. DAVID FISHER.
CAPTAIN BREMONT Mr. RAYMOND.
ADRIEN DE BEAUVAL (*an Architect*)... Mr. BARSBY.
M. RABINEL.....(*a Notary*)..... Mr. BRAZIER.

MADAME MATHILDE DE LA ROCHE
(*Niece of Bremont*)..... Miss C. LECLEBCQ.
LUCILLE..... (*Daughter to Bremont*) Miss M. TERNAN.
VICTOIRE..... (*Servant to Mathilde*) Miss CLIFFORD.
GUESTS Mr. COLLINS, Mr WARREN,
Miss HUNT and Miss E. LOVELL.

Scene.—Paris, in the Lodging Establishment of
Madame de la Roche.

TIME—PRESENT.

Costumes.

PERTINAX.—*First Dress:* Morning dress. *Second Dress:* Evening
dress.
MATHILDE.—Ditto
LUCILLE.—Ditto.
BREMONT.—Ditto

Rest of the Characters all Evening.

MUSIC HATH CHARMS.



SCENE.—*A handsome Drawing Room. Large folding doors, c, shewing another chamber at back; door R. U. E.; door L. u. E.; arm chair R. of round table R.; cane chair, L. of table; sofa at back, L.; piano, L.; music stool; music on small table behind piano with newspaper; Chairs, &c, about the stage.*

RABINEL *discovered at table reading.*

RABIN. Victoire told me her mistress would be here in half an hour, and I declare that I have been waiting double that time. *(rises)* Seven o'clock ! and the contract is to be signed at eight. I shall have no time to spare. It is absolutely necessary that I should see Brignolet before I retuni. Madame de la Roche does not make her appearance ; and I don't think it indispensable that I should see her. She will see the paper if I place it on her writing table there, *(placing paper on table, R. c.)* She has only to sign her name to this paper, and Brignolet becomes the purchaser of this house from her. A strange and sudden freak of madame's to sell the house on such disadvantageous terms, just as she is about to be married ; and to an architect. I doubt whether Monsieur Beauval is aware of what she is doing, for he is too knowing a fellow, and too fond of money to make so bad a bargain. I Buspect there is little love on his side, and I doubt if there is much on hers; but he has got a way of making himself useful to people, and they fancy they can't do without him. Eh ! some one's here! It's not Madame de la Roche.

Enter VICTOIRE, door L., shewing in BREMONT and LUCILLE, in travelling costume.

BREMONT. (L.) Charming house ! Trim, taught, and well rigged, as we old sailors say.

VICTOIRE. (R. C.) Are you my young lady's uncle, sir ?

BREMONT. Well, I suppose I am, seeing that the young lady is my niece, *(seeing RABINEL)* You I suppose are the young lady's bo 'son—I mean her first lieutenant ? Now sheer off and tell her I'm come into port. *(VICTOIRE takes off LUCILLE'S shawl, and gets, L. c.)*

RABIN, (R., *aside*) He takes me for the domestic!

BREMONT. Heave ahead and save tide, I say, and tell my niece to come on deck.

VICTOIRE. (*suppressing a laugh*) That, sir, is my young mistress's notary.

Exit VICTOIRE, door R. U. E., with Lucille's shawl and bonnet.

BREMONT. I beg pardon—out in my reckoning, eh ? Can't always tell a craft by her rigging, d'ye see—Notary, eh?

LUCIL. (c.) At St. Omer all the notaries are old gentlemen.

RABIN. In Paris we are most of us unfortunately too *young*.

LUCIL. Oh dear no !

RABIN. My opinion precisely, Mademoiselle I (*aside*) Very pretty! rather provincial, but decidedly pretty ! (*crosses, c.*) The contract is to be signed this evening at eight o'clock. Good fortune must wait on all who assist at the marriage of Madame de la Roche, (*bows*) Monsieur! Mademoiselle! (*bows very low to LUCILLE and exit at door, L. u. E.*)

LUCIL. Well, there's no notary a bit like him at St. Omer.

BREMONT. Well, but my neice ? Where is my niece ?

Enter MATHILDE, door, R. U. E. followed by VICTOIRE, who crosses and exits, L. U. E.

MATHIL. My dear uncle! (*embracing him*)

LUCIL. My dear cousin !

BREMONT. What a craft! what rigging !

MATHIL. How good of you to come so far to be present at my wedding.

LUCIL. Oh, papa intends to reside in Paris.

BREMONT. True, my lass; between ourselves I think Lucille finds no one to her mind at St. Omer !

LUCIL. Oh, papa ! (*sits in arm chair, R.*)

BREMONT. (*sitting, L., by piano, and taking up newspaper*) And as all the young fellows there have come to Paris, Lucille thought she'd just hoist sail, take Cupid for a pilot, and make chase after them.

MATHIL. Ha, ha, ha! (*sitting L. of table*)

LUCIL. And is your intended good looking ?

MATHIL. Pretty well—tolerably rich—about thirty.

LUCIL. Is he attentive ?

MATHIL. Pretty well! every morning he brings me a beautiful fresh bouquet of violets, (*taking up violets*)

LUCIL. Is he amiable ?

MATHIL. Pretty well! M. de Beauval has many estimable qualities. Heigho.

LUCIL. Is he sentimental ?

MATHIL. No, he is architectural! (*replacing violets on table*)

LUCIL. Lor!

MATHIL. And after all, perhaps that is much better—he is my *charge d' affaires*, architect, and book-keeper; as my representative he receives the rent from the numerous lodgers of the various floors, makes requisite alterations, &c. &c. In short, I could not get on without him.

BREMONT. He seems more like the steward of a steamer, than the captain of a first-rate, like my niece !

MATHIL. (*taking up paper*) I see M. Rabinel has been here! Oh, my dear ! you don't know the miseries of a rich proprietress with an establishment like mine—the details are overwhelming. I can't see my friends—I go nowhere ! and then, alas ! Music! my only passion—I have been obliged to renounce even that, just too as I was commencing the study of the compositions of the divine Alfredi!

LUCIL. Alfredi! The author of *Stolen Moments—Tears of Evening*.

MATHIL. An author I adore! How provoking to be disturbed in the midst of a charming song by the complaint of the ground floor lodger, that his rooms are damp, or by the little gentleman up stairs that the sun is broiling him! But there is one especially who is a perfect torment, and gifted with a perseverance quite astonishing. Nothing suits him! He is an Englishman, and says he couldn't live if he didn't grumble ! Twenty times a day, down like an avalanche, comes Mr. Poppleton Pertinax! His windows won't open—he suffocates ; his windows won't shut—he freezes! In short, I have been so ranch annoyed, that I have almost made up my mind to sell the house and have done with it. My notary has left me this paper, which I have only to sign, and I am a proprietress no longer.

BREMONT. Well, but instead of selling your ship, why not get rid of your crew ?

MATHIL. Impossible! I think the man's mad! Every hour in the day, the servant announces Mr. Poppleton Pertinax! If I were to go to the other end of the world, the first person I should hear of would be-----

Enter VICTOIRE, door L.

VICTOIRE. Mr. Poppleton Pertinax !

MATHIL. There ! (*rising*)

Enter PERTINAX, door L., hat in hand.

Exit VIOTOIRE, door L.

PERTIN. I am truly sorry to be obliged to trouble you, my dear madame; I lament exceedingly.

MATHIL. I think I have replied to you once before to-day.

PERTIN. To-day ? yesterday, madame; I assure you it was yesterday, I remember it by a combination of circumstances.

I had previously complained to you of a violent toothache, brought on by excitement, in consequence of the absence of my bootjack ; but when I last had the honour of seeing you, our conversation was of a more brilliant and luminous character—a discussion on the theory of light, illustrated by repeated references to the inadequate supply of gas in my apartment. It was about the gas—yes, it was about the gas.

MATHIL. Well, sir, the workmen had orders to do as you required; besides, you said last evening-----

PERTIN. Not last evening! I remember it by many collateral evidences. I had spoken to you about the hole in the hearth rug, and was about to say that I should rather prefer the silver spoons not being cleaned with my tooth brush. (PERTINAX *places hat on sofa, and takes a book out of his pocket*) Being a resident in a country of which I have the misfortune not to be a native, I find by reference to this guide book-----

MATHIL. Really, you must perceive that I am engaged— these are my relations, only just arrived from St. Omer, and I--

PERTIN. Charming place! (*bows to BREMONT*) Beautiful country ! (*looking at LUCILLE and bowing*) Beautiful, indeed !

MATHIL. Must I be. more explicit? (*pointing to door and crossing to BREMONT*)

PERTIN. Perhaps, as you say, you'll think the matter over. (*pause*) Exactly ; at some other time. I'll look in again tomorrow—certainly—I wish you a very good evening, (*bows to each —as he bows to LUCILLE, sees the violets on R. table*) Ah! violets! they are hers! To her they owe their perfume—there—there, next my heart! (*bowing again to all and exit door, L. u. E.*)

LUCIL. Well, my dear, he is an original! I thought the man never would have taken his departure.

MATHIL. (*seated L. of table*) Oh, my dear, you don't know him!

PERTIN. (*re-entering*) I beg ten thousand pardons, but-----

MATHIL. (*rising*) Really, Mr. Pertinax, this persecution is intolerable, (*going to R.*)

PERTIN. Madame, you behold before you the most unfortunate of human beings ! I come to throw myself on your generosity ; I seek an asylum.

MATHIL. The man's a lunatic!

PERTIN. I am sorry to say that my door refuses to unlock my key—no, no, I mean that my lock declines to unkey my door.

MATHIL. You must break the door open.

PERTIN. (*placing hat on sofa*) Permit me, madame. (*taking out book*) As a resident in a country of which I have the mis-

fortune not to be a native—I find on reference to the Travellers' Guide, that forcible entrance into a dwelling house, or infraction with violence-----

MATHIL. Pshaw! What has the guide book to do with it ? You must open your own door. Have you tried?

PERTIN. Till my hands are blistered—look! (*shewing right hand*) No, not that one—this, (*shewing left hand*) No, not this one—it's-----

BREMONT. Excuse me, but this, sir, is a mere trick!

PERTIN. Exactly, my dear sir, I said so ; some one has been playing a trick with the lock.

BREMONT. Let me give the door a broadside, I'll have it open. I warrant you.

MATHIL. No, no, send for a locksmith. I shall go distracted.

BREMONT. I think a lock and key for Mr. Pertinax himself would'nt be amiss, (*going up L. C.*) Now, sir, after you!

PERTIN. Permit me, monsieur.

(*ceremony of letting each go before the other, BREMONT at last taking the lead, PERTINAX follows him out and returns directly*)

LUCIL. Ha, ha! What an extraordinary creature !

MATHIL. He is the perfect pest of my life, but now that we have actually got rid of him-----

PERTIN. (*coming between them*) Allow me, my dear madame. (*MATHILDE goes, L,—LUCILLE, R.—aside*) How diabolically beautiful she is!

MATHIL. Well, Mr. Pertinax.

PERTIN. (*hesitating*) Hem! I wish to speak to you, Madame de la Roche.

MATHIL. Well, Mr. Pertinax.

PERTIN. (*to LUCILLE*) Perhaps, mademoiselle, you would oblige Madame de la Roche by leaving us for a short time.

LUCIL. Leave you alone with my cousin?

MATHIL. (*quickly*) Be seated, I beg of you. (*crosses to table, R.—MATHILDE, L. of table, and LUCILLE, R. of table, sit*)

PERTIN. Thank you, madame, I will take a chair, (*sits, L. C.*)

MATHIL. Now, sir, I listen.

LUCIL. (*aside*) What a funny man !

MATHIL. I say, sir, I listen !

LUCIL. I shan't listen, (*taking up a look and pretending to read*)

PERTIN. (*coughing, &c.*) My throat feels like a coke oven.

MATHIL. Well, sir.

PERTIN. (*aside*) , I feel just like a man going to sing a comic song, when he has forgotten the words, and doesn't remember the tune.

MATHIL. (*impatiently*) Mr. Pertinax !

PERTIN. Poppleton Pertinax, madame.

MATHIL. Poppleton Pertinax—pray what is the reason of this fresh intrusion ?

PERTIN. Fresh, madam—nothing of the kind ! the grievance is as old as Adam and Eve.

MATHIL. (*aside*) What does the man mean?

PERTIN. (*hesitating and confused*) I think, madame—that is to say—and indeed on that point you must agree with me. I must make a plunge. In short, madame, picture to yourself a sort of person—young—that is, youngish—good-looking-----

LUCIL. (*laughs aside*)

PERTIN. That is to say, passable—not *too* good-looking.

MATHIL. Well, Mr. Pertinax?

PERTIN. Pray, my dear madame, leave "well" alone; I can't stand that bitter monosyllable any longer. You see before you---- Are you fond of poetry ? (*LUCILLE laughs again*)

PERTIN. Confound that girl, I wish she was back again at St. Omer. I say, you see before you one, who, like the poet ---- (*LUCILLE laughs*). I shall die of that small person. What can I compare myself to ? I have it! Madame, you see before you a locomotive steam engine (*MATHILDE and LUCILLE start*) with extra fuel, high pressure, express, Cupid the driver, you, madame—you—confound it, I can't compare her to the stoker! In short, madame—I love you.

MATHIL. (*surprised and rising*) Mr. Pertinax?

PERTIN. Poppleton Pertinax, and your devoted—(*kneels*)

LUCIL. (*aside*) How quick he's been about it, not a bit like those stupid men at St. Omer.

MATHIL. Sir! I must insist that you do not address me in this monstrous manner, (*crosses, L.*)

PERTIN. (*aside*) I've been abrupt. I've proposed too soon.

LUCIL. (*aside to him*) She's engaged to be married.

PERTIN. (*rising*) I've proposed too *late*. What! going to be married ? to whom ? to which ? to what ? Who is going to marry her ? who dares ? going to be sacrificed to some Parisian dandy, some designing ruffian—worse, some antediluvian all the way from St. Omer. I see. I see.

MATHIL. (*seriously*) Mr. Pippleton !

PERTIN. Poppleton !

MATHIL. Well sir, Poppleton—Pertinax.

PERTIN. Precisely.

MATHIL. I forbid you to speak in this way before me of the man I am about to marry.

PERTIN. The villain! (*to LUCILLE*) IS he a man of property ?

LUCIL. Not exactly, he is an architect.

PERTIN. The fellow's a bricklayer !

LUCIL. An amiable young man who brings her every morning a fresh bouquet of violets.

PERTIN. A bouquet of violets, (*taking violets from his breast and throwing them on the ground.*) Do you know, Madame de la Roche, that your intended has insulted you for some time past by presenting you with a bouquet which has cost him the alarming sum of two sous! when he should have crossed oceans, exhausted the tropics, and each morning presented you with a bouquet that would have put to shame all the Horticultural Exhibitions, from the Gardens of the Hesperides to those of Chiswick downwards. Miserable stonemason! paltry plasterer! ignoble hodman! one penny! only a penny. Bah!

MATHIL. This is beyond endurance, (*crosses to R. table, rings bell*) I will send to Monsieur Beauval, and he must write instantly to this man, and give him notice to quit the house.

Enter VICTOIRE, door L.

Victoire, shew this gentleman to his apartments, and if I find him here on my return, I shall dismiss you from my service. Come, Lucille. *Exeunt MATHILDE and LUCILLE, R. door.*

PERTIN. (*walking about*) Going to be married!

VICTOIRE. I think you heard, sir, that madam-----

PERTIN. (L.) Is going to be married! Perhaps it is not yet too late, (*suddenly*) Victoire, are you fond of money? Would you like to be covered all over with gold and silver?

VICTOIRE. Oh, Monsieur!

PERTIN. (*giving money*) There! there are ten francs-----

VICTOIRE. Oh, Monsieur!

PERTIN. There are twenty francs, and there are forty francs. There—there—are you satisfied, you domestic Danae?

VICTOIRE. But-----

PERTIN. Silence! Now speak the truth. What does your mistress think of me?

VICTOIRE. She must think well of you, monsieur; you pay your rent so regularly, (*puts the money in her pocket*)

PERTIN. Bah! Does she love me?

VICTOIRE. No; there's no reason why she should love you.

PERTIN. No, of course not—no—I don't mean exactly love; but when she breathes my name, does the colour never mantle to her cheek—does no half-stifled sigh betray—you know what I mean—is there no warmth of expression?

VICTOIRE. Oh, yes, a great deal, monsieur.

PERTIN. There is! Here—more gold! And now, what—oh, what does she say?

VICTOIRE. She says you are a perfect nuisance!

PERTIN. Give me my money back again.

VICTOIRE. But then perhaps she didn't mean it.

PERTIN. Of course, she couldn't mean it—impossible! She must think me the right sort of person—a sensible sort of

fellow —modest and retiring in my manners. My dear Victoire, for every word you say to *her* in praise of *me*, I'll give you five francs.

VICTOIRE. Five francs !

PERTIN. Oh, Victoire, why didn't I love somebody like *you* ? Instead of a woman possessed of every comfort, why not a poor girl like *you* ? Instead of a creature beautiful as Madame de la Roche, why not an ordinary person like *you* ? (*putting his arm round her waist*) You would have loved me, wouldn't you ? (*kisses her*)

VICTOIRE. (*struggling*) Monsieur!

PERTIN. Never mind! it's not you that I love, (*kisses her again*)

MATHIL. (*speaks outside*) Quick ! quick, I tell you !

VICTOIRE. Oh, it's madame ! I shall be turned away if she finds you here

PERTIN. (*going up to door, L.*) Remember ! five francs.

Exit, door L.

Enter MATHILDE and LUCILLE, in evening dresses, door R.

MATHIL. Well—Mr. Pertinax?

VICTOIRE. Oh, he's been gone this ever so long ! Oh, what a nice sort of a man he is —so gentlemanlike! (*aside*) Five francs So talented ! (*aside*) Ten francs, (*aloud*) So modest and retiring in his manners.

MATHIL. What does the girl mean ?

VICTOIRE. (*aside*) Fifteen francs, (*goes up, L. c.*)

LUCIL. Oh, what a charming little room you have given me ! Don't my dress look nice ? I do so long to be dancing ! Will Monsieur Rabinel be here ?

MATHIL. Oh, certainly.

LUCIL. He's so nice-looking; we have no gentlemen to dance with at St. Omer—only lady partners, and that is so stupid !

(BREMONT and DE BEAUVAL heard outside, door L.—" My dear sir, I beg your pardon," &c.—*entering, L. door*)

MATHIL. Oh, my dear uncle, allow me to introduce you to my future husband M. Beauval.

BREMONT. Oh, we've already made each other's acquaintance.

BEAUV. Yes, we had a concussion on the staircase, and to my astonishment I am one of the survivors.

BREMONT. We old sailors don't stand upon trifles, I don't think your hull is much the worse for it. (*pointing to LUCILLE*) My daughter. (*LUCILLE and BEAUVAL exchange bows*)

LUCIL. I shall be with you in a few minutes, my dear cousin. The florist is waiting. I shall choose the best bouquets, and bring you the most beautiful.

Exit LUCILLE, door R., and VICTOIRE door L.

MATHIL. (*coldly*) You are late, M. Beauval. (*seated R. c.*)

BEAUV. I have not been idle. I have attended to your wishes, and Mr. Pertinax will shortly get his notice to leave his apartments. I want to consult you about some most important alterations—improvements I mean—with regard to this house.

BREMONT. What about your friend overhead ?

MATHIL. Oh, we have taken our precautions, and I trust I shall see no more of him.

Enter PERTINAX, door L.

PERTIN. I cannot sufficiently apologize ! I know him, (*looking at Beauval*) and to think that I had him standing on my threshold this morning, and that I omitted to smash him to atoms against the door post.

MATHIL. Really, sir, at least you remember—

PERTIN. Distinctly I do. But at the present moment I can only address you in the words of a favourite English poet. " Pity the sorrows of a poor young man, whose trembling limbs have borne him to your door," again I ask an asylum! " Oh give relief and heaven will bless your store."

(BREMONT *sits L. with newspaper.*)

MATHIL. And the locksmith, sir?

PERTIN. Was a jewel of a locksmith; he opened the door with the greatest ease. My present calamity is of a different character. I am *smoked out*.

OMNES. Smoked out!

PERTIN. Smoked out!

BEAUV. (*aside to MATHILDE*) He'll receive his notice to quit in a few minutes, (*goes up R., and down L. c.*)

MATHIL. Do all your chimneys smoke ?

PERTIN. Without exception. (MATHILDE *turns away, and sits in arm chair, R.*)

BREMONT. Then sit without a fire, (*seated, L.*)

PERTIN. In the present inclement state of the weather, old gentleman, at your years such inhumanity is too shocking, (*to MATHILDE*) I appeal, madam, to your tenderness for warmth and shelter, (*close to her, MATHILDE rises, advances down, R. —BEAUV. down L. C.*)

Enter VICTOIRE, door L., with a letter.

VICTOIRE. A letter for Mr. Pertinax. It's immediate.

PERTIN. For me ! (*takes it*)

MATHIL. Thank heaven! now I shall be released. Read, sir, read.

PERTIN. (*reads*) What do I see ! A *conge* ! A notice to quit

the premises ! What, madame, a stranger in the land ! Turn me out to the tender mercies of the wide, wide world! Me I so contented a lodger !

VICTOIRE. (*up stage a little, R.*) Pays his rent so regular! (*aside*) Twenty francs.

MATHIL. It is the only way escaping your continual annoyance.

PERTIN. " Pity the sorrows of a"— However, I have only one remark to make, and that is that I can't go.

BEAUV. But the paper in your hand.

PERTIN. Was executed after this one. (*takes paper out of his pocket*) therefore the one just, received is null and void.

BEAUV. What do you say ?

MATHIL. Explain.

PERTIN. That your *charge d' affaires* (*pointing to BEAUVAL*) is remarkable for a most retentive memory. He serves me with an ejection in the evening, having in the morning given me a lease of my apartments for three, six, or nine months at my own discretion. Ah, ah ! (*goes up*)

BEAUV. Fool! (*crossing to R. corner*)

MATHIL. How could you be so stupid ? Then now I am determined ! and I will no longer submit to such tyranny ! (*goes to table*) Yes, I have only to sign my name to it. (*signs the paper which RABINEL left*)

PERTIN. She is going to send me a challenge!

MATHIL. Victoire, let this be sent to Monsieur Brigolet, No. 37.

VICTOIRE. Yes, madame. *Exit, L. door.*

PERTIN. What can be the meaning of this?

MATHIL. It means that I am no longer a proprietress !

OMNES. How—what?

MATHIL. I have sold the house to M. Brigolet; and he takes possession this very day.

BEAUV. Sold the house—and without consulting me! (*R. corner*)

MATHIL. I pay twenty thousand francs to be rid of you, sir!

BEAUV. A great deal more, madame! I had a project for building over the garden. A magnificent speculation ; and allow me to say that I am both surprised and displeased at such reckless conduct.

MATHIL. (*indignantly*) M. Beauval! (*BEAUVAL goes up, R.*)

PERTIN. (*aside*) There's a mercenary rascal for you !

MATHIL. Mr. Poppleton, I have not had one moment's peace since you came into this establishment.

PERTIN. It is very true, madame ; I am afraid I have caused you great uneasiness.

MATHIL. And now when you have done all the mischief you can, you will say you are very sorry—at last you are coming to your senses.

PERTIN. On the contrary, I mean to blow out my brains ; but never mind—you'll think of me when I'm gone ! In the language of one of our most celebrated poets, " And you'll remember me." (*sings*)

When hollow hearts shall wear a mask,
 'Twill break thine own to see —
 At such a moment I but ask,
 That you'll remember me. *Exit, door L.*

BEAUV. (C.) Idiot! fool! mad Englishman !

BREMONT. (L.) No more mad than you are ; he's all right here, (*slapping his breast*) May I never see salt water again if I don't like the fellow; and, if I were in your place, niece, I begin to think----- (*looking at BEAUV. —crosses to c.*)

MATHIL. What, uncle ?

BREMONT. I say, I think he's a good sort of fellow! and if— Ah! well, I suppose, it is too late ; but if he had a fancy for my daughter-----

MATHIL. With her fortune of 200,000 francs, would you give her to Mr. Pertinax. (*goes up with BREMONT*)

BEAUV. (L., *aside*) Two hundred thousand francs ! I am so enraged and disappointed that, if I could get a fair excuse to break with madame, I would make up to this sea-calf's pretty daughter! (*Music—quadrille*)

Enter LUCILLE, quickly, with two bouquets, L. C.

LUCIL. Cousin, cousin! a great deal of company has arrived !

MATHIL. Will you take my place in the ball-room for a short time?

LUCIL. M. and Madame de Rohan, Cousins Henry and Marie. Oh here they are. (*Music continued at back. Enter M. and MADAME DE KOHAN, HENRI and MARIE, MATHILDE receives them, and invites them to be seated. RABINEL enters last, L. a*)

RABIN. (R. C.) Charming! very charming! The flowers are enchanting! (to LUCILLE) How could I be so blind? I had always thought the Parisian taste perfect, but now I see my error.

LUCIL. (*standing in the doorway, c.*) No one ever said anything half so nice as that as St. Omer. *Exit c. off I.*

BREMONT. Is the contract ready ?

RABIN. By all means—the contract.

MATHIL. Now then read quickly.

BEAUV. (L.) Madame, these are matters of too much importance to be hurried over.

MATHIL. M. Rabinel will you oblige me by reading as quick as M. Beauval's interests will allow.

RABIN. Certainly, by all means, (*taking out contract*) Now

then for it. (*reads*) " Taken before me, Maitre Rabinel, Notary.
In consideration of the—

Enter VICTOIRE, door L.

VICTOIRE. Oh madame, madame, here's the gentleman that has bought the house come to pay you a visit.

MATHIL. M.Brignolet!

BEAUV. This is no time for—

VICTOIRE. (*announcing*) Mr. Poppleton!

Enter PERTINAX, in evening dress, L.

OMNES. Pertinax ! (*all rise*)

PERTIN. Precisely ! I have just concluded the arrangements and have *bought* the house.

BREMONT. (*at back*) Then he's got the shiners.

PERTIN. I mean to build over the garden. Two rows of splendid terraces, magnificent pavilions. I am indebted to this gentleman for the idea ; a magnificent speculation !

BEAUV. Ass that I *was* !

PERTIN. *Was* ? I have just completed the purchase from M. Brignolet, No. 37. I am no longer a tenant, I am the house, I am the furniture, I am monarch of all I survey.

MATHIL. (*reproachfully*) Monsieur!

PERTIN. Now, madame, I shall no longer annoy you.

MATHIL. Thank heaven!

PERTIN. It will now be my duty as a proprietor to make you the happiest of tenants. Instead of augmenting, to diminish your rent, (*looking at BEAUVAL*) I shall be my *own* architect. It will be my pleasure to see that the windows and doors open and shut with alacrity, and that the chimneys consume their own smoke. As to the servants, if they offend I'll turn them out of doors ; if they refuse to go, I'll set fire to the house. I being the proprietor, the rest being only lodgers, I mean to be a pattern to all proprietors, doing my duty to those whose happiness will be my constant care, and whose love I would die to make my own! (*tenderly to MATHILDE*)

MATHIL. I must put an end to this. Sir, this is a reunion of a particular kind—a-----

PERTIN. A ball, of course. You see I am in costume, (*aside*) Madame, may I remain ?

BREMONT. (*coming down, c.*) Of course you may.

MATHIL. Uncle-----

BREMONT. "Would you let him freeze up aloft, with the noise of the fiddles between decks ? (to PERTINAX) Of *course* you'll remain, and join the party midships, (*aside to him*) Come along, old fellow, it's all right.

PERTIN. (*aside to MATHILDE*) Is it possible that you can prefer *him* to *me* ? *Exeunt BREMONT and PERTINAX, L. C.*

BEAUV. (*aside*) I'll be revenged if I die for it !

RABIN. But-----

BEAUV. Stay, some alterations will be necessary in the details. Madame de la Roche has most imprudently sold the house for twenty thousand francs, less than it was valued at.

MATHIL. It is very evident that Monsieur Beauval thinks more of the house than its mistress.

BEAUV. Do you think, madame, that under the circumstances, you had a right to act without consulting me ?

MATHIL. If you regret your position, sir, it is not too late to retract. M. Rabinel, put up the paper. M. Beauval, you are free.

Music.—ORCHESTRA *outside* L. *plays a brilliant raise, the GUESTS rise and go off, L. C. LUCILLE enters hurriedly.*

LUCIL. Quick, quick—Mr. Pertinax has placed all the dancers, and he is going round and round like a teetotum, (to MATHILDE.) Have you found me a partner ?

MATHIL. Don't tease!

(RABINEL *seeing the GUESTS gone, puts up the contract very quickly and goes off, c.*)

BEAUV. (to LUCILLE) Madame, shall I have the honor?

LUCIL. With pleasure ; I'd rather have had the Notary.

BEAUV. (looking at MATHILDE as he goes off) She's furious.

Exit BEAUV. and LUCILLE, L. C.

MATHIL. I breathe more freely. I am glad I had the courage to break off with him, cold, mercenary, selfish. *All men are so I think. No! this mad, extravagant, eccentric Englishman—he at least-----*

Enter PERTINAX, L. C, unperceived by MATHILDE.

PERTIN. (*close to her*) He at least desires your happiness.

MATHIL. (*starting*) You frightened me. Are you not about to join the dancers?

PERTIN. Not at present. I come to enlighten you as to the character of your future husband.

MATHIL. Monsieur!

PERTIN. You don't appreciate him; he is a man of honour, and has many good qualities; under his brusque and impetuous manners he hides a true and affectionate spirit. Moreover, he is a distinguished artist.

MATHIL. Monsieur Beauval an artist !

PERTIN. Eh! Oh! the stonemason—the plasterer and bricklayer !—oh ! I was not speaking of him !

MATHIL. Of whom then were you speaking ?

PERTIN. Of your future husband ! Of *me*, of *me*, Mathilde !

MATHIL. *You* my future husband !

PERTIN. I sincerely believe I shall be.

MATHIL. (*aside*) I begin to think he'll end by making me believe it, too. (*aloud*) Then you are an artist—a painter ?

PERTIN. No—a pianist! I have published a few things—songs, &c.

MATHIL. What? I have no recollection of the name of Pertinax I

PERTIN. No ; I Italianized myself, of course; my first name is Alfred, and I write under the name of Alfredi!

MATHIL. What ?

PERTIN. Alfredi!

MATHIL. *Stolen Moments—Tears of Evening.* You whom I imagined so thin—so delicate—so pale—and with such long black curly hair !

PERTIN. Yes; in my portrait! I got an interesting friend to sit for me.

MATHIL. I adore your music; here is your last composition. *(taking duet from, piano)*

PERTIN. Composed expressly for you. *The Second Love !* Shall we try the effect of it ?

(leads her to the piano, and there commences the symphony)

*Duet**

PERTIN. Grieve no more, my fair one ;
Calm, oh, calm thy fears ;
Love's fond hand would dry
Thine unavailing tears.

MATHIL. Memory still will wander
O'er the happy past;
Still will fondly dwell
On scenes too bright to last.

PERTIN. Grieve no more, my fair one,
Calm, oh, calm thy fears ;
Love's fond hand would dry
Thy unavailing tears.

MATHIL. Call me not thy fair one.
Can I calm those fears?
Never can I dry
These unavailing tears.

BOTH. Banish, oh, banish
Every thought of sorrow ;
Hope still shall guide
Our onward steps to-morrow.

PERTIN. Should within thine eye
A crystal tear-drop glisten,
Dearest, let it be
When tales of love you listen.

BOTH. Banish, oh, banish, &c.

* The Music of this Duet, by *Hatton*, is published by Addison & Co., Regent Street. Sold at 89, Strand, London, W.C.

PEETIN. Let me ask thy heart,
By yonder star above thee,
Wilt thou—darest thou swear,
Dearest, yes, I love thee.

MATHIL. Dearest, yes, I love thee!
(PERTINAX *jumps up, and exclaims " She loves me!" at same time kissing her hand*)

BOTH. I love thee! I love thee!
(*during the close of the duet, all the Characters have entered at back, and stand with astonishment*)

MATHIL. (*seeing them*) Gracious heaven!

BREMONT. " I love thee!" Why, what the deuce does all this mean! You are a most extraordinary set of folks! I sail down here to witness your marriage contract with M. Beauval, and I find another man saying he loves you, after M. Beauval has just been proposing for my daughter!

LUCIL. Oh, no, papa, I'd rather not! he can't dance a bit.

BREMONT. Can't he ? then you shan't have him.

RABIN. Captain Bremont, I am Maitre Rabinel, notary, and I beg to offer my hand and fortune in perspective to your daughter.

BREMONT. (*puzzled*) Eh?

LUCIL. (*to BREMONT*) He dances beautifully! he'll make a capital husband.

BREMONT. Why, then, you shall have him. (RABINEL *and LUCILLE go up, R.*) But my poor niece.

PERTIN. Don't be alarmed. I intend to be *her* husband. Oh, Mathilde, you wouldn't make me guilty of falsehood? (MATHILDE *gives her hand without speaking*)

BREMONT. What, the troublesome first-floor lodger?

MATHIL. My dear uncle, it is the only way I had of getting rid of him. (*music plays a polka*)

BREMONT. Well, so long as you are all happy, I don't see why I should be otherwise; and so my advice is, that you all go into the ball-room—don't you hear the music ? (*all go off at back but PERTINAX and MATHILDE*)

PERTIN. To be sure—music—to music I owe my happiness.

Now I find true the adage oft expressed,
" Music hath charms to soothe"—you know the rest.
(PERTINAX *polks with MATHILDE, and as they are in the centre at back, the curtain falls*)