

THE
SOMNAMBULIST:

OR,

THE PHANTOM OF THE VILLAGE.

A Drama,

IN *TWO ACTS.*

BY

W. T. MONCRIEF 

AUTHOR OF

Tom and Jerry, Spectre Bridegroom, Bashful Man, Cataract of the Ganges, Eugene Aram, Liar of Private Life, Van Diemens Land Court of Queen Anne, Green Dragon, Hag of the Glen, Heart of London, John Adams, How to take up a Bill, Latude, Lochinrar, Man Wolf, Monk's Cowl, One Fault, Parson's Nose, Lost Life, Sam Weller, Mistress of the Mill, Wagoner of Westmoreland, What's in a Name ? Peer and the Peasant, Monsieur Tanon. Cheque on my Banker, Scamps of London, &c., &c.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION AND REMARKS.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,
89, STRAND, LONDON.

REMARKS.

The Somnambulist.

O u r dramatic acquaintance, Mr. Moncrieff, again passes in review before us. As a caterer for the public taste, he is indefatigable in his researches for its gratification ; and, by that easy transfer to which literary property is subject, the inhabitants of the good cities of Paris and London are made merry or sad on the same night from the same cause. Certain diurnal critics have sneeringly remarked that the French have little to spare in the way of wit and invention. Does it then become our magnanimous wisdoms to take from them *that little*, and subsist upon it ourselves? Like captious valetudinarians, who never make a hearty meal without grumbling, we borrow liberally, and as liberally abuse. Like *Ancient Pistol*, we swallow the leek, and bravely content ourselves with swearing all the while.

The Somnambulist is not a translation of the *Vaudeville*, " La Villageoise Somnanibule, ou les Deux Fiancees ;" but, like that piece, is taken from the ballet " La Somnambule," by M. M. Scribe et Aumer, which, in its turn, is founded on a *Vaudeville* of the same name, by Scribe and Delavigne: from this latter Mr. Beazley produced, some years since, a pleasing entertainment, entitled " Love's Dream." In the farce of " The Sleep-walker," somnambulism has been turned to very merry account; in the present piece, it produces fearful surprise and trembling anxiety. Had not circumstances passed within our own knowledge of an equally wonderful, though less romantic character, we should stamp "*incredulus odi*," upon the adventures of the sleeping Ernestine; but, like many theories, questioned at first, yet subsequently confirmed by experience, somnambulism proves what little advancement philosophy has made in unravelling the mystery of the mind,

and shows that human *knowledge* may find its limit, though human *presumption* never can.

The story of this piece is simple and touching. It enlists our sympathies on the side of virtue, and illustrates a principle that cannot be too strongly enforced—that innocence, amidst its severest trials, is sure to meet with the protection of heaven. The comic portion is pleasantly written: the uxorious Colin de Trop, with his matrimonial influenza, and the jealous, coquetting, virtuous, Madame Gertrude, down to Master Oliver, the Trunipetr, who salutes the ill-paired couple with a discordant nourish, are naturally drawn. The mechanical, or melo dramatic part, is singularly affecting. The scene between Ernestine and Rosambert, where every vicious thought is extinguished in the breast of the latter, and the concluding one, where the mystery is cleared up, swell the heart with emotion; indeed, the latter awakens a suspense and dread almost amounting to agony. We question if *dumb show* ever excited more intense feelings than those which thrill the audience when Ernestine passes over the water-wheel.

Somnambulism is a favourite subject with the French—its wonders have risen to several pieces—"La Petite Somnambule," "Heloise, ou la Nouvelle Somnambule," "La Somnambule Mariee," &c. &c.; none of which are more deservedly popular than the present English version.

We dislike *catchwords*—they do not add to the humour of a part; and their frequent repetition always tires, and often disgusts.—This remark applies equally to Ollapod's, "Thank you, good sir, I owe you one!" and to Colin's, "But it won't bear thinking of."—Mr. Keeley plays Colin very whimsically: we never saw a little man more in a way to be put out of his misery by the matrimonial noose. All praise centres in Miss Kelly's performance of Ernestine: the fixed attention, the deep anxiety, the tears, that accompanied it, are the best evidences of her absolute power over the imagination, in characters of this description.  D---- G.

Costume.

ROSAMBERT.—*First dress*: Brown frock—light-blue pantaloons—boots—travelling-cap, with tassel—cloak. *Second dress*: Red Hussar dress, richly trimmed with gold—high military cap, with gold curds and tassels—sword.

EDMUND.—Light green coat—drab breeches and gaiters—buff waistcoat—black hat.

COLIN DE TROP.—Light buff or yellow coat and breeches—flowered waistcoat—striped stockings—shoes—round straw hat.

OLIVER —*First dress*: Grey livery short coat—buff breeches—top boots—hat and cockade. *Second dress*: Red military dress—(As Trumpeter.)

BAILLIE.—Black suit—square toed shoes and buckles—large cloak or gown of black—large powdered wig.

ERNESTINE.—*First dress*: White dress, trimmed with pink and green—white straw hat, trimmed with green. *Second dress*: Plain white muslin short sleeved dress.

DAME MICHAUD.—Brown stuff body—lightstriped stuff petticoat—handkerchief—large French cap, &c.

MADAME GERTRUDE — *First dress*: Amberskirt, with black velvet tucks and tail—black velvet hat, with blue trimmings—black velvet body—white stockings—black shoes. *Second dress*: White skirt, with blue trimmings—handsome French cap.

MARCELLINE.—*First dress*: Blue stuff body—grey skirt—blue stockings—high French cap. *Second dress*: White and scarlet holyday dress—cap—white stockings, &c.

VILLAGE LASSES.—Peasants' dress etc

*Cast of the Characters, as performed at the Theatre Royal at
Covent Garden, February 19, 1828.*

<i>M. de Rosambert (Colonel of Musketeers, Seigneur of the Village)</i>	}	Mr. Wrench.
<i>Edmund Beauchamp (a rich young Farmer, enamoured of Ernestine)</i>	}	Mr. Diddear.
<i>Colin de Trap (a wealthy Shepherd of the Village, in love with Madame Gertrude)</i>	}	Mr. Keeley.
<i>M. Le Notaire (Baillie of the Village)</i>	.	Mr. Evans.
<i>Oliver (Servant to Rosambert, and Trum- peter to the Regiment)</i>	}	Mr. Meadows.
<i>Ernestine Dormueil (an Orphan, adopted daughter of Dame Michaud, in love with Edmund)</i>	}	Miss Kelly.
<i>Dame Michaud (Widow of the Village Miller)</i>	}	Mrs. Davenport.
<i>Madame Gertrude (a young Widow, Mis- tress of the "True Lover's Knot" Inn)</i>	}	Miss Coward.
<i>Marcelline (Servant at the Inn)</i>	.	Miss Henry.

Ladies, Villagers, Servants, Guests, &c. &c.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

The Conductors of this Work print no Plays but those which they have seen acted. The Stage Directions are given from their own personal observations, during the most recent performances.

EXITS and ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. Door in flat; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R. means *Right*, L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left Centre*.

R. RC. C. LC. L.

••• The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage facing the Audience.

Performance Free.

THE SOMNAMBULIST.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Romantic Village in the Isle of Camargue, near Arles, Provence—the Farm-House of Edmund Beauchamp, and part of the picturesque Mill of Dame Michaud, L.—A Rustic lint, R, with the sign, "The True Lovers' Knot.—Madame Gertrude."—A Summer Pavilion, with windows down to the ground, adjoins the Inn.—A group of Mole and Female Villaetrs, who have been hay-making, discovered resting on the grass, taking their mid day meal—A bell is heard ringing from the Farm— Villagers rise up.*

Enter COLIN DE TROP.

Col. Holloa! what, idling still ? Dinner-hour is over, so I'd advise you to get to your work,—there's a great deal to do, and very little time to do it in.

Vils. (R.) We didn't want you to come and tell us that, Master De Trop.

Col. (L.) Didn't want me! nobody seems to want me ; I always appear to be one too many, and yet I'm not so very big, neither. I'm—but, no matter, I won't be vexed, about it—no, every body must be pleased now, for tomorrow our neighbour, Master Edmund Beauchamp, is to be married to the pretty orphan, Ernestine Dormeuil, worthy Dame Michauds adopted daughter; the contract is to be signed to-night, the Baillie will be here directly, and—Oh, dear ! Oh, dear! What a way talking of a wedding always does put me in ; but I'm such a loving soul, it's a shame and disgrace I should remain single—I needn't, that is if Madame Gertrude would but—eh ! here she comes.

Enter MADAME GERTRUDE from Inn, R.

Ger. Hey-day ! hey-day ! neighbours, why what's all this bustle about?

Col. La! now, Madame Gertrude, and do you pretend you don't know? If you would but let the Baillie kill two birds with one stone.—

Ger. Birds, Mr. De Trop ? I don't understand you—what birds?

Col. *Why,* turtles and doves ; you and I, Madame Gertrude, to be sure. There's nothing like striking the iron while it's hot, so here goes. [*Aside.*] In a word, Madame Gertrude, I'm young and able, and you're marriage-able—I want a wife, you want a husband, and—

Ger. Mr. De Trop !

Col. [*Aside.*] Ah, they always pretend they don't. But come, Mademoiselle Ernestine sets you a very good example.

Ger. Ernestine, indeed! a chit like her to think of marrying, and with Edmund, too, who might have had any woman in the village. Ay, I don't know that even I myself should have refused him—

Col. Then don't refuse me.

Ger. A pretty choice he has made, truly ; a girl with no fortune, no experience—but it's all Dame Michaud's fault, she shouldn't have encouraged the minx, and so I shall tell her.

Col. [*Aside.*] I've broken the ice—she seems very cool about it still, though.

Enter DAME MICHAUD from Mill, L. U. E.

Dame M. [*Comes down, c*] Well, neighbours, is the notary come yet ? Ernestine is all ready.

Ger. (R.) That I can well believe, dame. Nobody ever complained of her not being forward enough on any occasion.

Dame M. Forward ! why what do you mean, widow?

Ger. Neighbour! neighbour! you are to blame: these early marriages never come to any good—it is not at all proper—it don't look well, neighbour.

Dame M. Marry, now I think it's very proper. They are both young, he's rich, she's virtuous, they love each other; and, as for the match not looking well, they are the handsomest couple in the village, therefore it can't look better. [*Seeing Edmund.*] Ah! Edmund, my dear boy.

Enter EDMUND, from Farm, L. s. E.

Edm. (L.) Here I am, mother, all ready ; but what's this ! at work still, boys !—Fshaw ! hang work—no more work to-day. [*Exeunt Villagers, L. and R. U. E.—One lad and him alone remaining.*] And as lor to-morrow, it must be a general holyday; mind I invite all the village, —we must have no work then, eh, mother?

Dame M. [*Aside.*] By my troth, but there'll be a piece of work, though, if I know any thing of Madame Gertrude !—Eh ! here the Baillie comes !

Col. [*Looking off; R. u. E.*] Ah, it is the Baillie coming, sure enough ; what a way he does put me in ! He reminds one so of throwing the stocking, and the ring, and all that. Heigho ! how conjugal I do feel!

Enter the BAILLIE, R. U. E.—advances, c.—all bow and courtesy respectfully to him.

Bai. Good even, my children; I'm somewhat behind time, but I have been detained at the chateau, waiting the arrival of our new lord, Colonel Rosambert—a very amiable younj man, who is expected hourly.

Col. [*Looking at Baillie.*] Lord bless me, to think, now, that he could with a few words make us two one.—It won't bear thinking of.—Dear me! dear me! I keep growing more wifeish every minute !

Edm. What are we waiting for? Where is Ernestine?
Ernestine ! Ernestine! [*Calling.*]

Enter ERNESTINE hastily from the Mill, L.U.E.—She comes down R. of EDMUND.

Em. Dear, dear Edmund ! [*They embrace.*]

Ger. [*Aside.*] A forward hussy !—I shall expire with vexation!

Col. Oh, lord! oh, lord ! what a way it does put me in, to see them, to be sure !—I'm in such an all-over-ishness !—If Madame Gertrude, now, would but let me do so with her—dear me ! dear me! if weddings are such provoking things to mere lookers-on, what must they be to the parties concerned ?

Edm. Dear, dear Ernestine!—But let us not lose a moment—where is a chair for Monsieur, the Baillie ?

Ern. And the table for the papers—you know we have to sign the contract, Edmund.

[The Village Lad and Lass go into Farm, L.S.E., for the table, &c.

Col. [Running to join and assist them.] I'll get them, I'll get them: perhaps somebody may do the same kind of office for me, one of these days. Oh ! how I should like to be married!

[They place the table in c , and an arm-chair behind, for Baillie, who sits, produces his ink-horn and papers, and arranges them.—Colin, who is extremely officious, is, to his great chagrin, checked more than once in his good offices.—Omnes appropriately group round Baillie.

Bai. Now, then, all is ready; where are the contracting parties?

Edm. [Taking Ernestine's hand.] Here.

Bai. Edmund Beauchamp, what bring you in marriage with Ernestine Dormeuil?

Edm. My farm, my fields, my gold, my goods, all that I possess, all is Ernestine's.

Bai. And you, maiden ?

Ern. Alas ! sir, I can only give my heart, and that has long been Edmund's, and my dear mother's, who, without a mother's right, has bestowed on me a mother's love, has supported me from infancy, to whom I owe my life, my all!

Dame M. [Crossing to, and embracing Ernestine.] Good girl! good girl!

Col. This is too touching ! It melts my very soul: I was born for the wedded state—if Madame Gertrude would but---- it won't bear thinking of!—

Bai. Nothing now remains but to sign the contract. Dame Michaud, as the adopting mother and nearest friend of the bride, Ernestine Dormeuil, you will sign first

[Presenting the pen.

Dame M. Laws! your worship, what should a poor body like I do with writing,—I can only make my mark.

Bai. 'Twill be sufficient, it is good in law ; put your cross there. [Dame Michaud signs.

Col. [Looking over.] Why, dear me, you sign your name just exactly as I do mine, dame; but come, let me have a hand in the marriage, at all events.

Bai. Now the contracting parties.

[Edmund and Ernestine sign the contract,—Colin each time going to take the pen, but disappointed.

Col. [Taking pen.] Now then me! What an interesting moment !

Bai. [*Depriving Colin of pen.*] Madame Gertrude, as nearest neighbour of the affianced, you will witness their betrothals.

Col. [*With great mortification.*] Why, then, my turn will never come.

Ger. [*Speaking aside.*] I sign the contract of his marriage with another?—Ungrateful—after all that has passed—but I betray myself. [*She crosses to the table, signs, and goes back to R.*] There, may you never repent your union!

Edm. Thank you, thank you kindly, cousin. Come, come, we must still be friends.

Col. If that had been our marriage contract that she's signed—but it won't bear thinking of. Mr. Baillie, would you, as a very great favour, just let me put my scratch in the contract, if it's only on the back. I should like to have a finger in the pie.

Bai. Oh ! certainly—here, we'll put you in the left-hand corner.

Col. I shan't take up much room. [*Signs.*] Now I'm satisfied !

Edm. All then is completed, dearest! and we are affianced—to morrow we meet, never to part again. Now, friends, in to the farm, and taste my humble cheer; then for the song and dance. My wedding eve must not be passed in sadness—and to morrow—

[*The Village Lad and Lass removes table, &c. into farmhouse.*]

Col. Will be the death of me.—I shall never be able to live over to-morrow night! I'm convinced of it.

Bai. Madame Gertrude, give me leave—
[*Takes Madame Gertrude's hand, and, with much ceremony, conducts her into the Farm, L. s. e.—Dame Michaud and Villagers follow.—Edmund and Ernestine have retired a little up, R.—Colin stops, disappointed.*]

Col. Eh! why, if she isn't gone off with the Baillie, while I was standing, talking. Heigho ! what a way I am in.

[*Colin stands, L., lost in a reverie.—Edmund and Ernestine, imagining themselves alone, with evident satisfaction retrace their steps to the front of the stage.*]

Edm. (R.) Ernestine, my beloved Ernestine! now that, for a moment, we are alone, let us seize the golden chance, and—[*Sees Colin.*] Eh! Monsieur de Trop here ?

Excuse me, neighbour, but Ernestine and I—a little conversation—and—you—you know—are—

Col. Yes, I know, I'm Monsieur de Trop; I know who I am—I can take a hint—two is company, that is when they're going to be made one, but not afterwards: *three's* no company ! I know. I'll go and see if I can make one with Madame Gertrude. Heigho! was ever a little man so much in the way as I am? But it's all the fault of being single—single men are always in the way.—Heigho! I must get married !

[Exit Colin into Farm, L. S. E.]

Edm. My own, my only love ; now I can speak without restraint! Behold this ring, it was my mother's, the best of mothers—take it, you are now my affianced bride. *[Puts the ring on her finger]* Take this bouquet, too: the preparations for our nuptials will force me at timet to leave you; let it be my representative, let it remind you of him who has no memory of aught but you.

Ern. Dearest Edmund, I will place it next my heart; that heart, love, in which you reign supreme, alone !—Want may assail, the world look coldly on us, kindred may fail, and friends estrange ; but here is one, love, who can never alter.—Proof alike to wealth or woe, still fondly, truly thine!

Edm. 'Tis nobly said—one kiss to seal the vow!

Ern. To-morrow.

Edm. How ! do you refuse me ? cruel girl !

Ern. I will give it to your representative. *[Kisses bouquet.]* Now, then, are you satisfied ?

Edm. I must be, till I am wholly yours. My bouquet must take my kisses for me—but, once yours—

[Embraces her]

Enter MADAME GERTRUDE, from Farm, followed by COLIN.

They advance, L.

Ger. Very pretty, very pretty, indeed! such liberties before marriage ! I'm quite shocked to see such goings on!

Col. (L.) It gives me a bit of a turn.—I wish I had been in his place though, nevertheless. *[Aside]*

Ger. You, who pretend to be such a pattern of virtue ! such a mirror of modesty !—but I'll let all the village know of your doings, miss!

Edm. *[Crosses to Gertrude.]* Nay, nay, never frown, coz—come, come, you and Ernestine must be friends,

and so must we, too ; though you are not my wife, that's no reason you should be my enemy ; let us live in good fellowship, let us be united.

Col. Ah, do! Madame Gertrude, let us be united.

Edm. Come, come, give me your hand, and your's, Ernestine—nay, I must have it—still sullen—come, Ernestine, love, you must make the first advance, then!
[*Draws them together, and puts their hands in each other.*]

'Tis well done—now then, embrace!

Col. (L.) There's nothing but embracing! but deuce a hug do I get—Oh dear me! I wish this marrying business was all over, it quite upsets me. I shan't be myself again for a twelvemonth ! Why was I born so inflammable? but I'm for all the world like a tinder-box !

Edm. Nay, I insist on it, there.—[*Makes them embrace.*]
And now, then, to seal the reconciliation, and that there may be no jealousy at my embracing one and not the other, I'll embrace you both.

Col. And what am I to do? I'm like nobody again, I'm one too many here.—Oh, Colin de Trop! Colin de Trop !

Edm. You, my dear fellow! you must do the best you can; you must look on and see justice done. Now then, it's no use attempting to escape.

[*Embraces Ernestine and Gertrude.*]

Enter DE ROSAMBERT in a plain travelling dress, followed by OLIVER, L. U. E.

Ros. Holloa! what, two at a time ? Oh, this is really too bad ; share and share alike, is fair play all the world over.

Col. So it is, you're right there, Mister; but I've no share at all.

Ros. You are certainly very fortunate, friend, to be on such good terras with two such handsome girls at one time. A poor traveller like me would think himself too happy to be half so blessed.

[*To Edmond.*]

Col. I only want to be half so blessed, but I can't!

Edm. Rather familiar, methinks, for a stranger ! [*Aside*]
You'll excuse me, sir, but, as this is a family party, and we have not the honour of knowing you, may I ask your business ?

Ros. Faith ! I merely want to know the nearest road to the Chateau.

Edm. [*Going a little upstage and pointing off, R. U. E.*]

This way : you see 'tis written up, " Road to the Chateau."

Ros. Is it far ?

Edm. Two leagues.

Ros. Indeed, six miles! It is more than I had bargained for. I am somewhat fatigued, and-----

Edm. A fatigued traveller! Oh, that alters the case ; I shall feel but too happy if you will accept the hospitality of my humble farm ; we are somewhat crowded, it is true, for to-morrow I am to be married, but-----

Ern. *(Courtesying.)* Yes; with me, monsieur.

Res. Indeed! and this other Venus!

Col. She is not to be married at all —I wish she was; I am all ready—but it wont bear thinking of!

Ger. I, sir, thank heaven, am disengaged—am my own mistress, at your service, sir ! *[Courtesies.]*

Ros. Umph ! *[To Edmund]* I thank you for your offer, my good friend, but I will not put you out of the way. *[Looks and paints at Im.]* Here is an inn I see! I will stop here ! *[Edmund and Ernestine go up c.]*

Ger. With pleasure, sir—I can accommodate you "The True Lovers' Knot," sir. Here, Marcelline, Marcelline ! I say— *[Going towards Inn door]*

Ros. Eh ! the mistress! So much the better, I shall certainly not budge now.

Oli. *[Saluting Rosambert a la militaire, and speaking aside]* Sir, sir, attention ; they will be waiting for us at the Chateau—it grows late ! *[in a whisper]*

Ros. *[Also whispering.]* No matter, I shall stop here ! I am fatigued, and may not easily encounter better quarters !

Oli. But will they not be alarmed, at the Chateau ?

Ros. Well thought of—you shall go and prevent it! But hark e, sirrah! not a word over your cups, that I am the proprietor of the Chateau—I would remnin unknown—do you go and drink something for the good of the house, at my pretty landlady's ; then on to the Chateau—mind, sir, don't let me be disobeyed—I have my reasons !

Oli. I'll take care, sir!

Ger. *[To Rosambert.]* Will your honour take off your travelling-cloak ? Why, Marcelline, Marcelline, I say ; we're going to have a dance on the green here soon ; and, Marcelline ! why, where are you ! *[Calling.]*

Enter MARCELLINE, from the Inn, R.—courtesies to Rosambert, who gives her his cloak—she receives instructions from Madame Gertrude—Oliver (L.) observes her with satisfaction.

Oli. My colonel seems to have got into pretty comfortable quarters—I don't see why I should not have my share of the baggage; I've a great mind to attack this wench here; a well-directed fire from the eye-battery will do the business! *[Going towards Marcelline.*

Mar. *[Seeing Oliver]* Dear me, what a fine man—and how he is looking at me, surely! *[Aside.*
[Oliver chucks her under the chin, and exits with her into the Inn, R.

Enter DAME MICHAUD and BAILLIE, from the Farm, L.S. E.

Dame M. Now then, my friends. Eh! why, where are they all? Not here yet! mercy on me, we shall have it quite night, soon, and then the white phantom will be coming, or some mischief or other.

Ros. The white phantom?

Dame M. Ay, Sir Stranger, the white phantom!

Ros. Ha, ha, ha! every village has its ghost, I find.

Dame M. 'Tis no phantasy: we all of us have seen it

Col. That we have; I saw it with my own eyes walk out of that very door. *[Points to Partition, R.S. E.]* 'Twas about six times as high as our church-steeple, and broad in proportion.—I saw it peep over the house-top once!

Ros. There is certainly no disbelieving such evidence as that.

Dime M. That pavilion is its favourite haunt; we have all, at times, seen it there, walking about, sitting down, sleeping, and such like.

[Edmund and Ernestine advance on Rosambert's left hand.

Ger *[Aside.]* Provoking! and that pavilion I had designed for the stranger's chamber!

Ros. Now, all this makes me wish to pass the night in that pavilion—I should like much to encounter this same white phantom.—Pray, have you ever seen this redoubtable spectre, my pretty bride? *[To Ernestine.*

Ern. Never, sir!

Dame M. No, no, Lord help her! she has never seen it—how should she? she is always in bed when it appears!

Ern. I have often been in that pavilion till late, yet

never saw any thing to alarm me; it is a place I am more than usually partial to; I often dream of it.

Ros. My mind is made up—in that pavilion I pass the night.—But enough of the white phantom, for, see, here are visitors. *[Looking off, L. U. E.]*

Dame M. Ay, here they are, at last Now, then, for the sports.

Enter, L. U. E., Village Lads and Lasses.—Rural Ballet, "Colin Maillard."—The first party is caught.

Col. Lord, they're having all the fun to themselves, with this blind man's buff—Oh dear ! oh dear! let's join them—and, if Madame Gertude goes in, perhaps she may catch me, and then who knows what may come of it? I'll put myself in the way on purpose.

Edm. Ay, ay, Madame Gertrude shall go in.

Col. I'll blind her—dear me, to think that ever I should blind her.—Give me the handkerchief. *[One of the Villagers gives him a handkerchief.]* I've never taken such liberties before. *[Blinds her.]* Now then, are you sure you can't see any thing ?

Ger. Nothing!

Col. Then turn round three times, and catch who you may—once—twice—three times. *[Turning her, and standing aside, L.]* Now !

[Music—the ballet is resumed—Colin puts himself in the way, but Madame Gertrude disappoints him by running in another direction.]

Col. She won't catch me; oh dear! oh dear! she won't see me when she can, and now she can't, she will.

Ern. *[Running to Edmund, R.]* My dear Edmund, save me, save me, ! shall be caught!

Ger. *[Catches hold of Rosumbert.]* I've got you,—who is it ? you sha'n't get away !

Ros. Tis I, my pretty hostess, well caught; let me pay the forfeit

[He is about to kiss her, when she smacks his face.]

Ger. Excuse me, monsieur, the girls of this village are not so free as you seem to imagine.

Ros. Gad! they seem to be more free than I imagined.—I stand corrected, madame; the little prude!

[Aside.]

Col. How particular she is; I'm glad I wasn't caught so. *[Rubbing his cheek.]* Oh dear! *[Goes a little up, L.]*

Dame M. (L.) Some people are mighty precise in

public, methinks; more nice than wise, to my mind; I can't see what harm there could have been, in being kissed by a nice handsome young man like that—I'm sure I shouldn't have refused him. *Going a little up, c*] But come, my children, 'tis time to go ; you, my dear Ernestine, in particular, for I'm sure you hadn't a wink of sleep last night—all night long did I hear you walking up and down your chamber !

Ern. It must have been in my sleep, then, dear mother, for I can assure you I never woke till morning!

Dame M. Nay, nay, 'tis very natural, child; I was just as restless myself for a week before I was married : there, put this shawl round your shoulders, bid Edmund good night, and let us go to bed. Good night, friends, —we shall meet in the morning !

Ger. Well thought of—Marcelline, bring me a shawl!
[*Exit Marcelline, into Inn, R.—The stage, towards the end of the dance, and since, has been growing gradually dark—night approaching*] The night air strikes chill; a light for the stranger !—You still fix on the pavilion, sir, do you ? Beware of the white phantom!

Ros. That may be the least dangerous of the trials I may have to encounter.

Enter Marcelline, from Inn, R., with light and shawl
Where is that fellow Oliver ? I shall be glad to retire to rest, [*To Marcelline, who gives him the light*] Thank you, my good girl.

[*Exit Rosambert into Pavilion, R. s. E.*
Mar. He's not half such a gentleman as his man, though he is the master, and that I'll certify on his homily !

[*Marcelline is helping Gertrude on with her shawl, when a noise is heard in the Inn, R*]

Ger. What's that?

Mar. Oh ! that's only the stranger's gentleman, ma'am! —He's so genteel—and so tipsy !

Enter OLIVER, very tipsy, from Inn, R.

Oli. [*Staggering to c.*] The colonel's a cursed good fellow; I've just drank his health in another bumper ; though he is my master, he's a good soldier, and a kind gentleman; and I won't be his trumpeter for nothing, for I'll sound his praise every where—don't go—he's no reason to be ashamed of his name, so I sha'n't let him remain unknown any longer; he shall be treated with

proper respect, and so will I. I say, do you know who I am?

To Villagers,

Col. No.

Oli. I am a cursed good fellow, I'm a trumpeter.

Edm. Your own, apparently, my friend.

Oli. Do you know who my master is ?

Ger. No, friend, who is he?

Oli. He's a cursed good fellow, too ; he's your master.

Dame M.

} Our master ? how the man talks.

Baillie.

Oli. Yes, he's the new Lord of the Village, that you've all been expecting so long, and now he's come; but he's not gone, because I'm going to tell them at the Chateau he is not. He's Colonel Rosambert, and he's a cursed good fellow ; and I'm his trumpeter, and I'll drink his health in another bumper ! so come along, wench!

[Exit into Inn, with Marcelline, R.]

Ger. To think of this now—the stranger our new young lord, and I to treat him so rudely ; how shall I excuse myself? I must make amends and regain his favour.

Bai. And I must show my zeal and duty, by rousing all the servants and waiting on him by daybreak, with such of the neighbours as I can muster! *[Going up, R.U.E.]*

Dame M. And I—I shall go to bed—so, come, child.

[Going up to Mill, L u. E.]

Edm. [To Ernestine.] Good night, dearest; to-morrow—to-morrow, love !

[Exeunt Dame Michand into the Mill, with Ernestine—

Edmund into the Farm—Baillie, R.U.E.—Colin, L.

Madame Gertrude into Inn, R.—At they reach their destination, they each turn and repeat "Good night!"

SCENE II.—*Summer Pavilion of the "True Lover's Knot" Inn.—A Large Window in F., through which the Village is partially seen in the moonlight.—A temporary couch, prepared for the bed of Rosambert, near R s. E.—A large chair, c. a table near L.S.E.*

Enter OLIVER (with lighted candle), showing in

ROSAMBERT.

Oli. [Staggering.] This way, your honour; this is the pavilion—I'll show you—this is the way—follow me.

[Stumbling.]

Ros. I am much obliged to you, but I don't want to be on my nose ! You're in a fine condition, sirrah!— You've been spinning it out nicely, here, and now you will be pleased to reel it home to the Chateau. Take this note to my steward, Dubios, and see you are back with the answer the first thing in the morning. [*Crosses to L.*] Put your soberest foot foremost. Do you hear, sirrah!

Oli. Never fear, sir ! I shall go straight on ; I know the way. [*Reels*]. I shall go so quick, that I shall stagger—stagger belief. [*Staggers*] Oh Lord, here's the white phantom coming !

Enter COLIN, R. D. with candle—both hulloa, and, trembling, fall down on their knees at the same moment—Oliver scrambles off at R. door.

Col. I am in the way again ! that fellow takes me for a ghost—it's immaterial, I shall be a ghost soon, if Madame Gertrude don't—I dar'n't think about it.—I beg your honour's pardon, but I'm here, because—I—I—want to be married.

Rus. I am very sorry, my good friend ; but, not being either a priest or a woman, I don't see how I can be of any assistance to you in your want.

Col. Ah, sir! if you would but speak a good word in my favour to—to—it must out — Madame Gertrude—I wouldn't ask you, but she's so strict.

Ros. Strict! eh?

Col. Oh, Lord bless you, yes—she's a very dragon of Virtue! You must admire her prudence—remember the smack of the face she gave you.

Ros. I do.

Col. There was propriety for you. You'll speak about it, will you ?

Ros. I will. I won't promise you to do it this evening.

Col. That I'll be sworn you won't—you'll see no more of her to-night; she never speaks to a man after nine o'clock—ten in the summer; you wouldn't set her to put a foot in your chamber this evening,—no, not if you were to chop her into mince-meat!

Ros. I suppose not!

Col. No, no ; to-morrow morning will do ; but, I say, pop the question the first thing—don't forget—if you should but get her to consent, oh Lord! what a thing

it will be—I shall be too happy—I shall be—it won't bear thinking of ! [*Exit, R. D., with candle,—Stage dark.*]

Ros. Ha, ha! but, zounds! I'm all in the dark I here, my good fellow, tell the girl to bring a light. This young creature, Ernestine, has interested me, and shall profit by my good opinion : my prudish little hostess, too, so piquant, so provoking; I must know them further. I don't know how it is, but I'm always amatory on a journey. A post chaise is sure to make me poetical: my busy fancy conjures up a romance for every hovel I encounter; my imagination converts every passing girl, in a garret, into a rustic Venus. Let me prepare myself for the night, that I may be in readiness to receive the visit of this same white phantom, should she be inclined to favour me so far.—Oh, here's the light.

Enter MARCELLINE, with a light in a dirty flat candlestick, R. D.

Mar. [*Aside.*] To think, now, he should be our new lord !—I've brought you a light, please your honour's glory ! I were coming with it.

Ros. I thank you, my good girl; put it down, [*Marcelline goes upstage*] Amazingly polite of a sudden; they've got me into the coop, like a capon for plucking ; and now they are coaxing me to eat, I suppose.

Enter MADAME GERTRUDE, bearing two silver candlesticks, with wax candles.

Ger. Marcelline here ! impertinent baggage ! [*Goes up to the table and puts down the candles, then advances in c.*] How dare you bring his honour such a light as that? Leave the room, hussy ! [*Pushes Marcelline out of R door.*]

Ros. What, my pretty hostess come to visit me? so much for Mr. de Trop's dragon of virtue ! I foresee an adventure.

Ger. [*Courtesying.*] A thousand pardons, sir!

Ros. Eh! here's as great a change in the mistress as the maid ! You are very polite, madame.

Ger. Is there any thing your honour wishes for ?

Ros. There is, there is,—I wish to see you; I would talk with you, my pretty hostess. You must forgive the shock I offered to your virtue this evening, in so imprudently attempting to seize that favour in public which should have been reserved for a time and place more select.

Ger. Ah, Monsieur! can you forgive my boldness, my rudeness—I knew not what I did!

Ros. One lovely as you cannot do wrong; the little striking proof of your attention to appearances, with which you obliged me this evening, I shall remember only as a trait of one as piquant as she is charming,—What a form is this—

Ger. Monsieur!

Ros. I must and will have a kiss!

Ger. For heaven's sake, sir—

Rosambert attempts to kiss her—she resists, and endeavours to get away—he catches hold of her shawl to detain her—she escapes, leaving the shawl in his hand—vexed and disappointed, he throws the shawl over the back of a chair—Madame Gertrude evinces great indignation.

Ger. I must request, sir, you will abstain from these freedoms, which are as disagreeable as they are unexpected: from a soldier and a gentleman I had rather anticipated protection than insult.

Ros. Wheugh! here's a tirade of ultra-virtue! I have done, madame. I shall offend no farther.

[Goes up, c, and sits.

Ger. *[Retires slowly to the door; just as she is about to exit, she turns round.]* You—have—no further orders, then?

Ros. Eh! she won't want chopping into mince-meat, I see. *[Aside]* I shall conquer this dragon yet. *[Advances, R.]* Yes! I promised to speak to you in behalf of a suitor of your's—one of the bumpkins of the village, who aspires to the honour of your hand.

Ger. That odious Mr. De Trop;—could you, sir, think for a moment I could listen to such a lout!

Ros. I must perform my embassy!

Ger. I cannot listen to you.

Ros. Well, if you won't hear me in behalf of another, let me plead once more on my own account

Ger. That would be even more dangerous! I see you would persuade me against my better reason; knowing my enemy, I must guard against him. *[Stands with her ears.]* Now then, I'm prepared.

Ros. You mustn't be angry at what I'm going to say

Ger. I can't be angry, for I can't hear you!

Ros. When I ask you, if you can refuse me a kiss—

Ger. I can't hear you.

Ros. Silence means consent, they say.

Ger. I shan't speak !

Ros. Now's my time, then.

[As Rosambert kisses Madame Gertrude, a noise is heard as of something falling at the window in F.—She gives a faint exclamation of terror, and withdraws her hands from her ears.

Ger. That alarm ! good heavens ! some one is listening without—let me away—should I be discovered, I am ruined. *[Exit hastily, R. D.*

Ros. Provoking interruption ! at such an interesting moment—who dares—

[Rushes towards the window in F., the folding sashes of which are suddenly thrown open—ERNESTINE enters slowly, in a state of somnambulism, in a plain white night dress, with a chamber-candlestick in her hand—Rosambert, with astonishment, retreats quietly a little towards R.

Ros. *[In a half-whisper.]* What do I see? the white phantom! Good heavens! 'tis Ernestine ! She sleeps—can I believe my eyes ? Still there—'tis no delusion ! Let me observe her ; hush !

Ern. *[Placing the candle on table.]* I have not kept you waiting, have I? *[She appears to think herself before the glass, arranging her hair.]* I had to prepare my dress.—All here? Thank ye, thank ye, friends. Yes, now for the sports. *[Advances, c.]* Madame Gertrude shall go in ! tie the handkerchief tightly—take care she does not see: now, then, all is ready !

[Ernestine, by her a  imagines herself still playing at blind-man's-buff.—She crosses, R.

Ros. (L.) She thinks she is still engaged in the sports. I have heard there is danger in abruptly awaking persons in this state.—This, then, is the dreaded white phantom ! the village terror!

Ern. *[Clapping her hands, as in the game.]* Ah, she will catch me—Edmund, Edmund, save me!

[Catches hold of Rosambert's hand.

Ros. She takes me for her lover; shall I wake her ?

Ern. *[Clinging closely to Rosambert.]* She touched me! but with thee, dearest Edmund! I fear nothing ! Oh, how blissful is this moment!

Ros. She dreams that she is happy—I will not awake her!

SCENE II.] THE SOMNAMBULIST. 25

Ern. Come nearer, love—why do you avoid me ? you frown! What have I done? how have I offended you? Ah, you are jealous ! this young stranger,—this young officer!

Ros. Oh, the devil! I must awake her !

Een. Indeed, you have no cause—to me he has no charms !

Ros. [*Impatiently*] I must awake her!

Em. You are mine alone—yes, dear Edmund !

Ros. (R.) Sweet creature! Oh, that I had such a wife! I shouldn't like this wandering in her sleep, though.

Ern. Before all the world do I prefer thee, dear; come, sit down. [*Rosambert places a chair for Ernestine—she sits*] There, there is my hand; no one observes us; you can take a kiss ; now all is joy again.

[*Rosambert kisses her hand.*]

Ros. Egad ! this is a pleasant dream for me. But I must not wake her; let me shut the window, that no one may interrupt us.

[*Rosambert goes up to shut the window.*]

Enter MADAME GERTRUDE, softly, R. D.

Ger. Did you ring the bell ? [*Seeing Ernestine.*] What do I see ? a woman here ? perfidious man ! let me away. [*Exit, unperceived, R.D.*]

Ern. Ah! has the morning come so soon? All my friends assembled? kind, very kind! yet still I tremble—nay, I will be firm ; yet this solemn shrine, this sacred rite—[*Rosambert puts back the chair.*] No—no—I have not forgotten the ring—let the ceremony proceed, I will command myself.

Ros. [*Returning, L.*] What do I see? She believes the ceremony is performing !

Ern. Do I love Edmund, holy father? Oh, yes ' yes ! freely will I take the solemn vow! let us kneel. [*Kneels.*] Here, in the eye of heaven, I swear ! in sorrow, in sickness, in health, and in pleasure, for richer, for poorer, forsaking all other, to love, honour, and obey him!—Now, Edmund, I indeed am thine.

Ros. Poor girl ! can I be *the* rascal to destroy such innocence? No, no—Rosambert, thou art a giddy, gay fellow, but thou hast a heart to protect, not betray—no, no, thou must listen to the voice of honour, and, though a soldier, must retreat. [*Going up, c.*]

Ern. Thank ye, thank ye, friends—yes, I am very happy.

[Courtesies as if receiving the congratulations of her friends.]

Ros. My only safety is in flight—I'll fly while I can, then. *[Opens the window.]* The moon shines brightly, and will light me to my Chateau.—Adieu, poor Ernestine—your misfortune makes this chamber the temple of purity. Yes! yes! ill befall that man who would take advantage of a helpless girl, to rob her of her innocence and place.

[Exit window in F.]

Ern. We must go—where is my shawl? Thank you, thank you. *[Gets up—bows as if being helped on with Madame Gertrude's shawl, which, having been left on the chair, she throws over her shoulders.]* Adieu, adieu! come, Edmund—adieu, adieu! *[Courtesies, as if taking leave, and crosses her hands, as if to confine her shawl.]* Adieu, Madame Gertrude! adi—e—u! *[Slow music.]*

[Takes two or three steps backwards, and encounters the couch, R., prepared for the bed of Rosumbert—sits down on it, then places her arm beneath her head, reclines, and sleeps quietly.—The candles on the table, during the progress of the scene, gradually burn down, and expire—stage becomes dark.]

Enter BAILLIE, very cautiously, leading in EDMUND, DAME MICHAUD, and COLIN, at R. door.—Morning is now seen breaking through the window, and, during the remainder of the scene, the stage becomes gradually lighter.

Bai. Softly, gently, my children! Egad! this will be a rare surprise; our young lord little dreams of our stealing this march upon him.

Dame M. Mercy on me, Mr. Baillie, you take us by surprise, too! But how could you possibly think I could disturb Ernestine; you forgot that she is to be married this morning.

Bai. Odd so! so I did! Mr. Edmund, as principal tenant on the estate, it falls to your lot to deliver our congratulations on his lordship's arrival.

Edm. With all my heart: but you awoke me from the most delightful dream of my dear Ernestine.—I'm not very fond of disturbing people's rest;—however, here goes— *[Advances towards the bed, P..]*

Dame M. Ay, ay, don't let us lose any more time.

Edm. *[Seeing Ernestine, and starting.]* Gracious

heavens! can it be possible ? is vision true to me ? Ernestine ! and here!

Enter MADAME GERTKDE, R. door—she starts.

Ger. and Omnes. Ernestine !

Dame M. Nonsense—Ernestine is safe enough in the mill.

Col [*Going up to and looking at her.*] But it is her, though—and in a gentleman's bed-room—Oh, it won't bear thinking of.

[Comes back, L.

Edm. Demons of guilt and woe ! what means all this? Ernestine false! I've built my hopes of happiness on sand.—Oh fool! fool!—Awake, abandoned one! arouse, thou traitress!

Ern. [*Awaking and rising.*] Dear Edmund ! Ah, I have overslept myself. You wait, you come for me—I will be ready soon—all is prepared, dear love ! one moment, and-----

Edm. Never, specious Jezebel!—But *I* am fooled no longer—away, seductress.

Ern. What do I hear? [*Rubs her eyes*] What frightful dream is this? What means this riddle?

Ger. (R.) It means that some people are no better than they should be; and that, though the mask of youthful innocence may be a very good bait to cozen fools with, it is not infallible.

Dame M. (L.C.) Heaven defend me! how my poor old head turns round.—Ah, Ernestine, Ernestine, was it for this that I preserved and reared thee ?—Never did I think thou could'st have disgraced me thus, child !

Ern. 'Tis all a mist, one wild confusion ! Let me collect myself! [*Looking round.*] What place is this? ha! the stranger's apartment! [*Screams.*] Gertrude! neighbours! [*Appealing to each, they turn from her.*] Mother, dost thou, too, condemn me ? where shall I turn for refuge? Ah, Edmund! dear Edmund, thou wilt not desert me—thou wilt not reproach me !

[Going to Edmund.

Edm. Away, traitress! Darest thou ask succour from him thou hast made the victim of thy arts ! Away, away ! ere virtuous indignation, ere outraged faith, insulted honour, crush thee !

[Pushes her from him, L.

Ern. Gracious heavens ! What frightful phantasy is this? Edmund, dear Edmund, here on my knees—*[Going to him, and falling on her knees.]* thus lowly in the

dust—I beg—I entreat, implore—Ernestine, thy Ernestine ! thy love ! thy bride ! she, who never yet asked aught in vain, now humbly sues—spurn me—scorn me—dash me to the earth—but hear me—answer me—what have I done—how have I merited this treatment?

Edm. What dost thou in this chamber? speak to that !

Ern. Alas, I know not! I must have come here in my sleep!

Edm. No more! I'm proof to all your arts—sorceress ! enchantress ! [*Takes out the contract*] Thus I destroy the hated contract. [*Tears it.*] I renounce my vows, I withdraw my troth, I love you no longer—I hate you, I abandon you. [*Crosses, R., and goes a little up*] But, where is the author of this deadly ruin ? Give him to my vengeance! Ah, fled! the coward had not courage to brave the desolation he has made !

Col. (.L.) Oh, dear me, I'm glad now I'm not doing to be married ! If Madame Gertrude had served me in this manner—Oh, it won't bear thinking of!

Ger. Leave her to her fate; nobody, that has any regard for themselves, can pity, or pay any attention to her now.

Dame M. Then the more reason that somebody should do so,— Ernestine, child ! guilty or not guilty, thy old dame never will forsake thee !

Ern. My more than mother! [*Embraces her.*] Edmund! Edmund ! I am innocent; on my soul I am! let my tears, my anguish, plead my truth!

Edm. Never! my woes be on thy head ! my curse—ay, my curse, be on thy heart! [*Rushes out of R door.*]

Ern. Ah, it has struck home! I feel it here! Oh!

[*Ernestine falls into the Baillie's arms—Dame Michaud sets Madame Gertrude's shawl on the bed, which she takes up and surveys with astonishment—Colin and Madame Gertrude confer—tabetau—curtain falls.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A beautiful Landscape—In the background the Mill of Dame Michaud, the wheel of the Mill turned by a rapid stream, which serpentine across the Stage.—An Attic Window at the top of the Mill-House, looking out on a shelving gutter of tiles, from which a plank innects across the Wheel of the Mill, to a half ruined Wall, which supports the spindle of the Wheel.—A Rustic Bridge is thrown across the stream, L.—A temporary Orchestra prepared for the musicians on the R.—Garlands of flowers hang from tree to tree, with the letter E and ether emblematical devices, prepared for the nuptials of Edmund and Ernestine.—Music as the curtain rises.—Groups of Village Lads and Lasses in holyday dresses, are discovered finishing the preparations.*

Vil. Come, neighbours, we must bestir ourselves. Hang the garlands near the bride's door-posts; Edmund's are already decorated ; we shall do nothing, if we forget that.

Girl. No, no; happy Ernestine—her lot is fixed in peace and joy. *[Hangs up garlands.*

Vil. Now, then, hang up those ciphers, and then-----

Enter COLIN, L.

Col. Hang up yourselves, for there's no occasion for any ciphers at all; so you may walk off as soon as you like.

Vil. Why, what's the matter?

Col. The matter is, there'll be no marriage; so I shan't be the only person that's been disappointed in wedlock, the more's the pity, oh, dear!

Vil. No marriage !

Col. No; therefore you may just all of you undo what you've been doing as fast as you can—havr'n't you heard ?

Vil. No, what?

Col. Lord bless me !—But I forgot, you were asleep at the time. What ignorant people you are. However, since you are so very curious, the business is thin — Last night—what a delicate subject to touch upon -the intended bride, Ernestine—Oh, dear!—was found -it

won't bear thinking of—but, to come to the point at once—the seducer (our young lord, I'm sorry to say) escaped just in time to prevent murder. Ernestine was discovered and disgraced—Edmund has gone mad—Madame Gertrude has ordered the pavilion to be pulled down; there's to be *no* marriage, and you've all had your trouble for nothing.

Vil. What a shocking disappointment!

Col. Ah, it is, indeed; it won't bear thinking of. Dear me ! dear me ! Oh, lord, what a pretty confusion there will be, when it comes to be generally known: the people that are invited, the turkeys that are on the spit—how they'll all be disappointed. Dear me, here Madame Gertrude comes, I declare! She quite brings my heart in my mouth.

Enter MADAME GERTRUDE, L.

Ger. Eh! bless me, neighbours—why, what are you all doing ?

Col. Nothing; we're undoing.

Ger. Undoing ! by whose orders ?

Col. Nobody's ; we don't want any orders : as there's to be no marriage, of course, there's no occasion for any garlands.

Ger. And how do you know there's to be no marriage ?

Col. What, have Ernestine and Edmund made up matters, then ? Well, I'm glad of that, with all my heart and soul. It shows that Edmund has as good a head as he has a heart, and that Ernestine is, what we always took her to be, a good girl.

Ger. You still take her part, then. I've no patience with such a little coquette entrapping the whole village . there is no such thing as keeping a sweetheart for her, any how. I thought she'd be found out at last; but you are mistaken, Mr. DeTrop : it is not Ernestine Edmund is about to marry—though there is to be a wedding, she is not going to be the bride! No, no ; Edmund has chosen another—he is wise. The best way to be revenged on one faithless fair one is always to marry another.

Col. Another faithless fair one! have two! Why, that will be out of the frying-pan into the fire. It won't bear thinking of.

Ger. There's no fear of Edmund's choice proving unfaithful, I can answer for her.

Col. You know her, then ?

Ger. I do; but I am bound to keep her secret,—so I shall not deprive you of the pleasure the surprise will occasion you. But, this change occurring so suddenly, the new bride is not exactly provided with every thing necessary for the nuptials. She wants a few purchases made, and has commissioned me to procure her a messenger to Tarascon ; she wishes for the articles specified in this paper, [*Gives a paper to Colin.*] the bridal garter, the bouquet, the veil, and gloves. Now, knowing your predilection, Mr. De Trop, for every thing connected with wedlock, if you would but-----

Col. Lord bless me! I buy a bride's garter! Oh, it won't bear thinking of. Give me the paper, I'll go directly— what a way it does put me in. I can't help being sorry, though, for this poor Ernestine, poor young creature,—every thing so near being settled, and then to be disappointed,—it's very tantalizing.

Ger. What have we to do with it? You go and execute your commission.

Col. I'll go directly—only one word more: I beg pardon, Madame Gertrude, but—but-----

Ger. Execute your commission faithfully, and I promise you, on your return, that you shall be put out of your misery.

Col. she never said so much to me before. I'm wanted, too ; I'm not in the way now, and that's another comfort ; the wedding can't take place without me—there's a thing to think of—what a way it does put me in. I'll go directly.

Ger. Ay, ay ; let us all be off, for I see Ernestine coming.

Col. [*Blubbing.*] Poor young thing, I declare it quite makes me weep to think of it. In fact, it won't bear thinking of. I'm going—poor young thing. Oh, oh, oh, what a way it has put me in ! [*Exit, R.*]

Ger. Poor dolt! he little thinks—now comes my hour of triumph. Let me away. Come, friends.

[*Exeunt Gertrude and Villagers, L.*]

Enter DAME MICHAUD and ERNESTINE from the Mill.

ERNESTINE seems plunged in the deepest anguish—her hair dishevelled, and her whole appearance disordered.

Dame M. (R.) Nay, nay, take not on thus, child! Bear

up; what's done can't be undone, and we should look forward to better things. Be of good heart, then. Marry, let the worst come to the worst, there are more men than one in the world.

Ern. (L.) My dearest mother, in vain you would console me—am I not disgraced—deserted? Behold these nuptial preparations; the sight of these redoubles all my misery. He has abandoned me unjustly! Yes, dear mother, I swear, however appearances may condemn me, neither in thought, word, or deed, can I reproach myself! Indeed, indeed, I cannot!

Dame M. I believe it, dear girl.

Ern. Do you believe me innocent? Do you still love me?

Dame M. I do—I do.

Ern. [*Throws herself in the Dame's arms, and weeps bitterly.*] My more than mother, I am not wholly lost, then.

Dame M. No, no; surely not, surely not. Unfortunately, my believing is of no use—it is Edmund, it is the world, you must convince. Ah, he comes. Courage! courage, child!

Enter EDMUND, L.U. E., sad and thoughtful—he does not see Ernestine and the Dame but walks moodily down the stage, and sits in a chair, L.

Ern. I tremble!

[*They retire up a little, R.*

Edm. All is over. Her guilt has wrecked my happiness—she has no further business for me, now; and this desolation is her work—she, in whom I'd garnered up my all of good on earth. Oh, damned perfidy!

[*Takes his handkerchief and covers his face to hide his emotion.*

Ern. Look, mother, look! you see he is unhappy? he weeps, he loves me still! dare I approach? [*Advances with hesitation.*] Edmund, Edmund! 'tis Ernestine who speaks—Oh, answer!

Edm. [*Looking up*] Wretch!

Ern. Kill me not with those looks of hatred! What have I done?

Edm. [*Rising.*] Dar'st thou ask that? Can'st thou forget? Recall thy treachery of last night—go, traitress, I loved thee, I adored thee, and thou hast betrayed me! The love that was yesterday my pride, my happiness, is now my misery, my shame. Still thou shalt not wholly triumph: though injury may not root thee from

my heart, duty shall weed thee from remembrance. To-day,---yes, this very day, will I seek to forget thee, in the arms of another.

Ern. [*Sinking on her knee, c*] Edmund, dearest Edmund!

Edm. Away!

[*Casts her from him, and falls into chair, L.—She leans her head against a tree, R.—Lively music.*]

Enter, R.U.E., Lords and Ladies, OLIVER, Musicians, Servants in rich liveries Girls with nuptial presents, Villagers, &c., then ROSAMBERT richly dressed in full uniform—The Villagers offer their congratulations to Rosambert as he passes, who courteously salutes them.

Ros. I thank you, friends, and return your good wishes heartily ; put down the bridal presents at Dame Michaud's door. [*Servants place the presents at door, R.U.E.*] That is their place of destination. It is on this spot they tell me the marriage fete will be celebrated—and, no doubt, they'll not be long before they begin. I did well to seek the Chateau last night! Virtue ever repays itself? Eh, what's this ? [*Seeing Edmund and Ernestine.*] Surely, it can't be? but, by Jove, it is, though—the young couple, as I live—the bride in tears, and the bridegroom not a word to say for himself.—What means all this?—here's something wrong here. By your leave, friends. [*He motions the Guests, Servants, &c, to depart, who exeunt, R. u. E.*] Holloa! my good friends—quarrelling before marriage! What, in the name of love and Hymen, means all this?

Edm. [*Rises.*] Ha! that voice! 'tis he! he who has destroyed my hopes.—Seductive villain! [*Aside.*]

Ern. The stranger—he will speak for me.—Oh, sir ! you know if I am guilty — defend me from the jealousy, the fury, of this cruel man—they found me in your chamber—they charge me (can I speak it?) with falsehood—to my faith, my honour ! In your chamber, 'tis true, I was—how I came there, I know not; you, sir, may explain this fatal mystery !

Ros. Ha, ha, ha! I see it all—is that it? I can soon clear all that up. It is indeed true, friend Edmund, that Ernestine was last night in my chamber, and, more than that, I was there too, and at the same time !

Edm. Said I not so?

Ros. Not so fast; hear me out—do not mistake me ;

she was there unconsciously. She entered my apartment through the window, and, while locked in the most profound sleep, she came, like some enchanting vision ! but virtue slept not, if she did ! That, as a soldier, do I swear ! her beauties, her graces, moved me—the time, the scene, was dangerous ; I saw my only safety was in flight—I fled.

Edm. How, sir, do you pretend—

Ros. Yes ; on my honour, as a gentleman—I saw and respected her innocence, her helplessness. Ernestine is a sleep-walker, is the identical white phantom you warned me of, and who has so often scared you all.

Edm. Enough, sir ; your story is sufficiently plausible, I must confess—but it deceives not me.

Ern. Edmund !

Edm. I'll hear no more !

Em. You see, sir, he spurns conviction. I am condemned unheard, and will suffer uncomplaining.

[Going towards the Mill.]

Edm. Stay !

[Crossing to her, and seizing her by the arm.]

Ern. *[Eagerly.]* Ah, you would speak to me ?

Edm. Yes ; all is arranged with her whom *I* have selected. She loves me, she will be faithful to me. I have given her my heart and my troth. But you, false ingrate ! thus I recall my vows—this pledge of love and truth, this honoured relic of a sainted mother, it must not longer be disgraced thus by the wearing of a wanton.

[Seizes the hand of Ernestine, and takes from it the ring he has given her.]

Ern. Ha ! mother—my ring, my ring ! —Cruel, cruel Edmund !

[Throws herself into the arms of Dame Michaud, who bears her into the Mill, R.U.E.]

Ros. Impetuous man ! but I must repair this mischief ; how can I convince this madman ? Edmund, honour speaks the language of freedom : you have been deaf to reason ; deler this ill-advised marriage ; time will disclose my truth ; I pardon your haste, your impetuosity ; but believe in the word—in the honour, of a soldier.

Edm. You speak in vain, sir. I will no longer delay the only vengeance in my power—another shall have my hand.

Ros. And who is she, may I ask ?

Edm. The most modest and most virtuous of the vil-
lage—one who long has loved me ; but behold her.
[Crosses to c.

*Enter MADAME GERTRUDE, L., in a bridal dress, followed
by MARCELLINE, a la cauchoise.*

Ger. Edmund ! Cousin ! all is prepared.

Ros. How, Madame Gertrude !

Ger. [Aside] Ha! our new lord—should he betray
me. *[Crosses to him, and puts her finger on her lip, to
implore silence, unobserved by the others, then makes a
low reverence.]* Welcome, seigneur ! welcome!

Ros. Now, shall I expose this prude? I feel plaguily
inclined—but yet, a lady's secret—no, I must be silent.
[Aside] Is this, then, the object you have selected to
supply the place of Ernestine ? *[To Edmund.]*

Ger. [Interrupting.] Dear Edmund ! I ever loved you ;
often in boyhood have you sworn true faith to me—but
I only kept the vows we plighted. Your's was a fickle
heart: still, fate forbids our parting; and the loss of an
inconstant restores you to your truth.

Ros. [Aside] Wily coquette!

Ger. It was I, monsieur, whose humble inn you ho-
noured with your presence yesterday.

Ros. I have not forgotten it, my piquant hostess.

Ger. I trust, sir, there was nothing in my manner of
receiving you, to leave room for reproach.

Ros. Be assured, madam, it is not I who will play
the traitor !—Truly these lovers are strange creatures :
this young man, now, will not believe in the innocence
of Ernestine, yet he places implicit confidence in the
modesty of this coquettish hostess. *[Aside.]*

Voices without, R. U.E.. Ha, ha, ha !

Edm. Ah, our friends grow impatient for the nuptials
—we delay too long. *[Music.]*

*Enter OLIVER, at the head of Musicians, R. U.E., Villagers
following.—The Musicians take their seats in the Or-
chestra.*

What are we waiting for ?

Oli. Why, for the bride, pretty Ernestine, to be sure !
There can be no marriage without the bride—where is
she!



THE SOMNAMBULIST. [ACT II.

Edm. (L.) The bride is here. [*Pointing to Gertrude.*

Oli. Eh, zounds ! if there isn't my Marcelline as fine as a peacock's tail. I must wheel round to her.

Edm. Come, friends, to the church : Gertrude is queen of the fete, to-day ; let her initials grace the scene, and not this traitress, Ernestine's.

Oli. Going to have the landlady for his wife ! I won't sanction it!

Edm. Strike up, musicians !

Oli. Don't: I'm leader of the band, and I forbid you. I came here to play for the wedding of pretty Ernestine, and, if she an't to be the bride, blow me, if my trumpet shall sound a note for all the landladies in France ! And no pipe, no dance, you know.

Ger. Insolent coxcomb ! but that shall not delay us. Let us proceed without music.

Oli. Yes; and you'd go on, as you begin.

Mar. (L.) I'm glad trumpeter gentleman has taken missus down a peg, that I am.

Oli. On second thoughts, you sha'n't go without a flourish ; but it shall be one the wrong way, though.

[*Aside.*—*Discordant flourish.*

Enter DAME MICHAUD from the Mill, R.U.E.

Dame M. Hush, friends—softly—softly ! poor Ernestine has just fallen asleep. Unhappy child! it is a sad sleep for her, but it will at least lull her sorrows for awhile; she has but too much need for rest, heaven knows, after the trials she has endured to-day.

Edm. (L.) I would not willingly disturb her, faithless as she is ; let us proceed in silence, friends.

Dame M. (R.c.) Proceed, where?

Ger. (L.c.) To be married, to be sure: to the church. Where should we go ?

Dame M. Married! with whom?

Edm. With Madame Gertrude, my affianced bride.

Dame M. Mercy on me! is it for *her*, you have forsaken Ernestine ?

Ger. Yes ; he was attached to me before, and you surely wouldn't have him marry one who goes at night to the chamber of a stranger. [*Pointedly.*

Dame M. Can I believe my ears?—*You* accuse her? The world's turning upside down !—*You*—*you* accuse my child—then there is no occasion for me to conceal anything longer.—No, no; I'll follow your example.

[Takes a shawl from her pocket.] This shawl, that I found last night in the chamber, on the couch of Monsieur there, to whom does it belong?

Edm. To Ernestine, of course.

Dame M. Not it, indeed,—no, its owner is a person a great deal more grave, more precise, more cautious, than my poor child.—It belongs to Madame Gertrude.

Omnes. Madame Gertrude!

Dame M. Yes, to the virtuous, modest Madame Gertrude. I appeal to the honour of our new lord, if this is not the fact?

Ros. [Aside.] Good bye to Madame Gertrude's pretensions; the murder's coming out.

Ger. [Aside] Fatal disclosure! I see that I have lost him.

Oli. [Advances on Gertrude's R.] Do you want any music, now? *[Retires back.]*

Ros. [Aside.] I am glad the discovery has been made without my agency; now I maybe able to clear this poor Ernestine, without betraying Madame Gertrude's secret. Edmund, again let me assure you, Ernestine is innocent. *[Ernestine appears at the window of the Mill.]*

Edm. What proof have I of that?

Ros. What proof? ha! your own eyes. *[Turns suddenly towards the Mill, and sees Ernestine.]* Look!

[Edmund &c. turn towards the Mill, and perceive, with horror, Ernestine, who has come out of the garret window, in her sleep, with a candle in her hand, and is walking along the gutter to the right; just as she gets to the extremity, and appears in danger of being dashed to pieces, she seems suddenly to recollect herself, and proceeds to the left, placing her foot on the board, which forms the awning of the wheel—it gives beneath her steps with a smart crash—she drops the candlestick and pauses for an instant—the wheel is turning rapidly round, and threatens to crush her to atoms, should she make a false step—Edmund is about to utter an exclamation of alarm, and fly to her assistance, when Rosambert puts his hand before his mouth and stops him.]

Ros. Hold, hold! what would you do? A word, and you destroy her; silence, and she may escape.

[Edmund, Gertrude, Dame, &c. sink on their knees in terror, and offer up prayers for Ernestine's safety—she slowly, but safely, makes her way across]



THE SOMNAMBULIST. [ACT II.

the plank, and descends gradually by the ruined wall, a part of which gives beneath her feet; she then advances to the front of the Stage, c.; nothing being heard all the while but the cogs and mill-hopper and the roaring of the mill-stream.

Ern. He has deserted me, and gives his hand to another, and for ever forsakes his wretched, but innocent Ernestine.—We should have been so happy, too—so dearly as I loved him—still, cruel as he is, he shall have my prayers! My poor ring, it is mine no longer; but he has not robbed me of all—the gift he gave me for remembrance ! Alas, I needed none, for he is ever here ! [*Laying her hand on her heart.*] His image is graven on my heart! Yes, here is the bouquet. [*Takes the bouquet from her bosom.*] It has faded, like my fortune ; its leaves have fallen, like my hopes ; my tears may refresh it! no one sees me, there cannot be a crime in this. [*Kisses the bouquet.—Bells are heard in the distance.*] Hark! the bells! he is being united to another! [*Falls on her knees.*] Bless him! Bless him! May he be happy ! There is no more happiness for me—no, only misery, misery. [*In a subdued tone of half stifled agony.*

Edm. [*Supporting Ernestine.*] Idiot! madman! that I have been ! How could I ever doubt her ?

Ros. Hush!

Ger. (L) All envy, every unkind thought yield to a love like this; take your promise—Edmund, I yield up all my claims, my hopes. Repair the injury you have wrought, and make her happy with your future love!

Edm. [*Kneels by her.*] I will, I will, cousin !—Yes, I can hold no longer. How has my heart been abused ! Let me, with this ring, give back my love, my faith !

[*Puts the ring on the finger of Ernestine, who appears lost in meditation.*

Ros. [*On Ernestine's R.*] That is not all, there is something more yet to be done. Come hither, girls. [*Two Girls with the wreath, come, R.*] And here, mother, these gifts trust to their original purpose. [*Gertrude and Dame Michaud, by Rosambert's direction, hastily attach the nuptial veil and wreath of white orange flowers to the head of Ernestine.*] Now, then, the wedding bouquet. [*They attach the bouquet to her breast.*] And now your hand in hers, Edmund. [*Edmund takes her hand.*] And now, then, musicians, strike up!

Oli. Ay, strike up, lads ! all's right now!
 [*Grand Flourish.—Ernestine awakes; and is, for a few minutes confused and lost in surprise.*]

Em. What means all this ? Is it not some deceitful dream ? some trick to mock me ! ah, Edmund ! and at my feet—my mother, too ! This bridal dress ! my friends !
 O— it cannot be a dream ! preserve me, heaven ! Ah, my ring ! my ring ! No, no ! it is no dream ; I am awake, am happy !

[*Falls, with an hysterical cry of joy, into Edmund's arms.*]

Edm. Yes, dearest Ernestine, it is indeed reality—all is cleared up !

Ros. Ay, Ernestine, our justification has been public and complete ; we have been found not guilty !

Ger. And, whatever you may think, entirely to my satisfaction.

[*All retire up but Rosambert and Madame Gertrude.*]

Ros. I believe you—you are too pretty not to be good sometimes. And now, there only remains one thing. Poor Monsieur deTrop ; eh, madame ? I must not refuse the interest I pledged myself to exert for him. Eh, here he comes ! and, for once in his life, not unwished for—he is not Mr. One-too-many this time.

Enter COLIN DE TROP hastily, R., with Bouquet, &c.

Col. (R.) Here I am, Madame Gertrude, here I am. I hope I'm not too late ; I've run every step o'the way. and a pretty heat I'm in. I've got the bridal garter, and the veil, and the bouquet, and the wreath of orange-flowers, and—dear me, what away I'm in.

Ros. (c.) You have come in good time, Monsieur de Trop ; Madame Gertrude was waiting for you. I have performed my promise, I have spoken a good word for you—behold your bride.

[*Presenting Madame Gertrude, who crosses to Colin.*]

Col. Eh ! what ! is it indeed so ? and an't you joking ? Oh, dear me ! Am I to marry—am I to have a wife—am I to be her husband ? Madame Gertrude !

Ger. (L.) I must obey the orders of our new lord, Monsieur de Trop.

Col. Ah ! I thought he'd do the business for me !
 [*Embracing her, and afterwards seeming ready to faint at the boldness of the act.*]

Ros. All, then, is settled. Edmund, henceforth let

not sleep deceive you ; be constant, and your happiness will be complete.

Ern. Sleeping or waking, if I still retain the good opinion of my friends, I shall be happy; but, if I should unfortunately have incurred their displeasure, I would wish never to have awakened again—

Your anger, friends, would make me weep:
For the effect, then spare the cause;
Your frowns I would avoid in sleep,
And only wake to your applause.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE
FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

COL, GER. ROS. DAM,  ERNES. EDM. OLIV. MAR.
R.] [L.]

THE END.