

**The devil to pay, or, The wives metamorphosed : a comic opera in two acts
/ by Charles Coffey ; revised by Colley Cibber.**

Contributors

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THE DEVIL TO PAY;

OR, THE WIVES METAMORPHOSED:

A COMIC OPERA IN TWO ACTS,

By CHARLES COFFEY.

(REVISED BY COLLEY CIBBER.)

PRINTED FROM THE ACTING COPY,

With Remarks, by D.-G.

A Description of the Costume, cast of the Characters, Entrances and Exits, Relative Positions of the Performers, and the whole of the Stage Busines, as now performed in the THEATRES ROYAL, LONDON.

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A Drawing taken in the Theatre
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MR. R. CRUIKSHANK.



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The Devil to Pay.

Jobson. Dar'st thou dispute with me, thy lord and master? Get in and spin, or else my strap shall wind about thy ribs most comfortably!

Act I. Scene 1.

85377.

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REMARKS.

The Devil to Pay.

THIS drama has undergone a variety of transformations from a variety of hands. "The Devil of a Wife" (its origin) was written by Thomas Jevon, (brother-in-law of Dryden's Mac-Flecknoe) an obscure playwright of the reigns of Charles II. and James II.; who borrowed it from the story of Mopsa, in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*. In 1730, it was turned into an opera by Coffey and Mottley, and called *The Devil to Pay*. Theophilus Cibber then reduced it into one act, omitted the part of a non-conforming priest, which had given some offence, and spoke a flippant prologue to it. From that period, the alterations have been merely verbal, to suit the decorum of succeeding times.

It was in *Nell* that the admirable Kitty Clive (*Garrick's Pivy!*) first gave earnest of her comic powers; and Harper, a joyous, jolly-faced comedian, (of whom a scarce and capital mezzotinto engraving exists in this very character) was wonderfully popular in the psalm-singing cobbler. *Nell* and *Jobson* have always produced great mirth on the stage.

The wisdom of our ancestors, of which we are too apt to speak in irreverent disparagement, invented a pair of stocks for the tongue of a shrew;—in such horror did those lovers of peace and quietness hold the unlicensed wagging of that riotous member. This ancient machine is now only to be found in the cabinets of the curious. The stocks are gone, and tongues are fast going! Necessity is the mother of invention: the remedy that comes readiest to hand, is adopted in an emergency; the strap might be beneficially applied, while the stocks were putting on. Hence the former instrument of coercion became the popular one: strap-oil was discovered to be an excellent cure for superabundant chin-music; and the matrimonial barrel was not unfrequently hooped ten times a day, when such vigorous and too-powerfully-refreshed cobblers as *Goodman Jobson* flourished the retributive leather at their own sovereign will.

Nell, who has been but three weeks wedded to her cruel cobbler, endures his tipsy humours, labours hard, fares ill, and gets little to her back but the oil in question; yet, in spite of this anointing, she is a patient, obedient drudge, and is fain even to love the brute that bastes her. *Lady Loverule*, an imperious termagant, drives her husband, a hospitable country squire, half out of his senses with her tyranny; yet she feasts luxuriously, rustles in silks and satins, lolls in her coach, and reposes on a bed of down! Grand doings are

to be at the hall; 'tis carnival time, for my lady is abroad! A blind fiddler, a most sovereign bowl of punch, and a ball, are to celebrate high-life-below-stairs, among butler, cook, footman, and maids.—Jobson is invited; but poor Nell is obliged to put up with a tester for ale and apples, that she may rejoice in lamb's-wool and solitude at home. In the height of their revels, my lady's alarum rings through the house;—all is helter-skelter among the jovial crew; the reeling butler pleads the custom of holiday—a vile, popish custom! and gets a cuff for his pains; the waiting-maid's two ears (arrested in a jig!) are nearly twisted off by a pull; the cobbler, hiccuping a canticle, and grimacing hard to look pious, is clawed into sobriety; and the blind fiddler's squeaking treble is cracked about his sconce. In the heat of this uproar, a travelling conjurer, benighted and sharp-set, craves the hospitality of Sir John; but neither devil nor conjurer have power to restrain the virago. He, too, is sent to the right about in double quick time, happy to escape in a whole skin.

A far different reception awaits the wizard at the cobbler's cottage, whither he had been directed by the hen-pecked knight. He is pressed by his kind hostess to mend his draught of home-brewed; and, grateful for her simple hospitality, he offers to tell her fortune. 'Tis a face, none of the cleanest, but a pretty one; and the lines are good-humouredly distinct, to augur great things for the owner. She shall soon be the happiest woman in the county, and ride in her own coach! Let us see how the cunning-man keeps his word.

A brace of familiars—(we laugh at magic now-a-days, yet affect to be serious upon craniology!)—dutiful spirits, who attend the conjurer on his rounds, are summoned to exercise their art upon the cobbler's wife, and the termagant, by transforming them into each other's likenesses, and conveying them, in a storm of thunder and lightning—the shrew, in her linseywoolsey gown, callico hood, and red baize petticoat, to Jobson's truckle-bed; and Nell, in her silken robe, long flounce, and train, to the sarsnet couch of Sir John, redolent of roses and violets. This command is obeyed. Nell, undisturbed by the nasal drone of the cobbler's bag-pipe, revels in delightful dreams, and wakes to a thousand sweet scents that breathe of Elysium! She must have died last night, and gone to heaven! My Lady Termagant, when her eyes open upon ragged curtains, coarse rug, and canvass sheets, opines she is at the other place, her tantrums have so often introduced upon earth! What a blissful change is miraculously wrought in the mansion of Sir John! Instead of "hussy!" and "jade!" 'tis "child!" and "sweetheart!"—a shoe heaved at the head, an eye blackened, or a tooth knocked out, 'tis "some small beer, honest man, and a rasher on the coals!" Nor is the knight less in wonder and ecstasy than his household;—he fervently prays that it may last for life!

There are contrary doings at the cobbler's crib.—Jobson's morning chant having disturbed the delicate ears of my lady, she roughly demands what impudent ballad-monger has dared to break:

her slumbers; and, calling for her servants, bids them toss the chorister in a blanket. Her wonder is increased when she looks round the hovel, and contemplates her greasy helpmate. Jobson, too, is not a little astonished at the boldness of his rib, who hitherto had opposed nothing but passive obedience to his ill-humours. Conceiving, however, that the conjurer has made her mad as well as tipsy, he has recourse to the infallible leather, and straps her, till she breakfasts on humble pie, and offers to do his bidding!

Open house and merry-making are to celebrate the ratification of peace at the hall; and the cobbler, without whose junketting co-operation nothing can be done in the way of drinking, is to lead the sports, and send home sobriety reeling. But my lady, resolving to blow up this wicked plot—for she is as yet unconscious that the conjurer has charmed away her identity as well as her fine clothes—follows close behind. Hearing the sounds of mirth, and beholding a troop of laughers, she breaks out so much after her old fashion, that the butler threatens to turn the mad woman out of doors; and the footman proposes to cool her courage at the pump! Her every-day frolic of cuffing and cap-pulling is repeated with fresh vigour; till, beholding Nell, tricked out in her own gown and petticoat, she looks in the glass, and stares with amazement at her strange metamorphosis! Nor is poor Nell without her fears, when, flourishing his strap, the cobbler enters; for she, too, is not aware that her features, dress, and condition, have undergone the like transformation. The re-appearance of the conjurer, in a fit of compunction for the hoax, and asking pardon on his knees, dissolves the charm.—Sir John beholds the delightful vision melt into air; and hears the jarring sounds of discord that once rattled in his ears, ringing him back into consciousness! Fate has, however, ordained him a happier fate: the cobbler's remedy has worked wonders; her ladyship has been strapped into reason and good humour; Jobson gets five hundred pounds for laying it on; and Nell (in consideration of the miracle) is made a present of her fine clothes.

Mrs. Jordan and Bannister (Nell and Jobson) always crammed the theatre to suffocation, in this farce. It was Thalia's favorite character; and Jack (vast as was his comic spirit) had quite enough to do to play up to her. The veteran Downton, whose recent return from America (November, 1837) the lovers of the legitimate drama will hail with satisfaction, is a very capital Jobson.



D.—G.

Cast of the Characters,

As performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 1827.

<i>Sir John Loverule</i>		Mr. Mercer.
<i>Butler</i>	}	<i>Servants to Sir John..</i>
<i>Cook</i>		
<i>Footman</i>		
<i>Coachman</i>		
<i>Jobson (a Cobbler)</i>		Mr. Dowton.
<i>Doctor</i>		Mr. Thompson.
<i>Lady Loverule</i>		Mrs. Orger.
<i>Lucy</i>	}	<i>her Maids</i>
<i>Lettice</i>		
<i>Nell (Jobson's Wife)</i>		Mrs. Davison.

Tenants, Servants, &c.

SCENE—a Country Village.

Costume.

SIR JOHN LOVERULE. — Green or red hunting frock-coat — buff waistcoat — white cord breeches — top-boots.

BUTLER. — A suit of black.

COOK. — White jacket, pantaloons, apron, and cap.

FOOTMAN and COACHMAN. — White livery coats and waistcoats — black velvet breeches.

JOBSON. — Black patched waistcoat, with worsted stocking sleeves — red plush breeches — gray stockings — old shoes — leather apron and strap — little old hat.

DOCTOR. — Black suit — Oxford scholar's hat and gown — gray beard.

LADY LOVERULE. — *First dress:* Blue satin pelisse — hat and feathers — whip, &c. *Second dress:* The same as Nell's first dress.

LUCY. — Spriged muslin gown — green French apron — kerchief and cap.

LETTICE. — Pink muslin gown — black apron — white kerchief and cap.

NELL. — *First dress:* Chintz gown — red petticoat — check apron — white kerchief and cap. *Second dress:* White muslin, with pink ribbon — long flounce and train.

THE DEVIL TO PAY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Jobson's House.*

Enter JOBSON and NELL, R. —

Nell. (R. c.) Pr'ythee, good Jobson, stay with me to-night, and for once make merry at home.

~~*Job.*~~ (L. c.) Peace, peace, you jade, and go spin; for if I lack any thread for my stitching, I will punish you by virtue of my sovereign authority.

Nell. Ay, marry, no doubt of that; whilst you take your swing at the alehouse, spend your substance, get as drunk as a ~~beast~~, then come home like a sot, and use one like a dog. *Lord*

~~*Job.*~~ Nounz! do you prate? Why, how now, brazen face! do you speak ill of the government? Don't you know, hussy, that I am king in my own house, and that this is treason against my majesty?

Nell. Did ever one hear such stuff? But I pray you, now, Jobson, don't go to the alehouse to-night!

~~*Job.*~~ Well, I'll humour you for once, but don't grow saucy upon't; for I'm invited by Sir John Loverule's butler, and am to be princely drunk with punch at the hall place;—we shall have a bowl large enough to swim in.

Nell. But they say, husband, the new lady will not suffer a stranger to enter her doors: she grudges even a draught of small beer to her own servants; and several of the tenants have come home with broken heads from her ladyship's own hands, only for smelling strong beer in the house. *Henry*

~~*Job.*~~ ~~Apon on~~ her for a ~~fanatical~~ jade! She has almost distracted the good knight; but she's now abroad, feasting with her relations, and will scarce come home to-night; and we are to have much drink, a fiddle, and other merry gambols.

Nell. Oh, dear husband! let me go with you; we'll be as merry as the night's long.

~~Job.~~ Why, how now, you bold baggage! would you be carried to a company of smooth-faced, eating, drinking, lazy serving-men? ~~No, no, you jade! I'll not be made a cuckold.~~

Nell. I'm sure they would make me welcome;—you promised I should see the house, and the family has not been here before since you married, and brought me home.

~~Job.~~ Why, thou most audacious strumpet! dar'st thou dispute with me, thy lord and master? Get in and spin, or else my strap shall wind about thy ribs most confoundedly!

CATCH.—JOBSON. AIR, “*The Twitcher.*”

He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life;
But for her who will scold and will quarrel?
Let him cut her off short
Cut her meat and her sport,
And ten times a day hoop her barrel,
Brave boys!
And ten times a day hoop her barrel!

Nell. Ah! we poor women must always be slaves, and never have any joy; but you men run and ramble at your pleasure.

~~Job.~~ Why, you most pestilent baggage! will you be hooped? Be gone!

Nell. I must obey.

[*Going, R.*

Job. Stay!—Now I think on't, here's sixpence for you: get ale and apples; stretch and puff thyself up with lamb's-wool; rejoice and revel by thyself; ~~be drunk, and wallow in thine own sty, like a grumbling sow as thou art.~~

[*Singing.*

He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life, &c.

~~✗~~ [*Exeunt, Jobson L., Nell R.*

SCENE II.—*The Servants' Hall in Sir John Loverule's Mansion—a table, L. C.*

Enter BUTLER, FOOTMAN, LUCY, LETTICE, COOK, and COACHMAN, R.

But. (c.) I would the blind fiddler and our dancing neighbours were here, that we might rejoice a little, while our termagant lady is abroad. I have made a most sovereign bowl of punch.

Lucy. (L. c.) We had need rejoice sometimes; for our devilish new lady will never suffer it in her hearing.

But. I will maintain, there is more mirth in a galley than in our family;—our master, indeed, is the worthiest gentleman—nothing but sweetness and liberality.

Foot. (R. c.) But here's a house turned topsy-turvy—~~from heaven to hell~~, since she came hither.

~~*Lucy.* His former lady was all virtue and mildness.~~

~~*But.* Ah, rest her soul! she was so; but this is inspired with a legion of devils, who make her lay about her like a fury.~~

Lucy. I am sure I always feel her in my bones. If her complexion don't please her, or she looks yellow in a morning, I am sure to look black and blue for it before night.

Cook. (R.) I dare not come within her reach: I have some six broken heads already. A lady, ~~quotha!~~ A she-bear is a civiller animal!

Foot. Heaven help my poor master!—This devilish termagant, scolding woman will be the death of him; I never saw a man so altered in all the days of my life.

Enter a Blind Fiddler, JOBSON, and Neighbours, L.

But. Welcome, welcome all! this is our wish. Honest old acquaintance, Goodman Jobson! how dost thou!

~~*Job.*~~ (L. c.) By my troth, I am always sharp set towards punch, and am now come with a firm resolution, though but a poor cobbler, to be as richly drunk as a lord. I have a true English heart, and look upon drunkenness as the best part of the liberty of the subject.

But. Come, Jobson, we'll bring out our bowl of punch in solemn procession; and then for a song to crown our happiness.

[*They all exeunt, R., and return with a large bowl of punch, marching round the hall.*

ROUND.—AIR, “*Charles of Sweden.*”

Come, jolly Bacchus, god of wine,
Crown this night with pleasure;
Let none at cares of life repine,
To destroy our pleasure.
Fill up the mighty sparkling bowl,
That ev'ry true and loyal soul
May drink and sing without control,
To support our pleasure.

Thus, mighty Bacchus, shalt thou be
 Guardian of our pleasure;
 That under thy protection we
 May enjoy new pleasure.
 And as the hours glide away,
 We'll in thy name invoke their stay,
 And sing thy praises, that we may
 Live and die with pleasure.

But. The king and the royal family in a brimmer!

ROUND.

Here's a good health to the king,
 And send him a prosperous reign!
 O'er hills and high mountains,
 We'll drink dry the fountains,
 Until the sun rises again,
 Brave boys!
 Until the sun rises again.

Then here's to thee, my boy boon,
 And here's to thee, my boy boon!
 As we've tarried all day
 For to drink down the sun,
 So we'll tarry and drink down the moon,
 Brave boys!
 So we'll tarry and drink down the moon.

Omnes. Huzza:

But. Now, Jobson, I'll give you a toast. All of you
 down on your marrow-bones. [*They all kneel.*] Here's
 success to Sir John, and confusion to my lady! [*Drinks.*

~~*Job.*~~ Every man in his turn. [*Drinking.*] Oh, I forgot
 the toast. Success to Sir John, and confusion to my lady!

[*He drinks again, and carries the bowl to Lettice, L.*
 —*they pass the liquor round to each other.*

~~*Job.*~~ [*Drinking after every one.*] Every man in his
 turn!

But. Jobson, crown the bowl. Now, shall we have a
 dance, or a game at Blindman's-buff?

Omnes. Oh, Blindman's-buff!

Cook. Aye, and Jobson shall be blinded.

~~*Job.*~~ No, no!—Lucy, or Lettice.

Omnes. No—Jobson!

~~*Job.*~~ Well, well; but don't blind my nose.

[*They tie a handkerchief over his eyes.*

But. Now, then. How many horses does your father keep?

Job. Horses! — Lord bless you! he never had but one donkey.

But. You must say three.

Job. Oh, very well. Three!

But. White, brown, or gray?

Job. White, brown, and gray.

But. Turn round three times, and catch whom you may.

[*They turn him about.*]

Job. Stop, stop! I must first know your names. [*To the Butler.*] What will you be?

But. Old Port.

Job. [*To the Cook.*] And you?

Cook. Roast Beef.

Job. And you, Lettice?

Let. Dimity Petticoat.

Job. And you, Lucy?

Lucy. Holland Smock.

Omnes. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha! — Bravo! — Now for it! [*They play at Blindman's-buff.*]

Enter SIR JOHN and LADY LOVERULE, L.

Job. [*Catching Lady Loverule in his arms.*] Holland Smock!

[*He takes the handkerchief from his eyes, and, finding his mistake, conceals himself under the table.*]

Lady L. Oh, heaven and earth! what's here within my doors? ~~Is hell broke loose?~~ What troop of friends are here? [*To the Butler.*] Sirrah—you impudent rascal! speak! [*Beats him.*]

Sir J. For shame, my dear! As this is a time of mirth and jollity, it has always been the custom of my house to give my servants liberty at this season, and to treat my country neighbours, that with innocent sports they may divert themselves.

Lady L. I say, meddle with your own affairs; I will govern my own household without your interference.— Shall I ask your leave to correct my own servants?

Sir J. I thought, madam, this had been my house, and these my tenants and domestics.

Lady L. Did I bring you a fortune to be thus abused and snubbed before menials? Do you, ungrateful man! call my authority in question? Look you to your dogs

and horses abroad; but it shall be my province to govern here; nor will I be controlled by e'er a hunting, hawking knight in Christendom!

[*Exit, R., beating and driving the Servants before her.*]

AIR.—SIR JOHN LOVERULE,
Ye gods! you gave to me a wife,
Out of your grace and favour,
To be the comfort of my life,
And I was glad to have her:
But if your providence divine
For greater bliss design her,
To obey your wills at any time,
I'm ready to resign her.

This it is to be married to a continual tempest: strife and noise, canting and hypocrisy, are eternally afloat. 'Tis impossible to bear it much longer.

Re-enter LADY LOVERULE, R., followed by the BUTLER, LUCY, and other Servants.

Lady L. ~~Ye filthy~~ scoundrels and odious jades! I'll teach you to junket thus, and steal my provisions! I shall be devoured at this rate.

But. (L.) I thought, madam, we might be merry once upon a holyday.

Lady L. Holyday, you popish cur! — Is one day more holy than another? — And if it be, you're sure to get tipsy upon it, you rogue! [*Beating him.*] And you, too, minx, [*To Lucy.*] you impudent flirt! are you jigging it after an abominable fiddle? [*Pulling her by the ears.*] All dancing is bad, hussy!

Lucy. Oh, lud! she has pulled off both my ears! —

Sir J. Pray, madam, consider your sex and quality. I blush for your behaviour!

Lady L. ~~Consider your incapacity~~: you shall not instruct me!

[*Lady Loverule again beats the Servants, and drives them off, L.—in the confusion, the table is upset, and discovers Jobson on his knees.*]

Lady L. [*To Jobson.*] Who are you, thus muffled, you buzzard?

Job. [*Coming forward.*] I'm an honest, plain, psalm-singing cobbler, madam. If your ladyship would but go to church, you might hear me above all the rest of the congregation.

Lady L. I'll try thy voice here first, villain!

[*Strikes him.*

~~*Job.* Nounz! what a plauge—what the devil ails you?~~

Lady L. Oh, ~~profane wretch!~~ wicked varlet!

Sir J. ~~For shame, madam!—Your behaviour is monstrous!~~

Lady L. Was ever a poor lady so miserable in a brutish husband as I am?—~~I, that am so pious and so religious a woman!~~

~~*Job.* [*Singing.*]~~

He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life;

But for her who will scold and will quarrel, &c.

[*While singing, Jobson takes off his strap, and beats Lady Loverule, running on and off, L., at each line of the catch, and finally exits, L.*

Lady L. Oh, rogue! scoundrel! villain!

Sir J. Remember ~~modesty!~~

Lady L. I'll rout you all with a vengeance! [*To the blind Fiddler, R.*] I'll spoil your squeaking treble!

[*Beats the fiddle about his head.*

Fiddler. Oh, murder! murder!—Which way shall I get hence? She has broke my fiddle, and undone me and my wife and children!

Sir J. Here, poor fellow! take your staff, and be gone. There's money to buy you two such fiddles. This is your way. [*Leads him off, L.*

Lady L. Methinks you are very liberal, sir. Must my estate maintain you in your profuseness?

Sir J. [*Crossing to R.*] Go up to your closet, ~~pray,~~ and compose your mind.

Lady L. Oh, ~~wicked man, to bid me pray!~~

Sir J. [*Aside.*] A man cannot be completely cursed, I see, without marriage; but since there is such a thing as a separate maintenance, she shall to-morrow enjoy the benefit of it. [*Knocking heard without, L.*] Here! where are my servants? Must they be frighted from me?— [*Calling off, L.*] Within there! see who knocks.

Lady L. Within there!—Where are my ~~sluts?~~ Ye drabs! ye queans! lights there!

Re-enter the BUTLER, L.

But. Sir, it is a doctor that lives ten miles off; he practices physic, and is an astrologer. Your worship knows

him very well: he is a cunning man, makes almanacks, and can help people to their lost goods again. [*Exit, L.*]

Enter DOCTOR, L.

Doc. Sir, I humbly beg your honour's pardon for this unseasonable intrusion; but I am benighted, and 'tis so dark, that I can't possibly find my way home;—and knowing your worship's hospitality, desire the favour to be harboured under your roof to-night.

Lady L. [*Crossing to him.*] Out of my house, you ~~low~~ conjurer! you magician!

Doc. [*Aside.*] Here's a turn! here's a change! Well, if I have any art, ye shall smart for this!

Sir J. You see, friend, I am not master of my own house; therefore, to avoid any uneasiness, go down the lane for about a quarter of a mile, and you'll see a cobbler's cottage;—stay there awhile, and I'll send my servant to conduct you to a tenant's house, where you'll be well entertained.

Doc. I thank you, sir. I'm your most humble servant. [*Aside.*] But as for your lady there, she shall this night feel my resentment. [*Exit, L.*]

Sir J. Come, madam, you and I must have some conference together.

Lady L. Yes; I will have a conference and a reformation, too, in this house, or I'll turn it upside down—I will! [*Exit, R.*]

AIR.—SIR JOHN LOVERULE.

Grant me, ye pow'rs, but this request,
And let who will the world contest:
Convey her to some distant shore,
Where I may ne'er behold her more;
Or let me to some cottage fly,
In Freedom's arms to live and die! [*Exit, R.*]

SCENE III.—*The Interior of Jobson's Cottage—table and chairs.*

NELL and the DOCTOR discovered seated, c.

Nell. Pray, sir, mend your draught, if you please; you are very welcome, sir.

Doc. Thank you heartily, good woman; and, to requite your civility, I'll tell you your fortune.

Nell. Oh, pray do, sir! I never had my fortune told me in my life.

Doc. Let me behold the lines of your face.

Nell. I'm afraid, sir, 'tis none of the cleanest: I have been about dirty work all this day.

Doc. Come, come; 'tis a good face; be not ashamed of it—you shall show it in greater places suddenly.

Nell. O dear, sir, I shall be mightily ashamed;—I want 'dacity when I come before great folks.

Doc. You must be confident, and fear nothing. There is much happiness attends you.

Nell. [*Aside.*] Oh, me! this is a rare man! Heaven be thanked!

Doc. To-morrow, before the sun rise, you shall be the happiest woman in this country.

Nell. How! by to-morrow? Alack-a-day! sir, how can that be?

Doc. No more shall you be troubled with a surly husband, that rails at and straps you.

Nell. [*Aside.*] Lud! how came he to know that? He must be a conjurer. [*Aloud.*] Indeed, my husband is somewhat rugged, and in his cups will beat me, but it is not much. He's an honest pains-taking man, and I let him have his way. Pray, sir, take t'other cup of ale.

Doc. I thank you. Believe me, to-morrow you shall be the richest woman i' th' hundred, and ride in your own coach.

Nell. Oh, father! you jeer me!

Doc. By my art, I do not. But mark my words: be confident, and bear all out, or worse will follow.

Nell. Never fear, sir; I warrant you. Oh, gemini! a coach!

AIR.—NELLS.

My swelling heart now leaps for joy,
And riches all my thoughts employ.
No more shall people call me Nell,—
“Her Ladyship” will do as well.
Deck'd in my golden rich array,
I'll in my chariot roll away,
And shine at ring, at ball, and play!

Enter JOBSON, L.

Job. (L.) Where is this quean?—Here, Nell!—What, the plague! are you drunk with your lamb's-wool?

Nell. (c.) Oh, husband, here's the rarest man! he has told me my fortune!

~~Job.~~ Has he so? and, perhaps, planted my fortune, too—
—a lusty pair of horns upon my head! Eh? is't not so?

Doc. Thy wife is a virtuous woman, and thou wilt be happy.

~~Job.~~ Come out, you hang-dog! you juggler! you cheating, bamboozling villain! Must I be cuckolded by such rogues as you are?—mackmaticians and almanack makers!

Nell. Pr'ythee, peace, husband!—We shall be rich, and have a coach of our own.

~~Job.~~ A coach!—A cart—a wheel-barrow, you jade!—By the mackin, she's drunk—most confoundedly drunk! [*Beating her with his strap.*] Get you to bed, you hussy!

Nell. Oh, mercy on us! is this a taste of my good fortune? [*Exit, R.*]

Doc. You had better not have touched her, you surly rogue!

~~Job.~~ Out of my house, you villain! or I'll run my awl up to the handle in your heart!

Doc. [*Crossing to L.*] Farewell, you paltry slave!

~~Job.~~ Get out, you rogue! [*Exeunt, L.*]

SCENE IV.—*An open Country.*

Enter the DOCTOR, L. U. E.

AIR.—DOCTOR. TUNE—*The Spirit's Song in Macbeth.*

My little spirits, now appear,—
Nadir and Abishog, draw near.
The time is short—make no delay;
Then quickly haste, and come away.
Nor moon nor stars afford their light,
But all is wrapt in gloomy night;—
Both men and beasts to rest incline,
And all things favour my design.

Spirits. [*Without, R.*] Say, master, what is to be done?

Doc. My strict commands be sure attend;
For, ere this night shall have an end,
You must this cobbler's wife transform,
And to the knight's the like perform.
With all your most specific charms,
Convey each wife to diff'rent arms:
Let the delusion be so strong,
That none may know the right from wrong.

Spirits. [*Without.*] All this we will with care perform,
In thunder, lightning, and a storm.

[*Thunder.—Exeunt the Doctor, L.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Interior of Jobson's Cottage—a bed, R.*

JOBSON discovered at work, L. C.

Job. What devil has been abroad to-night? I never heard such claps of thunder in my life. I thought my little hovel would have flown away; but now all is clear again, and a fine star-light morning it is. I'll settle myself to work. They say winter's thunder is summer's wonder.

BALLAD.—*JOBSON.* AIR—“*Sally in our Alley.*”

Of all the trades from east to west,
The cobbler's, past contending,
Is like in time to prove the best,
Which ev'ry day is mending.
How great his praise who can amend
The soles of all his neighbours;
Nor is unmindful of his end,
But to his last still labours.

Lady Loverule. [*In the bed.*] Heyday! what impudent ballad-singing rogue is that, who dares wake me out of my sleep? I'll have you flogged, you rascal!

Job. What, the devil! does she talk in her sleep? or is she drunk still?

AIR.—*JOBSON.* TUNE, “*Now ponder well, ye Parents dear.*”

In Bath a wanton wife did dwell,
As Chaucer he did write,
Who wantonly did spend her time
In many a fond delight.
All on a time so sick she was,
And she at length did die;
And then her soul at Paradise
Did knock most mightily.

Lady L. Why, villain! rascal! screech-owl! ~~who makest a worse noise than a dog hung in the pales, or a hog in a high wind.~~ Where are all my servants? [*Knocking violently against the side of the bed.*] Somebody come, and ham-string this rogue!

~~*Job.*~~ Why, how now, you brazen quean! You must get drunk with the conjurer, must you? I'll give you money another time to spend in lamb's-wool, you saucy jade, shall I?

Lady L. Monstrous!—I can find no bell to ring!—Where are all my servants? They shall toss him in a blanket!

~~*Job.*~~ Ah, the jade's asleep still: the conjurer told her she should keep her coach, and she is dreaming of her equipage. [*Sings the continuation of the preceding Air.*]

I will come, in spite, she said,
Of all such churls as thee;
Thou art the cause of all our pain,
Our grief and misery.
Thou first broke the commandment,
In honour of thy wife:
When Adam heard her say these words,
He ran away for life.

Lady L. Why, husband! Sir John! will you suffer me to be thus insulted?

~~*Job.*~~ Husband! Sir John!—What a plague! has she knighted me? and my name's Zekiel, too!—A good jest, faith!

Lady L. Ha! he's gone—he's not in the bed!—Heavens! where am I?—Foh! what loathsome ~~smells are here?~~ Canvass sheets, and a filthy, ragged curtain! a beastly rug, and a flock-bed! Am I awake? or is it all a dream? What rogue is that? Sirrah, where am I? who brought me hither?—What rascal are you?

~~*Job.*~~ This is amazing! I never heard such words from her before. If I take my strap to you, I'll make you know your husband; I'll teach you better manners, ~~you saucy drab!~~

Lady L. Oh, astonishing impudence!—You my husband, sirrah?—I'll have you hanged, you rogue!—I'm a lady!—Let me know who has given me a sleeping-draught, and conveyed me hither, you ~~dirty~~ varlet!

~~*Job.*~~ A sleeping-draught!—Yes, you drunken jade! you

had a sleeping-draught, with a plague to ye! What! has not your lamb's-wool done working yet?

Lady L. Where am I?—Where has my villanous husband put me? [*Calling loudly.*] Lucy! Lettice!—Where are my queans? ~~maids~~

~~Job.~~ [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha!—What! does she call her maids, too? The conjurer has made her mad as well as drunk.

Lady L. He talks of conjurers: sure I am bewitched! [*Searching on the bed.*] Ha! what clothes are here?—A linseywoolsey gown, a calico hood, a red bays petticoat!—I am removed from my own house by witchcraft! What must I do? what will become of me?

[*She puts on the clothes, and rises from the bed.—*
Horns are heard without, L.

~~Job.~~ Hark! the hunters and the merry horns are abroad. Why, Nell, you lazy jade! 'tis break of day!—To work—to work!—Come and spin, you drab! or I'll tan your hide for you! What the plague! must I be at work two hours before you in the morning?

Lady L. [*Coming forward, R. C.*] Why, sirrah—thou impudent villain! dost thou not know me, you rogue?

~~Job.~~ Know you!—Yes, I know you well enough; and I'll make you know me before I have done with you!

Lady L. I am Sir John Loverule's lady. How came I here?

~~Job.~~ Sir John Loverule's lady!—No, Nell; not quite so bad neither:—that confounded, stingy, fanatic vixen, plagues every one that comes near her; the whole country curses her.

Lady L. Nay, then, I'll hold no longer. [*Flinging old shoes and other things at Jobson.*] You rogue—you insolent villain! I'll teach you better manners!

~~Job.~~ [*Aside.*] This is more than ever I saw her do; I never had an ill word from her before. [*Taking off his strap.*] Come, strap! [*To Lady Loverule, beating her.*] I'll try your mettle—I'll sober you, I warrant you, ye quean!

Lady L. [*Flying at him.*] I'll pull your throat out!—I'll tear out your eyes! I am a lady, sirrah! Oh! murder! murder! Sir John Loverule will hang you for this, you villain! Murder! murder!

~~Job.~~ Come, hussy, leave fooling, and go to your spinning, or else I'll lamb you in a way you never before was

lambed since you were an inch long. [*She knocks down the spinning-wheel.*] Take it up, you jade!

[*She refuses, and Jobson again beats her with the strap.*

Lady L. Hold! hold!—I'll do anything!

Job. Oh! I thought I should soon bring you to yourself again!

Lady L. [*Aside.*] What shall I do?—I can't spin.

Job. I'll into my stall; 'tis now broad day.

[*Sits to his work, and sings.*

SONG.—JOBSON. AIR, "Come, let us prepare."

Let matters of state
Disquiet the great,
The cobbler has naught to perplex him;
Has naught but his wife
To ruffle his life,
And her he can strap if she vex him.

He's out of the pow'r
Of fortune, that whore,
Since low as can be she has thrust him;
From duns he's secure,
For, being so poor,
There's none to be found that will trust him.

[*During this song, Lady Loverule keeps turning the spinning-wheel about, and at length runs it against Jobson.*

Job. Heyday! I think the jade's brain is turned.—
What, have you forgot to spin, hussy?

Lady L. [*Aside.*] Yes, but I have not forgotten to run.

[*Exit, hastily, L.*

Job. Zounds! does she run for it? I'll be after her!

[*Exit, L.*

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in Sir John Loverule's House—
a bed, c. F.—a toilette table, R.—a door, L.*

NELL discovered in the bed.

Nell. What pleasant dreams I have had to-night!—
Methought I was in Paradise, upon a bed of violets and
roses, and the sweetest husband by my side! Ha! bless
me! where am I now? what sweets are these? No gar-
den in the spring can equal them. Am I on a bed? The
sheets are sarcenet, sure; no linen ever was so fine.—
What a gay, silken robe have I got! O heaven! I dream!

Yet, if this be a dream, I would not wish to wake again.
Sure, I died last night, and went to heaven, and this is it!

[*She covers herself up.*]

Enter LUCY, L. D.

Lucy. Now must I awake an alarum that will not lie still again till midnight, at soonest. The first greeting I suppose will be jade, or hussy. [*Approaching the bed, and calling.*] Madam! madam!

Nell. [*Half rising in the bed.*] Oh, gemini! who's this?—What dost say, sweetheart?

Lucy. [*Aside.*] Sweetheart!—Oh, lud! sweetheart!—The best names I have had these three months from her have been slut or baggage. [*Aloud.*] What gown and ruffles will your ladyship wear to-day?

Nell. [*Aside.*] What does she mean?—Ladyship! gown and ruffles! Sure, I am awake! Oh, I remember the cunning man now!

Lucy. Did your ladyship speak?

Nell. Yes, child; I'll wear the same I did yesterday.

Lucy. [*Aside.*] Mercy upon me!—Child!—Here's a miracle!

Enter LETTICE, L. D.

Let. [*Apart to Lucy.*] Is my lady awake? Have you had her shoe or her slipper at your head yet?

Lucy. [*Apart.*] Oh, no; I'm overjoyed; she's in the kindest humour! Go to the bed and speak to her;—now's your time!

Let. [*Apart.*] Now's my time!—What, to have another tooth beat out? [*Going up to the bed.*] Madam!

Nell. What dost say, my dear? [*Aside.*] Oh, father! what would she have?

Let. What work will your ladyship please to have done to-day? Shall I work plain-work, or go to my stitching?

Nell. Work, child!—'Tis a holiday; no work to-day.

Let. [*Apart to Lucy.*] Oh, mercy! am I or thee awake? or do we both dream? Here's a blessed change!

Lucy. [*Apart.*] If it continues, we shall be a happy family.

Let. Your ladyship's chocolate is ready.

Nell. [*Aside.*] Mercy on me! what's that?—Some garment, I suppose. [*Aloud, getting out of bed.*] Put it on, then, sweetheart.

Let. Put it on, madam!—I have just taken it off; 'tis ready to drink.

Nell. (R.) I mean, put it by; I don't care for drinking now.

Enter the COOK, L. D.

Cook. [*Aside.*] Now I go, like a bear to the stake, to know her scurvy ladyship's commands about dinner!—How many rascally names shall I be called, I wonder?

Let. [*Crossing to L.*] Oh, John Cook! you'll be out of your wits to find my lady in so sweet a temper.

Cook. [*Aside.*] What, the devil! are they all mad!

Lucy. Madam, here's the cook come about dinner.

Nell. [*Aside.*] Oh, there's a fine cook! he looks like one of your gentlefolks. [*To the Cook.*] Indeed, honest man, I'm very hungry now: pray get me a rasher upon the coals, a piece of one milk cheese, and some nice white bread.

Cook. [*Aside.*] Hey! what's to do here?—My head turns round!—Honest man!—I looked for rogue and rascal at the least. She's strangely changed in her diet, as well as her humour. [*Aloud.*] I'm afraid, madam, cheese and bacon will sit very heavy on your ladyship's stomach in a morning. If you please, madam, I'll toss you up a white fricasee of chickens in a trice, madam; or what does your ladyship think of a veal sweetbread?

Nell. E'en what you will, good cook.

Cook. [*Aside.*] Good cook! good cook!

Enter the BUTLER, L. D.

[*Apart to him.*] I am out of my wits!—We have the kindest, sweetest lady——

But. You shamming rogue! I think you are out of your wits, all of ye;—the maids look merrily, too.

Lucy. Here's the butler, madam, to know your ladyship's orders.

Nell. Oh, pray, Mr. Butler, let me have some small beer when my breakfast comes in.

But. [*Aside.*] Mr. Butler! Mr. Butler!—I shall be turned into stone with amazement! [*Aloud.*] Would not your ladyship rather have a glass of frontiniac or lacryme?

Nell. [*Aside.*] Dear me! what hard names they are! But I must not betray myself. [*Aloud.*] Well, which you please, Mr. Butler.

Enter the COACHMAN, L. D.

But. Go, get you in, and be rejoiced as I am!

Coach. [*Apart to him.*] The cook has been making his game I know not how long. What, do you banter, too?

Lucy. Madam, the coachman.

Coach. I come to know if your ladyship goes out to-day, and which you'll have—the coach, chariot, or vis-a-vis?

Nell. Oh, I'll ride in all three.

Coach. [*Aside, going.*] Then the devil may drive you for me! [*Exeunt all the Servants, L.*]

Nell. I can hardly think I'm awake yet. How well pleased they all seem to wait upon me! Oh, notable cunning man! My head turns round! I'm quite giddy with my own happiness!

SONG.—NELL. AIR, “*What though I am a Country Lass.*”

Though late I was a cobbler's wife,
In cottage most obscure-a;
In plain stuff gown and short-ear'd coif,
Hard labour did endure-a;—

The scene is chang'd—I'm alter'd quite,
And from poor humble Nell-a,
I'll learn to dance, to read and write,
And from all bear the bell-a. [*Exit, L.*]

SCENE III.—*The Servants' Hall.*

Enter SIR JOHN LOVERULE, L., meeting the BUTLER, LUCY, and other Servants, R.

But. Oh, sir, here's the rarest news!

Lucy. There never was the like, sir; you'll be overjoyed and amazed!

Sir J. What, are ye mad?—What's the matter with ye? How now?—Here's a new face in my family!—What's the meaning of all this?

But. Oh, sir! the family's turned upside down;—we are almost distracted—the happiest people!

Lucy. Aye; my lady, sir, my lady—

Sir J. What, is she dead?

But. Dead!—Heaven forbid! Oh! she's the best woman—the sweetest lady—

Sir J. This is astonishing! I must go and inquire into this wonder. If this be true, I shall rejoice indeed!

[*Exit, R.*]

But. 'Tis true, sir, upon my honour. Long live Sir John and my lady!—Huzza!

Omnes. Huzza! [Exeunt Servants, L.]

SCENE IV.—*Another Apartment in Sir John Loverule's House.*

Enter NELL, R.

Nell. I well remember the cunning man warned me to bear all out with confidence, or worse, he said, would follow. I am ashamed, and know not what to do with all this ceremony. I am amazed, and out of my senses! I looked in the glass, and saw a fine, gay thing I knew not. Methought my face was not at all like that I have seen at home in a piece of looking-glass fastened upon the cupboard. But great ladies, they say, have flattering glasses, that show them far unlike themselves; whilst poor folks' glasses represent them e'en just as they are.

Enter LUCY, L.

Lucy. Oh, madam, here's my master just returned from hunting!

Enter SIR JOHN LOVERULE, L.

Nell. [*Aside.*] Oh, gemini! this fine gentleman my husband!

Sir J. My dear, I am overjoyed to see my family thus transported with ecstasy, which you have occasioned.

Nell. Sir, I shall always be proud to do everything that may give you delight, or your family satisfaction.

Sir J. By Heaven, I am charmed! Dear creature, if thou continuest thus, I had rather enjoy thee than the Indies. But can this be real? may I believe my senses?

Nell. [*Kneeling.*] All's that good above can witness for me, I am in earnest.

Sir J. Rise, my dearest! Now am I happy indeed!—Where are my friends—my servants? Call them all, and let them be witnesses of my happiness. [*Exit Lucy, L.*]

Nell. [*Aside.*] Oh, rare, sweet man! he smells like a nosegay! Heaven preserve my wits!

DUET.—SIR JOHN LOVERULE *and* NELL.

Sir J. Was ever man possess'd of
So sweet, so kind a wife?

Nell. Dear sir, you make me proud.

Be you but kind,
And you shall find
All the good I can boast of,
Shall end but with my life.

Sir J. Give me thy lips!

Nell. First let me, dear sir, wipe 'em.

Sir J. Was ever so sweet a wife? [Kisses her.]

Nell. Thank you, dear sir!
I vow and protest,
I ne'er was so kiss'd!

Again, sir!

Sir J. Again, and again, my dearest! [Kisses.]
Oh, may it last for life!

Nell. What joy thus to enfold thee!
What pleasure to behold thee,
Inclin'd again to kiss!

Sir J. How ravishing the bliss!

Nell. I little thought this morning
'Twould ever come to this!

[Da Capo.—Exeunt, L.]

SCENE V.—*Jobson's Cottage.* *every one*

Enter LADY LOVERULE, L.

Lady L. Was ever lady yet so miserable? I can't make one soul in the village acknowledge me: they surely are all in the conspiracy. This wicked husband of mine has laid a devilish plot against me;—I must at present submit, that I may hereafter have an opportunity of executing my design. Here comes the rogue; I'll have him strangled! But now I must yield.

Enter JOBSON, L.

Job. Well, Nell, art thou come to thyself yet?

Lady L. Yes, I thank you; I wonder what I ailed.—This cunning man has put powder in my drink, most certainly.

Job. Powder!—The brewer put good store of powder of malt in it, that's all. Powder, quoth she? [Laughing.]
Ha! ha! ha!

Lady L. I never was so before in all the days of my life!

Job. No, nor I hope never will be so again; to put me to the trouble of strapping you so devilishly!

Lady L. [Aside.] I'll have that right hand cut off for

that, you rogue! [*To him.*] You was unmerciful to bruise me so.

Job. Well, I'm going to Sir John Loverule's; all his tenants are invited; there's to be rare feasting and reveling, and open house kept for three months.

Lady L. Husband, shan't I go with you?

Job. What the devil ails thee now? Did I not tell thee but yesterday I would strap thee for desiring to go? and art thou at it again, with a plague to ye?

Lady L. [*Aside.*] What does the villain mean by strapping and yesterday?

Job. Why, I have been married but six weeks, and you long to make me a cuckold already! Stay at home, and be hanged! There's good cold pie in the cupboard; but I'll trust thee no more with strong beer, hussy! [*Exit, L.*]

Lady L. Well, I'll not be long after you. Surely I shall get some of my own family to recognise me; they cannot be all in this wicked plot. [*Exit, L.*]

SCENE VI. — *Sir John Loverule's House.*

The BUTLER, COOK, FOOTMAN, LUCY, LETTICE, and other Servants, discovered.

Enter LADY LOVERULE, hastily, L.

Lady L. Here's a fine rout and rioting! You, sirrah butler, you rogue!

But. Why, how now? who are you?

Lady L. Impudent varlet! don't you know your lady?

But. Lady! [*To the Footman.*] Here, turn this mad woman out of doors!

Lady L. You rascal! [*Boxing his ear.*] Take that, sirrah!

Foot. Have a care, hussy; there's a good pump without; we'll soon cool your courage for you.

Lady L. You, Lucy, have you forgot me, too, you minx?

Lucy. Forgot you, woman!—Why, I never remembered you; I never saw you before in my life!

Lady L. Oh, the wicked slut!—I'll give you cause to remember me—I will, hussy! [*Pulls her cap off.*]

Lucy. [*Bawling.*] Murder! murder! help!

Enter SIR JOHN LOVERULE, R.

Sir J. How now? what uproar's this?

Lady L. You, Lettice, you slut! [*Striking her.*] won't you know me, neither?

Let. Help! help!

Sir J. What's to do there?

But. Why, sir, here's a mad woman calls herself my lady, and is beating and cuffing us all round.

Sir J. [*To Lady Loverule.*] Thou my wife! — Poor creature, I pity thee! I never saw thee before.

Enter NELL, R.

Lady L. [*To Sir John.*] Then it is in vain to expect redress from thee, thou wicked contriver of all my misery!

Nell. [*Aside.*] How am I amazed! Can that be I, there, in my clothes, that have made all this disturbance? And yet I am here, to my thinking, in these fine clothes. How can this be? I am so confounded and affrighted, that I begin to wish I was with Zekiel Jobson again.

Lady L. To whom shall I apply myself, or whither can I fly? [*Turning, and seeing Nell.*] Heavens! what do I see? Is not that myself yonder, ~~in the gown and petticoat~~ I wore yesterday? How can it be? I cannot be in two places at once!

Sir J. Poor wretch! she's stark mad.

Lady L. What, in the devil's name, was I before I came here? Let me look in the glass. [*Going to a mirror.*] Oh, Heavens! I am astonished! I don't know myself! — If this be I that the glass shows me, I never saw myself before.

Sir J. What incoherent madness is this?

Enter JOBSON, L.

Lady L. There, that's the devil in my likeness, who has robbed me of my countenance! Is here, too!

Job. Aye, hussy! and here's my strap, you quean!

Nell. [*Aside.*] Oh, dear! I'm afraid my husband will beat me, that am on t'other side the room there!

Job. I hope your honours will pardon her: she was drinking with a conjurer last night, and has been mad ever since, calling herself my Lady Loverule.

Sir J. Poor woman! take care of her; do not hurt her; she may be cured of this.

Job. Yes; and, please your worship, you shall see me cure her presently. [*To Lady Loverule, showing his strap.*] Hussy, do you see this?

Nell. Oh, pray, Zekiel, don't beat me!

Sir J. (R. c.) What says my love? Does she infect thee with madness, too?

Nell. I am not well; pray lead me in.

[*Exit with the Servants, R.*]

Joh. I beseech your worship, don't take it ill of me; she shall never trouble you more.

Sir J. Take her home, and use her kindly.

Joh. Oh, yes, your honour; I always keep a doctor in my family.

Sir J. Indeed!

Joh. Yes—Doctor Strap; here it is! [*Throwing it to Lady Loverule.*] There, Nell, take it up.

Lady L. What will become of me?

[*Jobson puts the strap round her neck, and drags her off, L.*]

Re-enter FOOTMAN, L.

Foot. Sir, the doctor who called here last night desires you will give him leave to speak a word or two with you, upon very earnest business.

Sir J. What can this mean? Bring him in.

[*Exit Footman, L.*]

Enter the DOCTOR, L.

Doc. Lo, on my knees, sir, I beg forgiveness for what I have done, and put my life into your hands.

Sir J. What mean you?

Doc. I have exercised my magic art upon your lady.—I know you have too much honour to take away my life, since I might still have concealed it, had I pleased.

Sir J. You have now brought me to a glimpse of misery too great to bear. Is all my happiness, then, turned into vision only?

Doc. Sir, I beg you, fear not: if any harm comes of it, I freely give you leave to hang me.

Sir J. Inform me what you have done.

Doc. I have transformed your lady's face, so that she seems the cobbler's wife, and have charmed the features of the latter into the likeness of my lady's; and last night, when the storm arose, my spirits conveyed them to each other's bed.

Sir J. Oh, wretch! thou hast undone me!—I am fallen from the height of all my hopes, and must still be cursed with a tempestuous wife—a fury with whom I never knew quiet since I had her!

Doc. If that be all, I can continue the charm for both their lives.

Sir J. Let the event be what it will, I'll hang ye if you do not end the charm this instant!

Doc. I will this minute, sir; and perhaps you'll find it the luckiest of your life. I can assure you, your lady will prove the better for it: for, e'er she was conveyed to his bed, the cobbler was up at his work, and he has done nought but beat her ever since, and you are like to reap the fruits of his labour. He'll be with you in a minute. Here he comes. [*Exit, L.*

Re-enter JOBSON, with the BUTLER and COOK, L.

Sir J. So, Jobson, where is your wife?

Job. An' please your worship, she's here at the door. But, indeed, I thought I had lost her just now; for as she came into the hall, she fell into such a swoon, that I thought she would never come out on't again;—but a tweak or two by the nose, and half a dozen straps, did the business for her. [*Calling off, L.*] Here—where are you, housewife?

Re-enter LADY LOVERULE, L.

But. [*Holding up a candle to her face, and instantly letting it fall in astonishment.*] Oh, heaven and earth! is this my lady?

Job. [*Aside.*] What does he say?—My wife changed to my lady!

Cook. [*Aside.*] Aye, I thought the other was too good for our lady!

Lady L. [*Kneeling to Sir John.*] Sir, you are the person I have most offended; and I here confess, I have been the worst of wives in everything, but that I always kept myself chaste. If you can vouchsafe once more to take me to your bosom, the remainder of my days shall be joyfully spent in affectionate duty and observance of your will.

Sir J. Rise, madam; I do, indeed, forgive you; and if you are sincere in what you say, you will make me happier than all the enjoyments in the world without you could do.

Job. (L.) What the plague! am I to lose my wife thus!

Re-enter LUCY and LETTICE, R.

Lucy. [*To Sir John.*] Oh, sir! the strangest accident

has happened! it has amazed us! My lady has been in so great a swoon, we thought she had been dead.

Let. Yes; and when she came to herself, she proved another woman.

~~Job~~ [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha!—A bull! a bull!

Lucy. She is so changed, I knew her not; I never saw her face before. [*Looking at Lady Loverule.*] O lud! is this my lady?

Let. We shall be mauled again!

Lucy. I thought our happiness was too great to last!

Lady L. Fear not, my servants;—it shall hereafter be my endeavour to make you happy.

Sir J. Persevere in this resolution, and we shall be blessed indeed for life.

Re-enter NELL, R.

Nell. My head turns round; I must go home. [*Seeing Job.*] Ah, Zekiel! are you there?

~~Job.~~ Zounds! is that fine lady my wife? Egad, I'm afraid to go near her! What can be the meaning of all this?

Sir J. This is a happy change, and I'll have it celebrated with all the joy I proclaimed for my late short-lived vision.

Lady L. To me 'tis the happiest day I ever knew.

Sir J. Here, Jobson, take thy fine wife.

~~Job.~~ But one word, sir. [*Apart to him.*] Did not your worship make a buck of me, under the rose?

~~Sir J.~~ No, upon my honour, nor ever kissed her lips till I came from hunting. But since she has been a means of bringing about this happy change, I'll give thee five hundred pounds to take home with her. So, go buy a stock of leather.

~~Job.~~ Huzza! brave boys! I'm a prince—the prince of cobblers! Come hither and kiss me, Nell; I'll never strap thee more.

Nell. [*Crossing to L. c.*] Indeed, Zekiel, I have been in such a dream, that I'm quite weary of it. [*To Lady Loverule.*] Forsooth, madam, will you please to take your clothes, and let me have mine again?

~~Job.~~ [*Apart to Nell.*] Hold your tongue, you fool! they'll serve you to go to church.

Lady L. No: you shall keep them, and I'll preserve yours as relics.

~~Job.~~ And can your ladyship forgive my strapping your honour so very much?

Lady L. Most freely. The joy of this blessed change sets all things right again.

Re-enter COACHMAN, FOOTMAN, and other Servants, L.

Sir J. Let us forget everything that is past, and think of nothing now but joy and pleasure.

FINALE.—AIR, “*Hey, Boys, up go we.*”

Lady L. Let ev'ry face with smiles appear,
Be joy in ev'ry breast;
Since from a life of pain and care,
We now are truly bless'd.

Sir J. May no remembrance of past time
Our present pleasures soil;
Be nought but mirth and joy a crime,
And sporting all our toil.

Job. I hope you'll give me leave to speak,
If I may be so bold:
There's nought but the devil, and this good
strap,
Could ever tame a scold.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE
FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

LUCY. LET. COOK. FOOT. COACH. BUTLER.

SIR JOHN. LADY L. NELL. JOBSON.

R.]

[L.

THE END.

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