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Title: The legacy, or, The fortune-hunter

Date of first publication: 1770

Author: Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de Marivaux (1688-1763)

Date first posted: Oct. 21, 2014

Date last updated: Oct. 21, 2014

Faded Page eBook #201410M3

This eBook was produced by: Delphine Lettau & the online Distributed Proofreaders Canada team at <http://www.pgdpCanada.net>

THE

LEGACY,
OR, THE
FORTUNE-HUNTER.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEANWELL.
The BARON.

COUNT SPANGLE.
The MARQUIS of Esbagnac.
BELLMOUR.
TOM.
A Footman.

HARRIET.
LETTICE.

THE LEGACY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter MEANWELL and LETTICE.

LETTICE.

And so, sir, here we are fix'd in the country for good and all.

MEANWELL.

Even so, Lettice.

LETTICE.

But, methinks, you ought to have some companion in your retirement; otherwise it may chance to sit heavy upon you.

MEANWELL.

Thank heav'n I am a widower, and such intend to remain.

LETTICE.

Well, I am surpris'd at that; for I've been told that your lady was the most amiable sweet-temper'd woman breathing, and that you were thought the happiest couple in the world.

MEANWELL.

Pr'ythee, who told you all this?

LETTICE.

A thousand different people.

MEANWELL.

Appearances are too often fallacious, Lettice: but, pray, what would you infer from the suppos'd happiness I enjoy'd in the marry'd state?

LETTICE.

Why, that it is very extraordinary, considering how well you succeeded upon the first trial, that you should not be tempted to make a second; especially as your time of life is such as might very well warrant the experiment. You are not much above forty, I believe?

MEANWELL.

No matter, Lettice; I have something else to think of. The father of a family has a thousand cares to employ his attention. I must think of disposing of my daughter, who, to say the truth, begins to be a heavy burthen upon my hands.

LETTICE.

And there's your son too.

MEANWELL.

Oh! a son can shift for himself: besides, mine, you know, follows the fashionable taste of the times—But my daughter is now turn'd of sixteen.

LETTICE.

A ticklish age, that's certain.

MEANWELL.

And very perplexing to me, Lettice; for I want to have her settled; and at the same time know I have little or no fortune to give her.

LETTICE.

Lack a day, sir! miss Harriet is a fortune of herself. So genteel, handsome, agreeable and witty a young lady, can never be in want of suitors.

MEANWELL.

Psha! psha! wit and beauty are nothing without money. The first question asked now-a-days is, what can you give her? and what answer can I make? It is this that distracts me. I might, doubtless, impose upon the world, but——

LETTICE.

But!——Lord, sir, it is the duty of every parent to dispose of his daughter to the best advantage.

MEANWELL.

I have some prospect of marrying her into a rich and noble family in our neighbourhood here; but then, the circumstance of a fortune will, I am afraid, overturn every thing. The father supposed me rich, as many others do, but I very fairly undeceiv'd him in that particular.

LETTICE.

And then he was off, I suppose?

MEANWELL.

Not so; for he is to send his son to pay a visit to Harriet this

very day.

LETTICE.

Pray, what is his name?

MEANWELL.

His name is——but hush! I think I hear somebody coming; see who it is.

LETTICE.

It is only mr. Thomas, your son's man.

SCENE II.

*Enter TOM, [booted and spurred, with a whip
in his hand.]*

MEANWELL.

Well, Tom, what brings you here so early this morning?

TOM.

I am come post, sir, to deliver you a letter from my master, which, he says, is of great consequence.

MEANWELL.

Give it me.

TOM. [*Feeling in his pockets.*]

Yes, sir——here it is——no faith, this is not it——nor this——Zounds! I believe I have lost it.

MEANWELL.

You careless scoundrel!

TOM.

What the devil can I have done with it? I have such a heap of papers in my pocket! It must certainly be amongst them——No! by all that's good, I believe I have dropt it by the way, or left it behind me.

MEANWELL.

Was ever such a heedless rascal!

TOM.

Lord, sir, I set out two hours before day-light, and my eyes were hardly open: I slept half the way, and no wonder, faith! for——

MEANWELL.

'Sdeath! you prating puppy, am I to be put off with these idle excuses?

TOM.

If you will but have a little patience, sir, I believe I shall find it at last: yes, faith, here it is.

[Giving him a letter]

MEANWELL.

Let me see it——Why——this is not directed in my son's hand.

TOM.

No?

MEANWELL.

No! How came you by this letter? Who had it you from?

TOM.

Why, from a man I overtook on the road, who accosted me very civilly, and begged I would do him the favour to stop a little. For, says he, in a melancholly tone, I am so weary, my good sir, for you must know he was on foot, I am so weary, says he, and you seem so well mounted, and make such dispatch, that I should be much obliged to you if you would give this letter to Mr. Meanwell, as soon as you get to his house; for I am ashamed to appear before him myself, in the condition I am now in, so badly cloathed, and half-dead with fatigue.

MEANWELL.

But who is this man?

TOM.

His letter will acquaint you, I suppose.

MEANWELL. [*Opening the letter.*]

Will it so? Well, let us see what his name is, and what he has to say to me? He is some sharper, or impudent beggar, I suppose.

TOM.

Upon my word, sir, he has an appearance above the vulgar stamp.

MEANWELL. [*Reads.*]

"I am just come from the West-Indies, whither I lately made a voyage, in hopes of finding my parents, and an handsome fortune: but, at my arrival, found they were both deceas'd, without leaving me any thing: and, to add to my misfortune, I am informed, since my return, that my dear aunt is likewise dead; so that I am plunged into the most dreadful difficulties: and fortune, who has been ever constant in persecuting me, seems to have preserved me from the dangers of the sea, only to make me end my life in misery and want on shore."

LETTICE.

Lord, sir, who is this melancholy letter from?

MEANWELL.

One whom misfortune seems to take a delight in tormenting——But tell me, Tom, will the person who gave you this be here soon?

TOM.

Within half an hour at farthest, I dare say, sir.

MEANWELL.

Will he so? I am glad of it.

TOM.

That is to say, if he does not stick by the way in a damn'd bog that I thought would have bury'd me and my horse.

MEANWELL.

But now, mr. Blunderbuss, about this letter of my son's that you

have lost?

TOM.

Why; sir, I must e'en post back again for it, if——But, here it is, after all! I remember now, I cramm'd it into my bosom——I am glad I have found it, however. Here it is, sir——

MEANWELL.

This is it, I see, by the superscription. Now for the contents; [*reading to himself.*] Hum—hum—hum—Odd enough! My son here tells me I may expect a visit from a high original, called the marquis of Esbagnac, a fiery, petulant Gascoon, and a person of great consequence in the province of Armagnac, where he resides. It seems he is over head and ears in love with my daughter, and is coming to ask her of me in marriage.

TOM.

It is very true, sir.

MEANWELL.

How do you know, pray, sir?

TOM.

My master has told me the whole affair; and the Gascoon too, finding me a lad of good parts, (which, I hope, you will allow, shews him to have some discernment) acquainted me with the occasion of his visit; and I can tell you that you may expect him here every minute.

MEANWELL.

But has he ever seen my daughter?

TOM.

He! never in his life.

MEANWELL.

Why then, how the devil came he so violently in love with her?

TOM.

From her picture.

MEANWELL.

Her picture? I don't believe that she ever sat for it.

TOM.

Lord, sir, my master gave so warm and lively a description of her to his lordship, that he took fire immediately.

MEANWELL.

Pr'ythee, truce with thy metaphors, and come to plain speaking.

TOM.

Why, then, sir, over and above the personal charms of the young lady, your daughter, I find that his lordship has been informed she has a very large fortune depending upon you. This has so increased his passion, that he has left nothing undone, by presents and promises, since the affair has been first brought upon the carpet, to engage me to speak a good word for him.

LETTICE.

A true fortune-hunter, my life for him.

MEANWELL.

If that is all his view——

TOM. [*Going.*]
I'll beg leave, sir——

MEANWELL.
Ay, ay; go and take a glass to refresh thee.

TOM.
A couple would do me no hurt, sir.

MEANWELL.
I believe not; nor a couple to that.

TOM.
Why, no faith. I never ride so well as when I have taken a whet.

MEANWELL.
You are going back again, then, are you?

TOM.
Yes, sir; my master ordered me to return as soon as ever I had delivered my message.

MEANWELL.
Well, well: but while you are taking a little refreshment, I'll go and write an answer to his letter. Follow me.

[*Exeunt Meanwell and Tom.*]

SCENE III.

LETTICE, [*Sola.*]

What the deuce can be the meaning of this same dismal letter my master read to us just now? He seem'd to make a mystery of it, which I wonder at, as he always used to communicate every thing to me.

SCENE IV.

Enter HARRIET.

HARRIET.

Ah, my dear Lettice; I am glad I have found thee!

LETTICE.

Did you want me then?

HARRIET.

I did—and I did not.

LETTICE.

But what, in the name of wonder, makes you up and drest so soon this morning?

HARRIET.

Why, I heard my brother's man's voice as he came into the court-

yard.

LETTICE.

Well! and what of that?

HARRIET.

And I die to know what brought him here.

LETTICE.

You might have saved yourself the trouble; I was just coming to inform you.

HARRIET.

I cannot conceive what he is come in such a violent hurry about. There is certainly something more than ordinary in the wind. Tell me, my good girl, what is it?

LETTICE.

Something that will not displease you.

HARRIET.

Indeed!

LETTICE.

Indeed.

HARRIET.

Oh let me have it then this instant!

LETTICE.

Well then, here is a husband coming for you; does that please you?

HARRIET. [*Coolly.*]

As it may happen.

LETTICE.

As it may happen?

HARRIET.

Ay; but who is he, Lettice?

LETTICE.

Oh! his name will be enough, it is a mighty pompous one; it ends with gnac.

HARRIET.

For heaven's sake what can this name be?

LETTICE.

The marquis of Esbagnac, of the province of Armagnac.

HARRIET.

Mercy on us! Esbagnac of Armagnac!

LETTICE.

The name seems to frighten you; but let me tell you the title of marchioness is no despicable thing.

HARRIET.

Heaven defend us! if he would make me a duchess I would have nothing to say to him. Esbagnac! my God! what a name! sure my father can never think of making me take so ridiculous a title? I cannot pronounce it without shuddering.

LETTICE.

And yet he is a great personage in the province of Armagnac. And don't you think it much better to be my lady marchioness Esbagnac, than plain mrs. such a one.

HARRIET.

You know I am naturally headstrong, Lettice; and I declare to thee, I would rather die an old maid than take that filthy name.—Lord! could I ever be brought to say, yes, think you, to Esbagnac?

LETTICE.

And do you think, let me ask you, that the sound of a name is of any consequence when one's interest is concerned? No, no; I should be glad to see the name I would refuse, howe'er harsh or disagreeable, if it brought a title and a good estate with it. Besides, if the marquis of Esbagnac is a handsome, well made agreeable young fellow, and can please you in other respects, you'll soon get rid of your dislike to his name.

HARRIET.

Never tell me! if he was as handsome as Adonis, or as ugly as a Satyr, it would be all one to me; my resolution's fixed.

LETTICE.

May I die but you have an amazing spirit for your age miss. I always thought that young women were to be governed by their parents in these matters.

HARRIET.

To be sure, when they can.

LETTICE.

Then how comes it you are so refractory? Come, will you make me your confidant?

HARRIET.

You'll betray me.

LETTICE.

As I hope to be married, and I do not know a more solemn oath a single young woman can bind herself by, I never will discover a syllable of what you tell me.

HARRIET. [*Sighing.*]

Ah Lettice!

LETTICE.

A sigh too! this leads to something. Come, out with it:— unbosom yourself of a secret that I have observed to lie heavy at that little heart of your's these six months; and moreover, depend upon it, you are safe with me.

HARRIET.

It is a very serious affair, I'll assure you.

LETTICE.

Your eyes tell me as much.

HARRIET.

My eyes!

LETTICE.

Yes, your eyes; for they have a certain melting softness, that

speaks more than they would willingly have known. Am I wrong think you?

HARRIET. [*Sighing.*]

Alas! no.

LETTICE.

Well said——I may presume then you are in love.

HARRIET.

Thou hast guess'd it.

LETTICE.

Bravo! and deeply.

HARRIET.

Over head and ears!

LETTICE.

So much the better. With a charming young fellow I make no doubt!

HARRIET.

The most agreeable of his sex.

LETTICE.

I thought as much.

HARRIET.

Tall, well made, sensible, witty——

LETTICE.

In a word the most accomplished of mankind. I knew it, I knew it.—Well, and does he love you in return?

HARRIET.

Love me! he dies for me!

LETTICE.

And what says your father to all this?

HARRIET.

Oh! he knows nothing of the matter.

LETTICE.

Are you sure of that?

HARRIET.

Very sure; at least we have done all in our power to conceal it from him.

LETTICE.

May be so; but people in love are very apt to be off their guard; and notwithstanding the modesty of our sex, the heart will sometimes declare itself:—tell me, have you never suffered your eyes to betray you? have no stolen glances——

HARRIET.

To prevent an accident of that kind, I have always taken care to turn another way whenever my lover has spoke to me before company; and put on an air of indifference when my heart was ready to leap to my lips.

LETTICE.

So young, and so artful!

HARRIET.

Do you think I have my lesson to learn at this time of day?

LETTICE.

But I wonder that your father, who watches you so narrowly, has never observed this.

HARRIET.

I have made it my business to blind him; and I'll answer for it he never once suspected my having an inclination for any man living.

LETTICE.

I know it is what he labours of all things to prevent; but egad I find you have been beforehand with him.

HARRIET.

You'll be surpriz'd, perhaps, when I tell you that I knew what it was to love almost from my infancy.

LETTICE.

"You suck'd the dangerous poison with your milk," as the poet says.

HARRIET.

Love was the first passion of my soul; but it has always been restrained by prudence.

LETTICE.

Oh lord! to be sure. But methinks this same lover of yours has

been absent a long while; for—

HARRIET.

We have been absent much alike.

LETTICE.

He's upon the spot then.

HARRIET.

No, not quite so near.

LETTICE.

And do you love him still?

HARRIET.

Every day more and more.

LETTICE.

A girl of sixteen, and so constant; you are a perfect prodigy!

HARRIET.

I love him so well, that if I have not him I'll die an old maid.

LETTICE.

Good lord! miss, make no rash vows! but pray, what may be the name of this beloved shepherd?

HARRIET.

Thou shalt know all at a proper time, Lettice.

LETTICE.

Why you amaze me! so much discretion and reserve, with such a

stock of tenderness and constancy at your years can never last long; no, no, you'll become a true woman by and by, and be as fickle and inconstant as the veriest she of us all.

HARRIET.

Time will show whether I am the giddy creature you take me for.

SCENE V.

Enter MEANWELL hastily.

MEANWELL.

What are you two discoursing about so earnestly?

LETTICE.

Of the ridiculous customs of the times, sir.

MEANWELL.

Which, I hope, my Harriet will make it her business to avoid.

HARRIET.

It shall be my chief study so to do, sir.

MEANWELL.

That's my good girl.

LETTICE.

Yes, sir, you may trust to my young lady's prudence; she is about

to give you a convincing proof of it.

MEANWELL.

How do you mean? Well, what is your business?

SCENE VI.

Enter a SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Sir, here is the marquis of Esbagnac come to wait on you.

MEANWELL.

Shew him in, Lettice; leave us. Daughter do you stay here.

HARRIET.

Lord, sir! what business have I with the gentleman?

MEANWELL.

No business at all, only to be present and hold your tongue.

SCENE VII.

*Enter the marquis of Esbagnac, who runs to
MEANWELL, and catches him in his arms.*

MARQUIS.

Ha! my worthy friend, I am rejoiced to see you, upon my soul!
let me embrace you. I hope you are well.

MEANWELL. [*With a distant air.*]

Much at your service, my lord.

MARQUIS.

By my faith I am very glad of it. T'other hug, my dear [*hugging
and squeezing Meanwell, who endeavours to get loose from
him.*]

MEANWELL.

Sir! My lord! for heaven's sake! oh!

MARQUIS.

This is the way that we make acquaintance in my province;
which is, let me tell you, the only spot in the globe for ease and
politeness; we are quite sans façon, all free and easy as you see.

MEANWELL.

A little too much so, I think. Lord what a sweat he has put me
into! [*Wiping his face.*]

MARQUIS.

So now, do you see we are sworn friends for life.

MEANWELL.

May be so——but methinks you are rather too precipitate in

your connections.

MARQUIS.

Not in the least, my dear, not in the least; the air of our country inspires us with an happy familiarity that overleaps all ceremony. In friendship and love we take fire at once.

MEANWELL.

Now we are not quite so hasty at Paris.

MARQUIS.

No? so much the worse.—Upon my soul you seem to have a pretty little box here; very commodious, and quite rural.

MEANWELL.

Both house and owner are at your lordship's service.

MARQUIS.

I'll take you at your word; I like the situation mightily, and should be pleased to spend a summer or so—

MEANWELL.

I wish I was more worthy of entertaining such a guest.

MARQUIS.

You have a fine girl of a daughter too, I find, if the description her brother has given me of her is just.

MEANWELL. [*Pointing to Harriet.*]
Your lordship may judge for yourself.

MARQUIS.

Hum! is that the original?

MEANWELL.

The very same, such as she is.

MARQUIS. [*Surveying her.*]

Why—really—she is passable. It is not impossible but we may like each other.

HARRIET. [*Aside to Meanwell.*]

This marquis is a great fool, or I am much mistaken.

MARQUIS.

Well, miss, you see before you as clever a young fellow, tho' I say it, as ever stept under a coronet; and upon my soul I think there is something agreeable enough about yourself, a pretty roguish eye;—a smart shape—a—curse on me mr.

Whatdyecallum, if I don't think your daughter and I were made for each other. [*To Harriet.*] You blush, child! well I declare this little confusion becomes you admirably; besides, I am vastly fond of modesty, it is a scarce qualification now-a-days; so that, my chicken, the more abash'd you seem at the ardour of my passion, the more you will fan the flames of my desires. [*To Meanwell.*] Does this pretty miss talk yet?

MEANWELL.

Yes, yes, my lord; she can talk upon occasion.

MARQUIS.

I am very glad of it, for I did not know but she might have been born dumb, as I have not heard her open her lips yet.

MEANWELL.

You'll find she has the use of her tongue at a proper time.

MARQUIS.

Oh! just when she pleases; I am in no kind of haste about it. Your women who talk little are generally very virtuous; and that's what I like. [*To Harriet.*] Will you be so kind, my dear, to take a turn or two about the room?

HARRIET. [*Angrily.*]

For what purpose pray?

MARQUIS.

Why, cannot you guess? as I like your face tolerably well, child, I am willing to see if you tread well; have a genteel air; and that pretty jaunty step which gives an ease and grace to the whole body.

HARRIET.

Well, then, you shall have a specimen.

[She walks a turn or two about the stage hastily, the marquis surveying her all the time, and then runs out, pulling the door after her.]

SCENE VIII.

MARQUIS.

Sprightly! very sprightly indeed—moves with life—and gracefully enough.—What the devil! she's gone. Oh! prythee call her back; I have not half examined her yet.

MEANWELL.

'Sdeath! sir! you talk as if you was bargaining for a Horse.

MARQUIS.

Why, do you suppose I'll buy a pig in a poke, old gentleman?

MEANWELL.

No, sir; neither did I expect myself or my daughter to be treated in this manner. To the point, if you please, and lay aside all these fooleries.

MARQUIS.

Fooleries! hark'ye, old rustick, none of your snarling; I would have you know that I say nothing but what is worthy of being noticed.

MEANWELL.

And I do notice it, you see.

MARQUIS.

You do well upon my soul!

MEANWELL. [*Aside.*]

My son was quite in the right: this is an original indeed.—Pray, my lord, how long have you left the country?

MARQUIS.

About a month or so. I am a little prince in my own country, my dear; and so am accustomed to a certain freedom of speaking and acting unknown to the vulgar.

MEANWELL.

You are pretty free, indeed.

MARQUIS.

Oh! not in the least too much: I always take my own way let who will dislike it. If I was in the presence itself, I should expect the same deference to be paid me as here; or let those look to it who were wanting.

MEANWELL.

Why, what would you do?

MARQUIS.

Death and ounds! do? why I would quit the place directly and return home. I would punish the whole court by withdrawing from it: but, however, I am willing in the first place to conclude the alliance with your family, for which I am purposely come to Paris.

MEANWELL.

I should imagine, my lord, that a person of your rank and consequence might find an alliance more worthy of you in your own country.

MARQUIS.

Upon my soul you talk like a sensible man mr. Meanwell. To be sure, my dear; I have some of the most antient and noble

families in the province of Armagnac at my call: but the devil of it is, they are in general plaguy poor: now you know, what is a name without money? I am for gracing a noble title and pedigree, with a fortune capable of supporting it in its proper lustre; but not finding that very easy to come at in my own neighbourhood, why I e'en took a trip to Paris, in hopes of succeeding better. No bad scheme you'll say.

MEANWELL.

Why, troth my lord, if your visit to me was on that score, I am sorry to say your lordship will find yourself furiously disappointed; for I can very truly assure you that no one in this house has any pretensions to a fortune. A bam, a mere bam!

MARQUIS.

Don't I know that you can give the little tit I saw here just now, thirty thousand good sterling pounds down on the nail; and upon my conscience, now, that will satisfy me very well, for I am not greedy at all. And so, without any more to do, give me your hand, and let it be a bargain: for what may come hereafter, I'll trust to your honour.

MEANWELL.

You are extremely condescending; but I must once again declare to your lordship, that my daughter, Harriet, has not a penny of fortune.

MARQUIS. [*Slapping him on the shoulder.*]

Come, come, old Squeezepenny, none of your tricks upon travellers. I know what I know.

MEANWELL.

And what is that pray?

MARQUIS.

The legacy, my dear! oh ho, do you blush? D'Orcy is dead, my jewel; he is by my soul! you may not know, perhaps, that he was my uncle. No matter! he told me on his death-bed, d'ye see, that he was well informed his late wife had, a little before her death, deposited a large sum of money, which she had laid by for herself and her relations, in your hands, as a person in whom she placed great confidence; now, as nephew to my deceased uncle, I am come to demand the restitution of these family savings; and in consideration of the trouble you have had in taking charge of this money so long, I am willing to take your daughter off your hands. What say you to this now?

MEANWELL.

And was this what brought you hither?

MARQUIS.

To be sure, my dear; and as being sole heir and executor to my uncle D'Orcy.

MEANWELL.

If so, I must deal freely with your lordship; and tell you, that admitting such a sum as you mention to have been committed to my charge, none of the family of the Esbagnacs can have any pretensions to it. Your uncle, you know, had no fortune of his own when he marry'd his late wife; and as he died without children, had she survived him, she would have had an undoubted right to dispose of her's as she saw proper. Now, her

brother had two sons, the younger of whom is still living; and to him this money, if there is any, properly belongs, and to no other person.

MARQUIS.

I deny that.

MEANWELL.

You deny it! on what foundation?

MARQUIS.

I deny it, that's enough.

MEANWELL.

Indeed!

MARQUIS.

Indeed, and so e'en wave your trifling objections.

MEANWELL.

Hey day! do you think to frighten me with this vapouring?

MARQUIS.

Vapouring! death and ounds do you know who you are speaking to? Oh! by the great God I am too patient. But come, to make short of the matter, I'll relinquish my claim to your daughter, if you'll give me the money that belongs to me.

MEANWELL.

Neither the one nor the other.

MARQUIS.

How! neither the one nor the other?

MEANWELL.

I have said it.

MARQUIS.

Nay, then my jewel, look to yourself.

MEANWELL.

I am not to be terrified by empty menaces.

MARQUIS.

'Sdeath! I can hold no longer; I am all in a flame.

MEANWELL.

Then walk forth and cool yourself.

MARQUIS.

By my father's soul, my little master Meanwell, you are not very bashful, to talk of sending me away without settling accounts.

MEANWELL.

They are already settled.

MARQUIS.

And I am to have——

MEANWELL.

Nothing.

MARQUIS.

May be so: but if I stir from hence till I have made you refund

this same legacy, may I be the veriest peasant that ever hid his head in a hut. So give me satisfaction this instant, or by——

SCENE IX.

Enter TOM.

TOM. [*To Meanwell.*]

Sir, I am going to set out; have you any commands to send by me to my master?

MEANWELL.

Yes, you may tell him I shall never forgive him for having recommended me such a fool for a son-in-law.

MARQUIS. [*Clapping his hand to his sword.*]

Damnation! do you mean to affront me, sir? Draw——

MEANWELL. [*In a passion.*]

Tom, run immediately and bring me my sword.

TOM.

Lord, sir, there's no occasion for it; here's a pretty little gentleman in my hand, ready to execute any commands of yours.
[*Looking at the Marquis, and shaking his stick.*]

MARQUIS.

Thunder and ounds! you impudent scoundrel.

TOM.

Scoundrel! that's not my name, sir; I have the honour to be called Tom Blunt, and none of the Blunts were ever scoundrels; downright honest fellows, if you please, who love to speak their minds, and have a natural aversion to bullies and cowards.

MEANWELL. [*Smiling.*]

Go, go, Tom, about your business.

TOM.

I obey, sir;—but if I was in another place, I know what I know——[*Exit, elbowing the Marquis, and shaking his stick.*]

SCENE X.

Enter BELLMOUR.

[*Drest in an old black coat, Meanwell seeing him, runs and catches him in his arms.*]

MEANWELL.

Bellmour, my dear Bellmour! is it you?

BELLMOUR.

I hope you will pardon me, sir, for appearing before you in this wretched plight; but my impatience to pay my respects to you, would not permit me to stand upon form: and——

MEANWELL. [*Embracing him.*]

Once more let me bid thee welcome.

BELLMOUR.

This generous reception gives me new life.

MEANWELL.

And the sight of you——

BELLMOUR.

But if I am not mistaken, sir, I found this gentleman and you at high words when I came in. What was the matter pray?

MEANWELL.

Oh, nothing; only this noble and courageous lord thought proper to insult me in my own house.

BELLMOUR. [*Going up to the Marquis.*]

How, sir! have you dared——

MARQUIS. [*Fiercely.*]

Zounds! fellow, do you know who you are speaking to? If I did not think you out of your senses, I would soon teach you to mend your manners.

BELLMOUR.

Indeed! well, that must be put to the trial. But may I not know the reason for your making this disturbance in my friend's house?

MARQUIS. [*Raising his voice.*]

Death and furies, man! he has the impudence to keep my estate from me whether I will or no.

BELLMOUR.

Lower your note a little if you please, sir.

MARQUIS. [*Louder.*]

Blood and fire! are you to direct me how I am to speak!

BELLMOUR.

It may happen so.

MARQUIS.

He shall either give me satisfaction, or I'll make day-light shine thro' him.

BELLMOUR.

Without troubling myself to enquire into the particulars of this affair, I take upon me to aver, that this gentleman is a person of too strict honour to injure any one; and whoever says to the contrary is a rascal.

MARQUIS. [*Putting himself in a fighting posture.*]

Oh! by Jesus, my fury is up.

BELLMOUR. [*Doing the same.*]

Give it full scope then.

MARQUIS.

By heavens if I do, annihilation will be thy portion;—so look to it.

BELLMOUR. [*Advancing.*]

I am ready; take care of yourself.

MEANWELL [*Interposing.*]

Put up your sword, Bellmour, he's unworthy your notice.

MARQUIS. [*To Meanwell.*]

Pray, Mr. Meanwell, who is this fellow? By the lord I must know his name before I will dispute with him any more, or I may debase my rank and dignity, by fighting with a peasant.

BELLMOUR.

Peasant! damnation! [*Drawing*] Draw and defend yourself, or quit the house this instant.

MARQUIS.

I leave you to yourselves for the present:—We may happen to meet on another place:—In the mean time I shall make it my business to enquire who you are, and if I find——

BELLMOUR.

Shall I wait on your lordship down stairs?

MARQUIS.

No, no; I dispense with your attendance till I know your name and family; and then perhaps—

BELLMOUR.

Know then, in the first place, I am a gentleman; my name is Bellmour.

MARQUIS.

A gentleman are you? May be so; but as there's many a paltry cit that decorates himself with that appellation, I must know a little more of you before I have any thing more to say to you. In the

mean time you may thank my nice notions of honour that you are living, and so farewell.

[*Exit. Marquis hastily.*]

BELLMOUR. [*Following him to the Door.*]
Insolent rascal!

SCENE XI.

MEANWELL [*Smiling.*]
So, he's gone.

BELLMOUR.
This poltroon is a disgrace to nobility! for heaven's sake on what account did this coxcomb insult you?

MEANWELL.
On an account you little conjecture:—on your's.

BELLMOUR.
On mine?

MEANWELL.
On your's!

BELLMOUR.
How could that be?

MEANWELL.

I'll explain it to you presently. This terrible lord has lately found out that the marchioness D'Orcy, your deceased aunt, left a sum of money in my hands, amounting to thirty thousand pounds.

BELLMOUR.

Thirty thousand pounds!

MEANWELL.

No less. And this considerable legacy she deposited with me, in trust for your brother and you. I proved just to the trust reposed in me; and agreeable to her desire, kept it a secret till after the death of her lord; your brother happening to die before him, you became alone entitled to this large sum. So you see, that at the very instant you thought your fortune the most desperate, she was showering a profusion of favours upon you. The huffing blade you saw here just now, came to lay claim to this legacy, in virtue of being his uncle's executor; but you have dismissed him in the manner he deserved, and saved me the trouble.

BELLMOUR.

I am less struck with this unexpected change in my fortune, than with the unparalleled generosity with which you have acted, and which has few precedents in this, or almost any other age. Receive then the tribute of my grateful thanks, and be assured it shall be the study of my future life to merit this excess of goodness and magnanimity.

MEANWELL.

You offend me by such encomiums; the man who does justice does no more than his duty. But tell me what mean these

mournful weeds?

BELLMOUR.

They are the consequences of the misfortunes of my father, who was killed in the last campaign in America. I fought by his side for a considerable time, and ventured my own life in the defence of him who gave me being; till overpowered by numbers, I was obliged to give way; and after seeing him fall lifeless at my feet, sunk myself, covered over with wounds. The enemy rifled me of all I had about me: and to add to my misfortune, the fate of the day declared so completely against us, that the whole baggage of our army fell into the enemy's hands; and after remaining prisoner for upwards of seven months, during which time I underwent all the hardships of the most rigorous confinement, I made my escape naked and pennyless, and got on board a vessel with some few of my fellow prisoners, which brought us over to Europe. At my landing here I begged these rags you see me in, of a poor labouring man, on a promise of rewarding him handsomely when arrived among my friends. In this condition I made the best of my way to your house, in hopes of meeting relief from your known generosity; but how little did I expect to find myself in possession of so large a fortune?——

MEANWELL.

And of a wife too!

BELLMOUR. [*Hastily.*]

Good heavens! what do I hear? Is it possible that I shall possess the lovely object?—

MEANWELL.

Hear me; my old neighbour, the baron, who has a sincere affection for me, has made two proposals, one of which relates to you, the other to myself. I was daily in expectation of your return home; and as we were talking together the other day, I acquainted him with the secret of the legacy I reserved for you, which put the thought of a double alliance into his head. You must know he has a niece, who is a very agreeable young lady, and has a handsome fortune; now he made me an offer of her for your wife; so that if you are inclinable you may have her out of hand.—You seem thoughtful, Charles. I assure you it is a match every way suitable to you.

BELLMOUR.

Hum! but what was his other proposal?

MEANWELL.

Upon my word a very advantageous one, for my daughter Harriet.

BELLMOUR.

As how?

MEANWELL.

Why the baron has lately sent for his nephew, count Spangle, home from his travels; do you know him?

BELLMOUR.

I do not.

MEANWELL.

He is a very clever young man, rich, well made, keeps the best

company, and is prodigiously well-bred; but, between you and I, a most egregious coxcomb.

BELLMOUR.

And does he love miss Harriet?

MEANWELL.

He has never seen her yet. To-day he is to make his first visit; and I doubt not but my daughter will be greatly taken with him, on account of his genteel address, that is all I want; for we shall have time enough to cure him of his foppishness after marriage; and as this will be so great a match for Harriet, who, you know, has but a very small fortune, I readily embrace the offer of him for a son-in-law, and expect his uncle to bring him here every minute.

BELLMOUR.

Pray, sir, then I must discover to you——

SCENE XII.

Enter a Servant.

SERVANT.

Sir, the baron and count Spangle.

[Exit.]

MEANWELL [*To Bellmour.*]

Odso! I must go and receive them then; I'll return again as soon as possible.

[*Exit Meanwell.*]

SCENE XIII.

BELLMOUR. [*Solus.*]

He's gone without giving me time to reply.—How will he be surpriz'd when I tell him?—But heavens! is not this my Harriet coming this way? It is——Be calm, my heart; I'll step aside to see if she will recollect me in this dress.

[*Goes to the back part of the stage.*]

SCENE XIV.

Enter HARRIET, hastily; LETTICE following her.

LETTICE.

Who, in the name of goodness, are you running after?

HARRIET.

Come along, come along, my dear wench! I am sure I have seen him; it can be no other, by the flutterings of my heart——O heav'ns! it is he himself! [*Perceiving Bellmour, who stands in a musing posture.*]

LETTICE.

He! What he? That figure!

HARRIET. [*In a trembling voice.*]

Lettice?

LETTICE.

Well, what d'ye want with Lettice?

HARRIET.

What cruel mischance can have reduced him to this condition? [*To Bellmour.*] Good heav'ns! mr. Bellmour, is it you I see?

BELLMOUR.

I blush to appear before you thus——

HARRIET. [*To Lettice.*]

Yes, it is him; I know his voice.

LETTICE.

His voice? whose voice?

HARRIET. [*Trembling.*]

The voice—the voice——of——Lord! how I tremble.

LETTICE.

Mercy on me! have you lost your senses?

HARRIET. [*To Bellmour.*]

I am struck dumb with amazement! What can be the meaning of this appearance? Speak, and ease my impatience.

BELLMOUR. [*Smiling.*]

I must own, my appearance is not the most elegant, at present; but I hope very soon to——

HARRIET.

Lord, what a strange metamorphosis! May I not know how it has happened?

BELLMOUR.

My dearest Harriet, this change is the effect of my misfortunes— Love, that made me leave you in search of fortune, thro' unknown climes, has brought me back as you now see me——

LETTICE. Oh, then, I presume a certain melancholly epistle, that came to hand just now——

BELLMOUR.

Was from me. When I left home, I went to America, in hopes of making a fortune, that might render me deserving of her hand, whom I love more than life.

LETTICE.

And fortune, I find, has play'd you a slippery trick, as she has done many a lover besides.

BELLMOUR.

I complain of her no longer. I am amply rewarded for all my sufferings, since I once more behold my lovely Harriet; and find her generous heart feels for my distress. By all that's good, she weeps!

HARRIET.

What heart can be insensible to such merit in distress!

BELLMOUR. [*Taking her hand.*]

But, say; do you love me still?

HARRIET.

[*Leaning on him.*] With unbated tenderness.

BELLMOUR.

And does not my present condition lessen me in your esteem?

HARRIET.

Ungenerous supposition! Let base and grovelling minds be influenced by outside shew; a generous heart regards the person, abstracted from every other consideration.

LETTICE.

I'll be hang'd, madam, if this is not the gentleman you have been speaking to me about.

HARRIET.

I had better have kept my own council a little longer.

LETTICE.

Not in the least. But, pray, sir, considering how scurvily you have been treated by fortune, how have you been able to keep

your hopes alive?

BELLMOUR.

More than ever.

HARRIET.

As to me——

LETTICE.

But are not you afraid, if all this story of your misfortunes, and being reduced to beggary, is true; are not you afraid, I say, of some little obstacle in the way of your happiness?—My master, for instance; do you think that he will ever——

BELLMOUR.

What can I fear, while my Harriet loves me?

HARRIET.

I declare to you, Lettice, I would sooner take him, as he now appears, than receive the offers of the most exalted fortune.

BELLMOUR.

Let me hug my misfortunes, since they serve to prove to me such matchless love and constancy.——

SCENE XV.

Enter COUNT SPANGLE.

[*Who steps affectedly up to a glass, and stands for some time adjusting his dress, and admiring himself in a ridiculous manner.*]

LETTICE.

Mercy on us! who have we here? See! see! what airs it gives itself.

HARRIET.

Oh! his appearance is enough to tell you who he is.

LETTICE.

As I live, I believe it is count Spangle, nephew to our neighbour the baron——

COUNT. [*Advances, bowing affectedly to Harriet, who turns from him with contempt.*]

Madam, your slave—I presume I am sufficiently known to you, without announcing myself by name.

HARRIET.

Really, sir, you are mistaken, for you are an absolute stranger to me.

LETTICE. [*Apart to Harriet.*]

Don't you think him a pretty figure?

HARRIET. [*Aside.*]

I see nothing in him but the ridiculous fop.

COUNT.

I was here yesterday; you must certainly have seen me.

HARRIET.

Not I, upon my word, sir.

COUNT.

Well, now then, I present myself to you, as one whom the power of your divine charms has riveted your eternal slave——Those eyes, those charming eyes, have pierced a heart, till now, insensible to all the efforts of love and beauty.

LETTICE. [*Aside to Harriet.*]

Lord! what a number of fine things all in a breath!

HARRIET. [*Aside.*]

He's a well-dressed fool; that's the most you can say of him.

COUNT.

Lovely miss Harriet, you are silent! What means this cold reserve? Say, charming maid, am I to have your hand without your heart?

HARRIET. [*To Lettice.*]

My hand! What does he mean?

LETTICE. [*Aside.*]

I'm afraid I can guess.

COUNT.

Adorable creature! vouchsafe me one word;

[*Going to take her hand, she pulls it back.*]

HARRIET.

Good heav'ns! what insipid fustian!

COUNT.

At least, bless me with a look.

HARRIET. [*Turning from him.*]

For what, sir?

COUNT.

For what, my angel? because I shall very soon have a right to that, and other marks of your affection.

LETTICE.

Marks of my lady's affection! Indeed, sir, I believe you deceive yourself.

COUNT.

Why, mrs. Abigail, do you think I am a person to be despis'd?

LETTICE. [*Making a low courtesy.*]

Oh! lord, sir, by no means!

COUNT.

If high birth, a title, figure, and an agreeable person, can please, I think I may pretend——

HARRIET.

Doubtless, sir, you have abundance of merit; but——

COUNT.

Kill me not; O cruel, but angelical maid!

HARRIET.

Angelical! Indeed, sir, I am but a simple mortal.

COUNT.

A mortal? Blaspheme not such heavenly perfections. You are a goddess! A divinity! Made for love and adoration.

HARRIET.

For heav'ns sake, truce with your high flights, and descend to talk in a stile that I can understand.

COUNT.

What must I say, then, to please you?

HARRIET.

Nothing.

COUNT.

Nothing?

LETTICE.

Yes, sir; for my lady chuses to be adored in silence.

COUNT.

Indeed! then, I am mute; lost to the power of utterance: but, permit me, thus lowly bending at your feet, to gaze on you with tacit love and admiration; and judge of my passion from my respectful silence. [*Here he kneels to Harriet, and makes love, affectedly, in dumb shew.*]

LETTICE.

Well, may I die if this is not an admirable scene.

HARRIET.

I shall lose all patience. Come, Lettice.

[*Going.*]

LETTICE. [*To Count Spangle, who still remains on his knees.*]
Do not let us disturb you, sir; we shall be back again presently.

COUNT. [*Laying hold of Harriet's gown.*]

By heav'ns you shall not leave me thus! but stay, and hear me recount the joys, the extasies, we shall taste, when blessed in the possession of each other.

HARRIET. [*Aside to Lettice.*]

Joys! ecstasies! possession! Mercy on me, Lettice! I tremble, lest my father would have engag'd my hand.

COUNT.

Yes, tomorrow! Tomorrow! you are to be my charming bride; and I, the beloved and happy husband of the loveliest of her sex.

HARRIET.

How! I your bride?

COUNT.

Yes, adorable miss Harriet. My uncle and your father have this instant settled the preliminaries, and I flew hither, on the wings of love, to give you notice of it; but, instead of expressing equal rapture on your side, you——

BELLMOUR.

You must look for no raptures here, I'll assure you sir. Your

brilliant figure will have no effect on this lady's heart.

COUNT.

And why so, pray?

BELLMOUR.

Because it is already engaged.

COUNT.

Oh, mightily well; then I shall disengage it, that's all. I have a happy talent at dismissing a rival.

BELLMOUR.

And yet, there is a person in the world, who, perhaps, may stand his ground, in defiance to this happy talent of yours.

COUNT.

Who is he?

BELLMOUR.

He who loves the best, and is the most beloved.

COUNT.

What prating fellow is this? Hearn'e, man, do you know who you are speaking to?

BELLMOUR.

Truly, I have not that honour; but, nevertheless, I'll answer for it, you'll be obliged to lower your topsail.

COUNT.

'Sdeath! friend, don't provoke me. If you have any regard to

yourself, go about your business.

BELLMOUR.

I am not a person to be easily frightened, sir, as I am ready to convince you, if you think proper.

COUNT.

Fire and fury! Quit the place this instant, or, by all that's sacred——

SCENE Last.

Enter the BARON, and MEANWELL.

[The Baron runs and catches Bellmour in his arms.]

BARON.

My dear mr. Bellmour, let me embrace you. I heartily felicitate you on the happy change in your affairs; and am rejoiced that your merit is rewarded with so noble a fortune, as I find my worthy friend, mr. Meanwell, has reserved for you.

BELLMOUR.

My dear baron, your friendly joy augments my own.

COUNT. [*Aside.*]

My dear mr. Bellmour! my dear baron! Zounds! I have mistaken my man, I believe.

HARRIET. [*Aside to Lettice.*]

Good God! Lettice, what do I hear!

LETTICE. [*Aside.*]

Hear? why, that your lover is rich, when you thought him a beggar.

HARRIET.

Heav'n send it may have no ill effect upon his heart.

LETTICE.

Amen, say I, since you wish it; but, in good faith, it is hard trusting to the sex.

HARRIET.

Peace! I will not harbour so base a thought of him.

BARON.

Mr. Meanwell tells me, he already acquainted you with our intentions; and I am now come to let you know, that we have settled every thing, and only wait for your consent. I am ready to give you my niece; and my good neighbour here, assures me, that you are ready to accept her hand. She'll please you, my boy, or I'm much mistaken. This young gentleman is her brother, who came up to town since you left us, and is, as you see, a good pretty figure of a fellow; well bred; a man of quality; and, with all these accomplishments, has a very large fortune, which he is willing to bestow on this young lady, in consideration of her merit and beauty. She has not quite so much money as I could wish, and, indeed, imagined at first; but no matter—Come, nephew, let me introduce you to your brother-in-law that is to

be. A little acquaintance with him will make you think yourself happy in such a relation. Embrace him, I say, and be better acquainted.

COUNT. [*Going up to Bellmour in confusion.*]

Sir—I—Upon my honour, I am extremely sorry, sir—my mistake—but I hope—

BELLMOUR.

You seem surpris'd, my lord——Let this teach you, not always to judge of a man from his dress.

COUNT.

You are perfectly right, sir: before Gad, I am really immensely confounded—but, I ask your pardon, from the bottom of my soul.

BELLMOUR. [*Embracing him.*]

And I as heartily give it you. Now, sir, [*To the Baron.*] I must undeceive you.

BARON.

Undeceive me! how?

BELLMOUR.

By telling you, that I should esteem it a singular honour and happiness, to accept the hand you offer me, if I was not already engag'd.

MEANWELL.

Engag'd? what do you mean?

LETTICE. [*Aside.*]

Now for it, madam.

HARRIET. [*Aside.*]

Support me, Lettice. I can hardly breathe.

MEANWELL.

Sure, Bellmour, you have not play'd the fool, and marry'd unknown to your friends?

BELLMOUR.

No, sir, I am not yet marry'd; but I am bound, by love and honour, in as strict ties as those of matrimony, that no authority, no consideration, shall ever make me renounce.

HARRIET.

Lettice, I revive.

LETTICE.

Blessings on him!

MEANWELL.

This is very extraordinary; but, come, unbosom yourself with freedom, and let us know the person to whom you have thus engag'd yourself.

BELLMOUR.

I shall imitate your generous example, sir, who might so easily have with-held the large fortune you have put me in possession of; and, with an openness equal to your own, reveal to you the whole secret of my inmost soul. It is out of my power to return your goodness, by complying with your present request; what I can do, I am ready to perform. Thus, on my knees then, let me

entreat you to grant me the lovely Harriet for my wife: or, in case you think me undeserving of so precious a gift, take back the fortune you have so lately given me, which can have no charms for me, if I am not permitted to share it with the only woman I have found worthy of my love.

COUNT.

But heark'e, my dear, you know very well that this lady is intended for me. The affair is determined, irrevocably fixed.

BELLMOUR.

If so, together with her hand, take the legacy her father reserved for me.

COUNT.

With all my heart: and, to show you that I do not bear malice, I am willing to lie under this obligation to you.

BARON. [*To the Count.*]

How, sir! is not your own fortune and mine sufficient to satisfy you? without——

COUNT.

To be sure, nuncle; but, you know that my honour is concerned in vindicating my claim to the lady; and, since this gentleman insists that the legacy shall go with her; why, it would be brutal, to the last degree, to refuse so generous an offer.

MEANWELL.

This offer shews all the nobleness of Bellmour's soul; but I should be an infamous wretch to take advantage of it. No; the

legacy shall be his. As to my engagements, as a man of honour, I cannot break them. Harriet shall be your's; but you must take her without a fortune, as I have already told your uncle.

BELLMOUR.

I hope, however, you will permit the lady to speak for herself. I am sensible, you are too tender and indulgent a parent, to engage your daughter's hand, without consulting her sentiments in regard to the person you propose her to pass the remainder of her life with.

MEANWELL.

Rightly observed.

BARON.

Well then, madam, give me leave to ask you, if my nephew has the happiness of pleasing you?

MEANWELL.

Oh, I can answer for her. Yes.

LETTICE.

And I say, No.

MEANWELL.

How! mrs. pert! Have you the insolence—— [*To the Baron.*] Be not surpris'd, sir; I am well convinc'd of my daughter's prudence and virtue.

LETTICE.

Very true, sir; but, notwithstanding all that, my mistress cannot help it, if another has found the way to her heart, and——

MEANWELL.

Why, is there such an one? Who is he? Speak.

LETTICE.

Nay, nay, she's of age to answer for herself.

MEANWELL [*To Harriet.*]

Tell me this instant, what is his name?

HARRIET.

I dare not.

MEANWELL.

Dare not! Tell me, I say.

LETTICE.

Why, his name is——

MEANWELL.

What?

LETTICE.

Can't you guess, now?

MEANWELL.

'Sdeath! don't play with my impatience.

LETTICE. [*Pushing Bellmour towards him.*]

Why, take the man and the name together, then.

MEANWELL.

How! Bellmour! Is this true, Harriet?

HARRIET.

It is, sir. I confess it.

BELLMOUR.

Thus, on my knees, let me thank you for so generous a confession. [*Kneels and kisses her hand.*]

HARRIET.

Rise, sir, for heaven's sake; I am overwhelm'd with confusion.

BARON. [*To the Count.*]

The town is taken, nephew; we had best draw off our troops.

MEANWELL.

Upon my honour, baron, I was entirely ignorant of this; as you may judge by my surprize—It is what I never once dreamt of.

BARON.

I see no reason why you should be surpris'd. They have been long acquainted with each other; and, I think, you might easily have——

MEANWELL. [*To Bellmour.*]

And have you really a passion for my daughter likewise?

BELLMOUR.

I have lov'd her from her earliest infancy; and it was in order to make myself worthy of her, that I undertook the long voyage in which I have undergone so many sufferings.

COUNT.

I am sorry for it, with all my soul; but I must tell you, that I love

miss Harriet as well as you can do, and am not a person to resign my claim to any man living——[*To Meanwell.*] Look you, sir, you have given me your word, and I shall insist upon your keeping it.

MEANWELL.

It is no longer in my power, sir. I cannot make my daughter miserable for life, by marrying her against her inclinations. She has placed them on this young gentleman; he is deserving of them; and, I think, I should act unjustly in refusing my consent.

BARON.

Come, nephew, I see you must give up your pretensions——

MEANWELL.

I hope, baron, you will pardon——

BARON.

No excuses, my good friend; I cannot blame you in the least.

COUNT.

I flatter'd myself, miss, you would think me deserving of your hand: however, you will repent having refused me, take my word for it.

HARRIET.

I must stand to the consequences, my lord.

COUNT.

You are blinded by a foolish fondness, at present; but, when time and expedience have opened your eyes, you will see your error; and confess you had better have made choice of me; you

will, indeed, my princess. But, I would have you save yourself the trouble of an application to me, in that case; for, I shall leave you to your fate, I assure you, without vouchsafing you one single syllable of comfort.

HARRIET.

And you might have sav'd yourself the trouble of so ridiculous a declaration.

BARON.

Body o'me, nephew, you are a great coxcomb. I always thought you too vain; and now I am confirmed in my opinion. Madam, give me leave to assure you, that, had I known your affection for this gentleman, and his for you, I would never have been the instrument of disturbing the happiness of two persons so deserving of each other. Forgive me, mr. Bellmour, for the involuntary fault I was guilty of, in obstructing your happiness. You are now going to enjoy the reward due to your merit and constancy, from the hands of the most noble and disinterested of men. [*Pointing to Meanwell.*] Let his example be the rule of your conduct through life; and, like him, you'll taste a satisfaction known only to the good and worthy;

Who, for fair honour, riches disregard,
And trust to virtue, as it's own reward.

END OF THE FORTUNE-HUNTER.



TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE

Contemporary spellings have been retained throughout. This includes use of lower case for titles such as Mr., Miss, Marquis, etc., and words such as confident (for confidant), stile (for style) and council (for counsel).

Punctuation was added for clarity in one instance: "why do you suppose I'd buy a pig in a poke" became "why, do you suppose I'd buy a pig in a poke".

The text is drawn from:

THE COMIC THEATRE.
BEING A FREE TRANSLATION
Of all the Best
FRENCH COMEDIES.
BY
SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq. and Others.
VOL. III,
LONDON,
MDCCLXX

[The end of *The legacy, or, The fortune-hunter* by Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de Marivaux (1688-1763)]