King Arthur

The Opera

In Five Acts.

Written by John Dryden

Composed by

Henry Purcell

AND NOW FIRST PRINTED.

Edited by

Edward Taylor,

Professor of Music in Gresham College.

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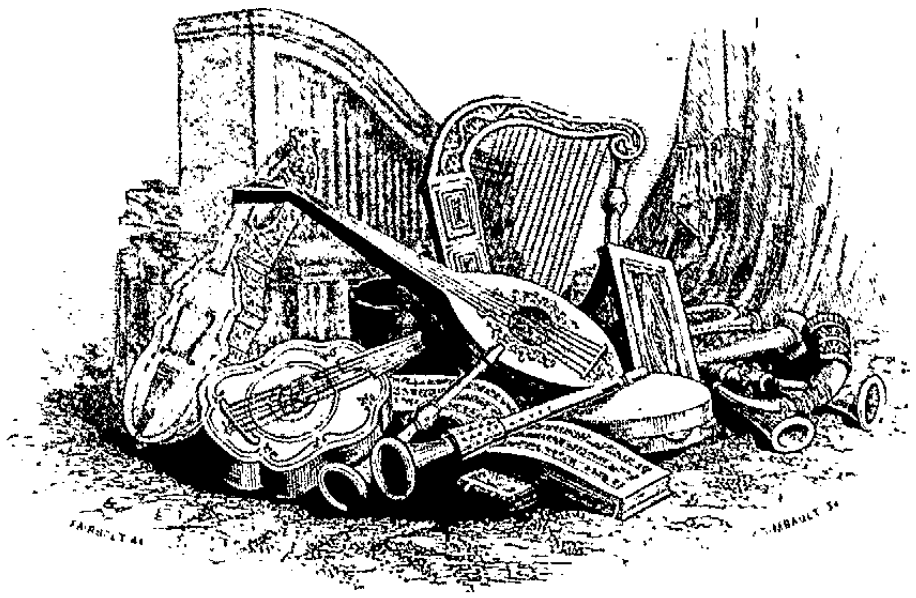

INTRODUCTION.

MY friend Mr. Rimbault, in his Introduction to the (only complete) edition of Purcell's Bonduca has led to the expectation that I should prefix a Life of its illustrious composer to the present edition of KING ARTHUR. To endeavour to supply this desideratum is a dream in which I sometimes indulge; but a Life of Purcell must occupy more leisure than I have now at command, and more space than is compatible with the plan of publication adopted by the Musical Antiquarian Society. What I now write, therefore, will only have reference to the Opera which I have undertaken to edit.

"KING ARTHUR" may be regarded as an illustration of Purcell's matured judgement and confirmed experience as to the mode in which Music should be employed in connection with the Drama. These were not conformed, but opposed, to what was regarded as the highest authority on this subject at the time. This may be given in the words of Dryden:—

"An Opera is a poetical Tale or Fiction, represented by Vocal and Instrumental Musick, adorned with Scenes, Machines, and Dancing. The supposed persons of this musical Drama are generally supernatural, as Gods and Goddesses, or Heroes which are at the least descended from them, and are in due time to be adopted into their number."—"The Recitative part of the Opera requires a more masculine beauty of expression and sound: the other (which for want of a proper English word I must call the *Songish* part) must abound in softness and variety of numbers, its principal intention being to please the hearing, rather than to gratify the understanding. It appears at first sight preposterous, that rhyme, on any consideration, should take the place of reason: but in order to resolve this problem, this fundamental proposition must be settled,—that the first inventors of any art or science, provided they have brought it to perfection, are, in reason, to give laws to it: and according to their model all after-undertakers are to build."—"Now, to apply this axiom to our present purpose, whosoever undertakes the writing of an Opera, is obliged to imitate the design of the Italians, who have not only invented, but brought to perfection, this sort of Dramatick Musical Entertainment*."

This, which we may suppose to have been the current opinion of the time, was adopted by

* Preface to Albion and Albanius.

Tate and assented to by Purcell, in their *Dido and Æneas*, in which the Italian rules for the construction of an Opera are adhered to. The dialogue is, throughout, in Recitative, the hero is god-descended, and the story is heroic. A boy of seventeen, who had never seen an Opera, who was ignorant of the Italian language, and whose musical training had been in the Chapel-royal, was little likely to question an opinion which Dryden endeavoured to exalt into an "axiom." In the Plays to which Purcell furnished the music for some succeeding years, he supplied it just when and where the poet required, and in greater or less abundance according to his design or caprice. Whenever an occasion presented itself, as in the *Libertine*, Purcell eagerly and successfully profited by it, and even the bombast of Dryden in *Tyrannick Love* is immortalized by his music, while that of *A Fool's Preferment*, though confined to a succession of single songs sung by the same person, is clothed in melodious variety and expressive beauty.

In 1685, after Purcell had composed the music to *Dido and Æneas*, *The Libertine*, and *Timon of Athens*, the Opera of *Albion and Albanius* appeared, written by Dryden, and composed by Mons. Grabu. This person, who was brought to England as the worthy head or chief of a company of French fiddlers, the only tolerated musicians of the court of Charles II., and for whom that profligate and unprincipled sovereign even displaced the organists and silenced the organ of the Chapel-royal,—this Monsieur Grabu was employed, in obedience to the command of his royal master, to furnish the music to the piece. His own estimate of his talents is thus recorded, as well as that of King Charles (who died before *Albion and Albanius* was produced), in his Dedication to James II.:—

"As the subject of this Opera is naturally magnificent, it could not but excite my genius, and raise it to a greater height in the composition—even so as to surpass itself. The only displeasure which remains with me is, that I could not possibly be furnished with variety of excellent voices, to present it to your Majesty in full perfection *."

The characters of his royal patrons are thus delineated, and their destiny (in one instance somewhat prematurely) predicted by M. Grabu:—

"Never," says he, "were two Princes united more straitly together in common sufferings from ungrateful and rebellious subjects. The nearness of their blood was not greater than the conformity of their fortunes. But the Almighty has received the one in his mercy to Heaven, and rewarded the constancy and obedience of the other here below. Virtue is triumphant in both places. Immortality is actually possessed by one Monarch, and the other has the earnest of it in the type of earthly glory *."

Equally uniform, according to the composer's account, was the admiration of his work by both his Stuart masters, and we may well believe that he spoke the truth; for Dryden was not ashamed to echo their opinions and to join in the unworthy attempt to extol this foreign competitor at the expense of his illustrious countrymen. "The best judges, and those too of the best quality," says he, "who have honoured his rehearsals with their presence, have no less commended the happiness of his genius than his skill. These and other qualities have raised M. Grabu to a degree above any man who shall pretend to be his rival on our Stage."

The courtly servility of Dryden is one of the stains upon his character. "Of this kind of meanness," says Dr. Johnson, "he never seems to decline the practice, or lament the necessity: he considers the great as entitled to encomiastic homage, and brings praise rather as a tribute than a gift: more delighted with the fertility of his invention, than mortified by the prostitution of his judgement."

* Preface to Albion and Albanius.

Thus, and thus only, can we account for the language which Dryden has employed, which must be regarded as an expression of unworthy adulation made at the expense of his judgement. Of the real merits of Grabu's Opera it is needless to speak; the work is in existence, and those who are so inclined may form their own opinion of its merits. They certainly are of a very different kind to those of Purcell.

The performance of *Albion and Albanius* is thus recorded by Downes in his "Roscius Anglicanus":—

"In Anno 1685 the Opera of Albion and Albanius was performed: wrote by Mr. Dryden, and composed by Monsieur Grabu. This being performed on a very unlucky day, being the day the Duke of Monmouth landed in the West, it was performed but six times, which not answering half the charge they were at, involved the Company very much in debt."

That Dryden had, in reality, formed a more accurate estimate of Purcell's habits as a dramatic composer, may be inferred from the fact of their being found in association in the altered version of Shakspeare's *Tempest*, which was produced in 1690. The Revolution had taken place, and neither taunts nor patronage were any longer the rewards of Stuart adulation. An English musician, if not patronized, was no longer proscribed as such at Court, and therefore was not shunned and disowned by the courtly poet. Dryden's opinion of his coadjutor's powers may also be inferred from the copious additions which he made to those parts of the play that were intended to be set to music. But he still scarcely seems to have regarded Purcell as an equal and a fellow-labourer, but rather as a journeyman, whose assistance, like that of the stage-carpenter, was necessary to the production of his Drama. No notice of him is vouchsafed by Dryden in his Preface, nor does that music which has been adopted by succeeding managers in all the various forms in which the *Tempest* has been revived, and which has kept possession of the Stage to the present time, receive from the poet the slightest commendation or even notice.

In the same year was produced *Dioclesian, or the Prophetess.* Whatever it may be necessary to state with regard to this play will more properly accompany the edition of it which Mr. Macfarren is preparing for the Musical Antiquarian Society. But Purcell's modest and admirable Dedication ought to stand near that of Monsieur Grabu; they will indicate the characters of the two men, as their musical compositions mark their station as artists.

"TO HIS GRACE CHARLES DUKE OF SOMERSET.

"Your Grace has been pleased so particularly to favour the composition of the Musick in *Dioclesian*, that from thence I have been encouraged to this presumption of dedicating not only it, but also the unworthy author of it to your protection. All arts and sciences have received their first encouragement from great persons, and owe their propagation and success to their esteem: like some sort of fruit-trees, which being of a tender constitution, and delicate in their nature, require the shadow of the cedar to shield their infancy from blights and storms.

"Music and Poetry have ever been acknowledged Sisters, which walking hand in hand support each other; as Poetry is the harmony of words, so Music is that of notes: and as Poetry is a rise above prose and oratory, so is Music the exaltation of Poetry. Both of them may excel apart, but sure they are most excellent when they are joyn'd, because nothing is then wanting to either of their perfections: for thus they appear like wit and beauty in the same person. Poetry and Painting have arrived to their perfection in our own country: Music is yet but in its nonage, a forward child, which gives hope of what it may be hereafter in England, when the masters of it shall find more encouragement. 'Tis now learning Italian, which is its best master, and studying a little of the French air, to give it somewhat more of gayety and fashion. Thus being farther from the sun, we are of later growth than our neighbour countries, and must be content to shake off our barbarity by degrees. The present age seems already disposed to be refined, and to distinguish betwixt wild fancy and a

just numerous composition. So far the genius of your Grace has already prevailed on us: many of the nobility and gentry have followed your illustrious example in the patronage of Musick. Nay, even our poets begin to grow ashamed of their harsh and broken numbers, and promise to file our uncouth language into smoother words.

"Once more, therefore, I presume to offer myself and this composition with all humility to your Grace's protection, at least till I can redeem so mean a present by one which may better deserve your acceptation. Be pleased to pardon my ambition, which had no other means to obtain the honour of being made known to you, but only this. The town, which has been so indulgent to my first endeavours in this kind, has encouraged me to proceed in the same attempt; and your favour to this trifle will be a good omen, not only to the success of the next, but also to all the future performances of

"Your Grace's most obedient and most obliged Servant,

"HENRY PURCELL."

We now come to KING ARTHUR. What was the immediate cause of this Opera having been produced in the form which it assumed under the hands of Dryden and Purcell, it would be fruitless now to seek. Whether the suggestion came from Betterton, from Dryden, or from Purcell, we should now vainly inquire. That these eminent persons must often have been brought together is certain; that the subject of the Lyric Drama generally—the form in which Music should be employed as a dramatic agent—its position and use in connection with the Stage—the amount of deference which ought to be paid to the authority of Italy, and the object at which a dramatic composer ought to aim—that these were all topics of occasional discussion, seems equally sure. Dryden had announced his opinion on this subject with oracular brevity and decision. To this opinion Purcell, then an inexperienced boy, had assented. But the time was now come in which he felt himself able to assert and vindicate his own views of the nature and character of Dramatic Music. From the two leading dogmas of the Italian Operatic code he dissented; he saw no reason for admitting only heathen divinities or demons into the Lyric Drama, nor any sufficient cause for carrying on the entire dialogue of the piece in Recitative. That he understood and proved the intent and power of Recitative will not be questioned; that he comprehended its true force and value as well as any composer of his time, English or foreign, he has left us sufficient evidence to prove. Burney calls "the opening of 'You twice ten hundred Deities' the best piece of Recitative in our language." It was not, therefore, from inability to understand, or incompetency to give effect to the requirements of the Italian rules for the construction of an Opera, that Purcell dissented from them; his opinions were the result of deliberate conviction, prompted by the masculine vigour of his mind, his consummate knowledge of the powers of his art, and that copious store of learning which rendered every step that he took firm and sure. He arrived at this conclusion,—That Poetry and Music should meet as sisters, upon equal terms and aiming at the same object; that the aid of Music should be given whenever and wherever it is needed,—whenever it can contribute to "the exaltation of Poetry," and only then; that an Opera should be so constructed that the assistance of Music should be necessary, or at least auxiliary, never needless or intrusive; that Music should be employed whenever and in whatever way it can best carry on the business of the scene, but that when the action of the Drama needs not its assistance, it should be withheld. An Opera, therefore, constructed on these principles would be a Drama of which Music formed a necessary, frequent, and integral part, but of which the dialogue was spoken. Such an Opera Dryden undertook to write, and, abandoning the principle which he had so dogmatically asserted, consented to construct one in conformity with Purcell's views of the power and province of Dramatic Music. The poet and the musician therefore now met on terms of admitted equality.

The history of his KING ARTHUR will be found in Dryden's Dedication of it to the Marquess of Halifax.

Dryden's assertion, that "the numbers of Poetry and Music are sometimes so contrary" as to render it necessary to "make verses rugged to the reader that they may be harmonious to the hearer," it is not very easy to understand. The rhythm of Poetry and of Music is subject to similar rules and formed on similar principles. A halting verse is an obstacle—not a help to a composer. That Purcell would request variety of metre from his poet we can easily comprehend, but that he would demand of him rugged verses, or songs written in violation of "the rules of Poetry," is not very likely. The result however was, that Dryden was satisfied with the labours of his colleague, on whom, for the first time during their frequent connection, he bestowed not merely notice but commendation. We have also his admission, that in what concerned the employment of Music he was guided by the suggestions of Purcell.

KING ARTHUR was produced at "the Queen's Theatre," with the following title and cast:—

KING ARTHUR, OR THE BRITISH WORTHY, a Dramatick Opera:

MEN.

KING ARTHUR	Mr. Betterton.
OSWALD, *King of Kent, a Saxon and a Heathen*	Mr. Williams.
CONON, *Duke of Cornwall, Tributary to King Arthur* . . .	Mr. Hodgson.
MERLIN, *a famous Enchanter* .	Mr. Kynaston.
OSMOND, *a Saxon Magician and a Heathen*	Mr. Sandford.
AURELIUS, *Friend to Arthur* . .	Mr. Alexander.
ALBANACT, *Captain of Arthur's Guards*	Mr. Bowen.
GUILLAMAR, *Friend to Oswald* .	Mr. Harris.

WOMEN.

EMMELINE, *Daughter of Conon* .	Mrs. Bracegirdle.
MATILDA, *her Attendant* . . .	Mrs. Richardson.

SPIRITS.

PHILIDEL, *an Airy Spirit* . .	Mrs. Butler.
GRIMBALD, *an Earthy Spirit* .	Mr. Bowman.

Officers and Soldiers, Singers and Dancers.

SCENE IN KENT.

The only singers whose names appear in the above cast are Bowman and Mrs. Butler. John Bowman (or as Betterton spells it, Boman) was the son of John Bowman, of King Street, Westminster; he was born in 1664, and was brought into the Duke's Theatre to sing at seven years old. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Francis Watson, Bart. She was also on the Stage, and was, says Betterton, "a very pretty player, both in her person and performances*."

Of Mrs. Butler, Cibber gives the following brief notice:—

"Mrs. Butler was the daughter of a decayed Knight. She proved not only a good Actress, but was allowed, in those days, to sing and dance to perfection. In the Dramatick Opera of Dioclesian and in that of King Arthur she was a capital and an admired performer†."

Mrs. Bracegirdle was a singer as well as an actress, although her vocal powers were not called into action in KING ARTHUR.

"Never was any woman," says Cibber, "in such general favour of her spectators, which to the last scene of her dramatick life she maintained, by not being unguarded in her private character. This discretion contributed not a little to make her the *Cara*, the darling of the Theatre. The most eminent authors always chose her for their favourite character. In such parts as required singing, her voice and action gave a pleasure, which good sense, in those days, was not ashamed to give praise to†."

In one of his later Operas, the Second Part of *Don Quixote*, which Purcell composed in conjunction with Eccles, there is a song (by Eccles) with Mrs. Bracegirdle's name attached to it as

* The History of the English Stage, by Mr. Thomas Betterton. † Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber.

the singer, beginning "I burn, my brain consumes to ashes," which demands some power of execution, and more of expression, and her performance of it is celebrated in the song, "Whilst I with grief did on you look," by Purcell*.

The performers comprehended under the general appellation of "Singers" must have been numerous, even supposing several of them to have played two or more characters, since they include the Saxon Priests, the Chief or Captain of the British Soldiers, the Shepherds and Shepherdesses, the Airy Spirits in the Third Act, the Cold Genius, Cupid, Sirens, Nymphs and Sylvans, the persons in the Masque, Eolus, Pan and Nereids, Comus and Peasants, Venus and her attendants, and in the concluding scene, Honour. To most of these "Singers" belong principal parts requiring no ordinary vocal talents, but there is no record of their names. I think, however, there is little doubt that for the same performer for whom Purcell composed, in the following year, "You twice ten hundred Deities," he also wrote the part of the Cold Genius. This was Richard Leveridge, the best English bass singer of his time. In early life Leveridge enjoyed the friendship and profited by the instruction of Purcell, after whose death he sung in the Anglo-Italian Operas introduced by Clayton and Haym, until these "counterfeit presentments" were succeeded by the genuine Italian Opera under the direction of Handel. The legitimate English Opera had by this time become extinct; and Leveridge was glad to take the only engagement that offered, and to sing in Rich's Pantomimes at the Playhouse in Lincoln's Inn Fields. In 1726 he opened a coffee-house in Tavistock Street, Covent Garden: and when incapacitated by age from attending either to his trade or his profession, he received from those friends to whose entertainment he had contributed while he was able, enough to maintain him in comfort for the rest of his life. He died about 1768, having nearly attained the age of ninety. Leveridge was a composer as well as a singer. He wrote some of the songs in the *Island Princess*, an Opera altered from Fletcher's play of the same name by Motteux. I have also three sets of his Songs, without date, but evidently published at remote intervals, in many of which there is considerable merit. Purcell is his frequent model; and if his songs are not as successful as those of copyists in general, it is because Purcell is a composer the most perilous to imitate and the most difficult to copy.

Leveridge was personally known both to Hawkins and Burney (the latter speaks of having heard him sing "in a style almost antediluvian"), and it is exceedingly to be regretted that these English musical historians should have neglected to avail themselves of the information which his contemporary and friend could have enabled them to add to their meagre narrative of Purcell's Life. Dr. Burney's well-known opinion that "Henry Purcell is as much the pride of an Englishman in Music, as Shakspeare in productions for the Stage, Milton in Epic Poetry, Locke in Metaphysics, or Newton in Philosophy," would seem likely to have prompted a greater anxiety to learn and to record, while it was yet possible, something of the character of so extraordinary a person. Time has long since severed the link which connected Purcell with the living, and we must grope our way as well as we can.

The performance of KING ARTHUR is thus recorded by Downes:—

"KING ARTHUR, an Opera, wrote by Mr. Dryden: it was excellently adorned with Scenes and Machines: the musical part set by the famous Mr. Henry Purcell, and Dances made by Mr. Jo. Priest: the Play and Musick pleas'd the Court and City: and being well performed 'twas very gainful to the Company."

Cibber also, who is at no pains to conceal his dislike of any connection of Music with the Drama, admits the "great success of KING ARTHUR and *Dioclesian*." When they were produced he occupied but a subordinate station in the company: when he became its manager, the music of Purcell was heard no more.

* Orpheus Britannicus, vol. i. p. 5. Second Edition.

It might have been expected that of a work produced under such auspices and with such success,—the joint effort of two such men, the admitted living representatives of their respective arts,—that a work which earned the approbation of a woman of Queen Mary's excellent sense*, pleased both the Court and the City, and established itself in the public favour, would quickly have appeared in print, in order that the thousands who could not partake the pleasure of hearing it on the Stage, might yet have enjoyed the gratification of singing it in private. This would seem a natural, almost a necessary result; but it was not. We have to regret that but a part of Purcell's KING ARTHUR survives to us. Nor, in this instance, did its author deviate from his usual habits. He published, as compared with what he wrote, almost nothing. The most ordinary precautions for the preservation of his works, or for deriving any emolument to himself from their publication, he neglected. Some curious proofs of this are upon record, and as Johnson says of Shakspeare, we have to lament and suffer from "his negligence of fame, or perhaps that superiority of mind which despised its own performances when it compared them with its powers, and judged those works unworthy to be preserved, which critics of following ages were to contend for the fame of restoring and explaining." Whatever were the cause, the fact is certain, that Purcell never published his KING ARTHUR, nor (as in another instance) did any publisher bring it out without his knowledge or permission.

Purcell died in 1695; and three years afterwards the first edition of the Orpheus Britannicus was published by Playford, with a dedication from Purcell's widow to his favourite pupil, the Lady Frances Howard. Herein the following scattered fragments of KING ARTHUR first appear, as entitled,—

A Two-part Song.—"For Love every creature."
A Song in King Arthur.—"Fairest Isle."
A Three-part Song.—"For folded flocks."
A Two-part Song in King Arthur.—"Sound a parley, ye fair."
"Two Daughters of this aged stream."
Dialogue.—"You say 't is Love creates the pain."

These seem to be all the pieces that Playford could collect when he published the first edition of the Orpheus Britannicus; for the second volume of that edition (published in 1702) contains no further addition to the pieces from KING ARTHUR.

In the second edition of the entire work, published in 1712, the following additional pieces appear, as entitled,—

In the First Volume.

A Song, with Instruments, out of King Arthur.—"Hither, this way bend."
A single Song.—"I call you all to Woden's Hall."
A Song in King Arthur.—"Sound a parley, ye fair."
A Two-part Song.—"Shepherd, leave decoying."
The First Scene in the Third Act of King Arthur.—"What ho! thou Genius of this Isle."

In the Second Volume.

A Song for Two Voices.—"To Woden thanks we render."

In publishing "A Collection of the choicest Songs composed by Mr. Henry Purcell" (for such is the second title of the Orpheus Britannicus), a regard to his reputation as well as their own advantage would have induced his widow and the publisher of the work to insert much, if not all the music of a work so recent and so popular as KING ARTHUR; and I can only account for the

* See Dryden's Dedication.

scanty portion that appears on the supposition that more was not within their reach. It would seem that Purcell made but a single copy of the Opera, and that after his death this copy was in the hands of persons (most probably the managers of the Theatre) who did not choose to part with it for the purpose of publication, and that Playford was thus compelled to derive from other and less authentic sources such fragments of KING ARTHUR as he could. This opinion derives confirmation from the imperfect and mutilated form in which many of the pieces appear. Thus, in the first edition of the Orpheus Britannicus, "Sound a parley, ye fair," is printed in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, and without symphonies or violin accompaniment, which are supplied in the second edition (where the piece is printed in $\frac{3}{2}$ time), a more perfect copy, doubtless, having come into the editor's possession. Of the added pieces in the second edition, all, save one, are only fragments of scenes. "Hither, this way bend," is but Philidel's first Solo without the Chorus, terminating at bar 9, page 34 of the present edition. "I call you all to Woden's Hall" (erroneously styled "A single Song") is a single movement from the Sacrificial Scene in the First Act, without the Chorus on the same subject. "Sound a parley, ye fair" is detached from the Frost scene to which it belongs, and the other portions of the scene want their connecting links: the Recitative of Cupid, "No part of my dominions;" the Chorus, "See, we assemble;" the Solo, "'T is I that have warm'd you," and the Chorus, "'T is Love that has warm'd us," being omitted.

Various inaccuracies in the words (many of which have been perpetuated in every subsequent copy) occur; thus—

"For folded flocks *and* fruitful plains;"
instead of
"For folded flocks, *on* fruitful plains."

"Fairest Isle *of* Isles excelling;"
instead of
"Fairest Isle, *all* Isles excelling."

"If you step, no *longer* thinking,
Down you fall, a furlong *pinking*;"
instead of
"If you step, no *danger* thinking,
Down you fall, a furlong *sinking*."

"I call *you* all to *Wooden's* Hall,
Your temples round with *joy* bound
And goblets crown'd,
And plenteous bowls of burnish'd gold:
Where *we* shall laugh," &c.;
instead of
"I call *ye* all to *Woden's* Hall:
Your temples round with *ivy* bound
In goblets crown'd,
And plenteous bowls of burnish'd gold:
Where *you* shall laugh," &c.

"Here are marriage vows for *sighing*;"
instead of
"Here are marriage vows for *signing*."

In the Frost Scene.

"What ho! thou Genius of *this Isle*;"
instead of
"What ho! thou Genius of *the Clime*."

"Seest thou not how stiff and wondrous *cold*;"
instead of
"Seest thou not how stiff and wondrous *old*."

"My beams create a more glorious *Spring*;"
instead of
"My beams create a more glorious *Year*."

Most of these errors are evidently those of copyists, and they are here cited (at more length than to some persons may seem worth while) in order to show that the widow of Purcell and his friend Playford had not a copy of KING ARTHUR, but were compelled to pick up a Song here, and a Duet there, when and how they could. These were probably obtained from the different singers in the Opera, each of whom, if able to supply his own part, could furnish no more.

Thus was this extraordinary composition, so original in design, so perfect in execution, abounding with all the attributes of vigorous and masculine thought, and enriched with the graces and resources of his art,—a composition which was to charm remote ages and future generations, of which insulated and detached portions were to be transplanted into the concert-room, and engage

the attention and display the powers of the greatest singers that this country has produced,—cast from the hands of its author, as if it had been unworthy of preservation. How are we to account for this? Purcell must have felt his own power: he must have been aware that he was the equal —on their own ground—of every musician, of whatever country, who had preceded him; and yet, within three years after his death, his widow was compelled to hunt up where she could the "*disjecta membra*" of one of his most popular works!

It would seem as if the view which he had obtained of the powers and resources of his art, and his conviction of what it might hereafter accomplish, had led him to regard all that he had produced but as the efforts of a learner (and we are justified in this conclusion from his own words), fitted to give a brief and transient impulse to his art, and, having accomplished this purpose, to be forgotten. It may be that he was right: it may be that we yet stand, as he stood, but at the threshold of the temple of Music: it may be that in his "clear dream and solemn vision" he saw further than his successors: nor will it be denied that some of its recesses have been further explored by genius and talent like his own; but all the great attributes which belong to the true artist, all the requirements which make the true musician, we may yet learn of Purcell.

"Those models," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "which have passed through the approbation of ages may be considered as sure guides, and regarded as subjects of admiration rather than of criticism." By this test we may, assuredly, try the compositions of Purcell, and we may add, that no man, finding his art as he found it, left it as he left it.

The Advertisement which appears in the first edition of the Orpheus Britannicus is a curious and significant commentary on what I have said. Who would believe that "these Six" comprised all the works that were published of the most voluminous Church composer that the English school can boast,—the writer of the music to thirty-nine Operas and Plays, the author of single Songs without number, and of endless Catches?

"ALL the excellent compositions of Mr. Henry Purcell, both Vocal and Instrumental, that have been published: *viz.*—

"His First Book of Twelve Sonatas, in 4 parts.
"His Ayrs and Sonatas newly printed, in 4 parts.
"The Opera of Dioclesian.
"Te Deum and Jubilate, in Score.
"A Choice Collection of Lessons for the Harpsichord or Spinett, with instructions for beginners.

"These Six, printed for Madam Purcell, and sold for her by Henry Playford."

In the "MS. Memoirs of Musick" by the Hon. Roger North (now in the possession of Mr. G. Townshend Smith, Organist of Hereford Cathedral), he mentions as the "chief of" what he calls "the Semi Operas" produced at Drury Lane, "*Circe, the Fayery Queen, Dioclesian*, and KING ARTHUR, which latter," he adds, "was composed by Purcell, and is unhappily lost*." Mr. North could scarcely be unaware that the other Operas, as well as KING ARTHUR, were the composition of Purcell; but his testimony points to the conclusion, which is too well confirmed by other evidence, that the complete Score of that Opera speedily vanished. Many MS. copies, however, more or less complete, still exist; and from the following the present edition has been compiled.

SCORE. In my own Library, nearly contemporary with the time of Purcell.
— From the collection of Mr. Corfe, Organist of Salisbury Cathedral: date about 1720.
— In the British Museum, formerly in the possession of Dr. Croft, and afterwards of Sir John Hawkins.

* Memoirs of Musick, being some Historico-Critticall Collections of that subject, by the Hon. Roger North of Rougham in Norfolk, 1728.

Score. In the possession of George Lawrence, Esq., formerly in the collection of Mr. Bartleman.
— Formerly in the possession of Mr. Travers, and now of Mr. Hedgley: date about 1730.
— In the possession of Mr. Windsor of Bath: date about 1760.
Dr. Arne's published edition of such parts of Purcell's Opera as he used at its revival in 1770.
Mr. Goodison's edition of Purcell, which terminated abruptly at the eighth bar of Philidel's Solo, "Hither, this way bend."
Airs for the Theatre.

From these various sources I have been enabled to compile a more complete, and, I hope, a more correct copy of King Arthur than is, at present, known to exist. No complete copy of what remains of the Opera has ever been printed. The same pieces are not found in all the above copies, and various differences occur in the score of such as are common to all. The editor of this and many other of Purcell's works will have, as I have had, to regret the want of any copy of authority, and to be compelled to exercise his own judgement in determining the text. Conjectural emendation is always a difficult task, but when applied to the compositions of Purcell a dangerous one. I have only endeavoured, to the best of my judgement, to free his work from those obvious and unavoidable errors which result from the multiplication of MS. copies; and between different readings, to adopt that which had the weight of authority and probability on its side. In this duty I have had the able advice of my brethren of the Council, and especially the effective assistance of Mr. Rimbault, to whom my thanks are eminently due.

The pieces which I have been unable to supply are the following:—

In Act III.

Song (Philidel), "We must work, we must haste."
— — "Thus I infuse these sovereign dews."
Song (Airy Spirit), "O Sight, the Mother of desires."

In Act IV.

Solo (Siren) and Chorus, "O pass not on, but stay."

In Act V.

Song (Comus and Peasants), "Your hay it is mow'd, and your corn is reap'd."

We may be assured, from Dryden's own words, that whatever parts of the play he wrote for music, Purcell set to music: indeed some of the missing portions of the Opera are indispensable to the dramatic action of the play. It is possible, therefore, that some of these may be recovered, and in this hope the present edition is so arranged that any piece may be inserted in its proper place. Its publication will doubtless stimulate further research; and if the Council of the Musical Antiquarian Society shall fortunately possess themselves of any authentic copies of the deficient pieces, they will be printed hereafter.

It remains to record the revivals of King Arthur. These I believe to be without parallel in the history of Dramatic Music; as I am not aware of any unpublished Opera, which for eighty years was known to the world only by name, having been restored to the Stage, and exhibited to successive generations.

To the discernment and good taste of Dr. Arne we owe the first revival of King Arthur. The play received some alteration from the hands of Garrick, but its original five-Act form was preserved. Arne wrote a new overture, eight new recitatives and songs (chiefly to supply those of Purcell which were lost), and Dibdin supplied a march and two dances. Dibdin is probably mistaken in the reason which, in the following passage, he assigns for Arne's introductions, which were made, not in consequence of Garrick's alterations, but to supply the want of those

pieces, which, though not found in the extant copies of the Opera, are yet necessary to its dramatic action.

"Arne, who, though according to Garrick's plan, was obliged to introduce some music of his own, was so far from mutilating Purcell, that he rescued those beauties from oblivion which time and ignorance had obscured. Arne idolized Purcell; and it was his pride to place him in that conspicuous situation the brilliancy of his reputation demanded*."

It was brought out December 13, 1770, at Drury Lane Theatre, and thus cast:—

King Arthur	Mr. Reddish.	Merlin	Mr. Aikin.
Grimbald	Mr. Bannister.		
Oswald	Mr. Jefferson.	Emmeline	Miss Hayward.
Osmond	Mr. Palmer.	Philidel	Mrs. Baddeley.

Victor thus registers the revival:—

"King Arthur, a Dramatic Opera. This celebrated performance was written by Dryden, and the Music composed by Purcell—two eminent Geniuses! In this improved, enlightened age we are apt to laugh at some of Dryden's bombastical strokes. Purcell's music retains its due force and merit, because founded on nature. The revival of this Dramatic Opera has answered the expectations of every adventurer, and Managers who have Singers are always right to have King Arthur in their stock†."

Murphy's pretended account of this revival is a tissue of blunders from first to last. He confounds it with that of a subsequent one; and the change of title and curtailment of the Drama to two acts he ascribes to Garrick, who had been then dead five years. He calls the music "Dr. Arne's," to which, with the scenes and decorations, he attributes the "powerful effect" which the Opera produced‡.

After the first run, the revived King Arthur was frequently acted for several years. It was then laid aside, and again produced October 19, 1781 (the bill stating "first time for six years"), with the following cast:—

King Arthur	Mr. Smith.	Emmeline	Miss Farren.
Grimbald	Mr. Bannister.	Philidel	Miss Field.
Oswald	Mr. Brereton.	Venus	Miss Phillips, (afterwards Mrs. Crouch).
Osmond	Mr. Farren.		
Merlin	Mr. J. Aikin.	Cupid	Miss Romanzini, (afterwards Mrs. Bland).

The following lines appeared at this time in one of the daily papers:—

"*To Miss Phillips, on seeing her in the character of Venus, in the Opera of* King Arthur.

"Methinks I see you in your ivory car,
Sparkling in gems, like the bright morning star:
In purple clothed, your brows with roses crown'd,
And your moist hair with golden fillets bound:
Drawn by your doves, as through the air you fly,
The winds, enamour'd, breathe a gentle sigh:
As upward, to the blest abodes you move,
All heaven, all earth, harmonious, sing their love."

November 22, 1784: the Opera, cut down to two acts, was again produced at Drury Lane under the title of *Arthur and Emmeline*, when Mr. Kemble played King Arthur. The music

* Dibdin's History of the Stage, vol. v. p. 239.

† History of the Theatres of London, vol. iii. p. 172.

‡ Life of David Garrick by Arthur Murphy, vol. ii. p. 76.

received some alteration from the hands of Mr. Linley, at that time one of the patentees of Drury Lane. A few additions from the original Opera were made, but much that Dr. Arne had retained was omitted. The entire Frost scene was expunged, and a song for Philidel was added, of which both the words and the music were new.

The next revival of the Opera in its mutilated form was at Covent Garden, November 2, 1803, with this cast :—

King Arthur	Mr. C. Kemble.	Emmeline	Mrs. H. Siddons.
Grimbald	Mr. Cory.	Philidel	Miss Wheatley.
Oswald	Mr. H. Siddons.		
Merlin	Mr. Murray.		

"The piece was revived," says Oulton, "with great pomp and splendour, and produced abundant applause*."

During the time that Mr. Hawes was the musical director of the English Opera House, he produced a different version of King Arthur, retaining its new title of *Arthur and Emmeline*, but extending the yet curtailed libretto to three acts. The opera was thus cast :—

King Arthur	Mr. Perkins.	Emmeline	Miss Kelly.
Grimbald	Mr. Thorne.	Philidel	Miss Goward, (afterwards Mrs. Keeley).
Oswald	Mr. Baker.		
Osmond	Mr. H. Phillips.	Venus	Miss Hamilton.
Merlin	Mr. Chapman.	Cupid	Miss Boden.
Neptune	Mr. J. O. Atkins.		
English Chief . . .	Mr. Pearman.		

In this version of the Opera Mr. Hawes rejected all the added music of Dr. Arne, and introduced some pieces from Purcell's *Indian Queen* and *Dido and Æneas*.

The last revival of King Arthur was under the direction of Mr. Macready at Drury Lane, November 16, 1842. The original title of the Opera was restored, but no former libretto was adopted, although, like the preceding version, it was made to consist of three Acts. It was thus cast :—

King Arthur	Mr. Anderson.	Emmeline	Mrs. Nisbett.
Grimbald	Mr. Stretton.	Philidel	Miss P. Horton.
Oswald	Mr. Graham.	Venus	Miss Fairbrother.
Osmond	Mr. H. Phillips.	Cupid	Miss Romer.
Merlin	Mr. Ryder.		

In this version (of which the musical arrangement was made by Mr. T. Cooke) the greater part of Purcell's music was retained, and some of that by Arne. Several pieces, from *The Libertine*, *Dido and Æneas*, *The Indian Queen*, and *Bonduca*, were also introduced, or substituted for those of a similar character in the original Opera. It was played thirty-three nights.

* History of the Theatres of London, vol. ii. p. 116.

EDWARD TAYLOR.

Stoke-Ferry, Norfolk, 1843.

King Arthur:

OR,

THE BRITISH WORTHY.

A DRAMATIC OPERA,

BY JOHN DRYDEN.

PERFORMED AT THE QUEEN'S THEATRE BY THEIR MAJESTIES SERVANTS.

..... Hic alta theatris
Fundamenta locant; scenis decora alta futuris.—*Virg. Æn.* i. 431.
Purpurea intexti tollant aulæa Britanni.—*Virg. Georg.* iii. 25.
.....Tanton' placuit concurrere motu,
Jupiter, æternâ gentes in pace futuras?—*Virg. Æn.* xii. 503.
.....Et celebrare domestica facta.—*Hor. De Arte Poet.* 287.

PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCXVII.

TO THE MARQUIS OF HALIFAX.

My Lord,

This Poem was the last piece of service which I had the honour to do for my Gracious Master King Charles the Second; and though he lived not to see the performance of it on the Stage, yet the Prologue to it, which was the Opera of Albion and Albanius, was often practised before him at Whitehall, and encouraged by his royal approbation. It was, indeed, a time which was proper for triumph, when he had overcome all those difficulties which for some years had perplexed his peaceful reign: but when he had just restored his people to their senses, and made the latter end of his government of a piece with the happy beginning of it, he was on the sudden snatched away from the blessings and acclamations of his subjects, who arrived so late to the knowledge of him that they had but just time enough to desire him longer before they were to part with him for ever. Peace be with the ashes of so good a king! Let his human frailties be forgotten, and his clemency and moderation (the inherent virtues of his family) be remembered with a grateful veneration by three kingdoms, through which he spread the blessings of them: and as your Lordship held a principal place in his esteem, and perhaps the first in his affection, during his latter troubles, the success which accompanied those prudent counsels cannot but reflect an honour on those few who managed them, and wrought out by their faithfulness and diligence the public safety. I might dilate on the difficulties which attended that undertaking,—the temper of the people, the power, arts and interest of the contrary party; but those are all of them invidious topics; they are too green in our remembrance; and he who touches on them, *incedit per ignes suppositos cineri doloso*. But without reproaching one side to praise another, I may justly recommend to both those wholesome counsels, which, wisely administered and as well executed, were the means of preventing a civil war and of extinguishing a growing fire which was just ready to have broken forth among us. So many wives who have yet

their husbands in their arms, so many parents who have not the number of their children lessened, so many villages, towns and cities whose inhabitants are not decreased, their property violated, or their wealth diminished, are yet owing to the sober conduct and happy results of your advice. If a true account may be expected by future ages from the present, your Lordship will be delivered over to posterity in a fairer character than I have given, and be read, not in the preface of a play (whose author is not vain enough to promise immortality to others or to hope it for himself), but in many pages of a chronicle filled with praises of your administration. For if writers be just to the memory of King Charles the Second, they cannot deny him to have been an exact knower of mankind, and a perfect distinguisher of their talents. It is true his necessities often forced him to vary his counsellors and counsels, and sometimes to employ such persons in the management of his affairs who were rather fit for his present purpose than satisfactory to his judgement; but where it was choice in him, not compulsion, he was master of too much good sense to delight in heavy conversation, and whatever his favourites of state might be, yet those of his affection were men of wit. He was easy with these, and complied only with the former. But in the latter part of his life, which certainly required to be most cautiously managed, his secret thoughts were communicated but to few; and those selected of that sort who were *amici omnium horarum*, able to advise him in a serious consult where his honour and safety were concerned, and afterwards capable of entertaining him with pleasant discourse as well as profitable. In this maturest part of his age, when he had been long seasoned with difficulties and dangers and was grown to a niceness in his choice, as being satisfied how few could be trusted, and of those who could be trusted how few could serve him, he confined himself to a small number of bosom friends, amongst whom the world is much mistaken if your Lordship was not first.

If the rewards which you received for those services were only honours, it rather showed the necessities of the times than any want of kindness in your Royal Master; and as the splendour of your fortune stood not in need of being supported by the Crown, so likewise in being satisfied without other recompense you showed yourself to be above a mercenary interest, and strengthened that power which bestowed those titles on you, which, truly speaking, were marks of acknowledgement more than favour.

But as a skilful pilot will not be tempted out to sea in suspected weather, so have you wisely chosen to withdraw yourself from public business when the face of heaven grew troubled and the frequent shifting of the winds foreshowed a storm. There are times and seasons when the best patriots are willing to withdraw their hands from the Commonwealth, as Phocion in his latter days was observed to decline the management of affairs; or as Cicero (to draw the similitude more home) left the pulpit for Tusculum, and the praise of oratory for the sweet enjoyments of a private life, and, in the happiness of those retirements, has more obliged posterity by his Moral Precepts than he did the Republic in quelling the conspiracy of Catiline. What prudent man would not rather follow the example of his retreat, than stay, like Cato, with a stubborn unseasonable virtue to oppose the torrent of the people, and at last be driven from the market-place by a riot of a multitude incapable of counsel and deaf to eloquence? There is, likewise, a portion of our lives which every wise man may justly reserve to his own peculiar use, and that without defrauding his native country. A Roman soldier was allowed to plead the merit of his services for his dismission at such an age; and there was but one exception to that rule, which was an invasion from the Gauls. How far that may work with your Lordship I am not certain, but I hope it is not coming to the trial.

In the mean time, while the nation is secured from foreign attempts by so powerful a fleet, and we enjoy not only the happiness but even the ornaments of peace in the divertisement of the town, I humbly offer you this trifle, which, if it succeed upon the stage, is like to be the chiefest entertainment of our ladies and gentlemen this summer. When I wrote it, seven years ago, I employed some reading about it, to inform myself out of Beda, Bochartus and other authors, concerning the rites and customs of the heathen Saxons, as I also used the little skill I have in poetry to adorn it. But not to offend the present times nor a government which has hitherto protected me, I have been

obliged so much to alter the first design, and take away so many beauties from the writing, that it is now no more what it was formerly, than the present ship of the Royal Sovereign, after so often taking down and altering, is the vessel it was at the first building. There is nothing better than what I intended but the music, which has since arrived to a greater perfection in England than ever formerly, especially passing through the artful hands of Mr. Purcel, who has composed it with so great a genius that he has nothing to fear but an ignorant, ill-judging audience. But the numbers of poetry and vocal music are sometimes so contrary, that in many places I have been obliged to cramp my verses, and make them rugged to the reader that they may be harmonious to the hearer, of which I have no reason to repent me, because these sorts of entertainments are principally designed for the ear and eye, and therefore, in reason, my art on this occasion ought to be subservient to his; and besides, I flatter myself with an imagination, that a judicious audience will easily distinguish betwixt the songs wherein I have complied with him, and those in which I have followed the rules of poetry in the sound and cadence of the words. Notwithstanding all these disadvantages, there is somewhat still remaining of the first spirit with which I wrote it; and though I can only speak by guess of what pleased my first and best patroness, the Duchess of Monmouth, in the reading, yet I will venture my opinion, by the knowledge I have long had of her Grace's excellent judgement and true taste of poetry, that the parts of the airy and earthy spirits, and that fairy kind of writing which depends only upon the force of imagination, were the grounds of her liking the poem and afterwards of her recommending it to the Queen. I have likewise had the satisfaction to hear that Her Majesty has graciously been pleased to peruse the manuscript of this Opera, and given it her royal approbation. Poets, who subsist not but on the favour of sovereign princes and of great persons, may have leave to be a little vain, and boast of their patronage who encourage the genius that animates them. And therefore I will again presume to guess, that Her Majesty was not displeased to find in this poem the praises of her native country, and the heroic actions of so famous a predecessor in the government of Great Britain as King Arthur.

All this, my Lord, I must confess, looks with a kind of insinuation that I present you with somewhat not unworthy your protection; but I may easily mistake the favour of Her Majesty for her judgement: I think I cannot be deceived in thus addressing to your Lordship, whom I have had the honour to know, at that distance which becomes me, for so many years. It is true that formerly I have shadowed some part of your virtues under another name; but the character, though short and imperfect, was so true, that it broke through the fable and was discovered by its native light. What I pretend by this dedication is, an honour which I do myself to posterity, by acquainting them that I have been conversant with the first persons of the age in which I lived, and thereby perpetuate my prose when my verses may possibly be forgotten or obscured by the fame of future poets; which ambition, amongst my other faults and imperfections, be pleased to pardon in,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MR. BETTERTON.

Sure there's a dearth of wit in this dull town,
When silly plays so savourily go down:
As when clipp'd money passes, 't is a sign
A nation is not overstock'd with coin.
Happy is he, who in his own defence
Can write just level to your humble sense;
Who higher than your pitch can never go;
And doubtless he must creep who writes below.
So have I seen in hall of knight or lord
A weak arm throw on a long shovel-board;
He barely lays his piece, bar rubs and knocks,
Secured by weakness not to reach the box.
A feeble poet will his business do,
Who straining all he can comes up to you;
For if you like yourselves you like him too.
An ape his own dear image will embrace;
An ugly beau adores a hatchet face:
So some of you, on pure instinct of nature,
Are led, by kind, to admire your fellow-creature.
In fear of which, our house has sent this day
To insure our new-built vessel, call'd a play.
No sooner named than one cries out, These stagers
Come in good time to make more work for wagers.
The town divides, if it will take or no;
The courtiers bet, the cits, the merchants too—
A sign they have but little else to do.
Bets at the first were fool-traps, where the wise,
Like spiders, lay in ambush for the flies;
But now they're grown a common trade for all,
And actions, by the News-book, rise and fall—
Wits, cheats and fops are free of Wager-hall.
One policy as far as Lyons carries,
Another, nearer home, sets up for Paris;
Our bets at last would ev'n to Rome extend,
But that the Pope has proved our trusty friend.
Indeed, it were a bargain worth our money
Could we insure another Ottobuoni.
Among the rest there are a sharping set
That pray for us, and yet against us bet:
Sure Heaven itself is at a loss to know
If these would have their prayers be heard, or no;
For in great stakes we piously suppose
Men pray but very faintly they may lose.
Leave off these wagers, for in conscience speaking,
The city needs not your new tricks for breaking;
And if you gallants lose, to all appearing
You 'll want an equipage for volunteering;
While thus no spark of honour left within ye,
When you should draw the sword you draw the guinea.

KING ARTHUR:

OR,

THE BRITISH WORTHY.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

KING ARTHUR.
OSWALD, King of Kent, a Saxon and a Heathen.
CONON, Duke of Cornwall, Tributary to King Arthur.
MERLIN, a famous Enchanter.
OSMOND, a Saxon Magician and a Heathen.
AURELIUS, Friend to Arthur.
ALBANACT, Captain of Arthur's Guards.
GUILLAMAR, Friend to Oswald.

WOMEN.

EMMELINE, Daughter of Conon.
MATILDA, her Attendant.

SPIRITS.

PHILIDEL, an Airy Spirit.
GRIMBALD, an Earthy Spirit.

Officers and Soldiers, Singers and Dancers.

SCENE—*in Kent.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter Conon, Aurelius, Albanact.

Conon. Then this is the deciding day, to fix
Great Britain's sceptre in great Arthur's hand.
Aur. Or put it in the bold invader's gripe.
Arthur and Oswald, and their different fates,
Are weighing now within the scales of heaven.
Conon. In ten set battles have we driven back
These heathen Saxons, and regain'd our earth.
As earth recovers from an ebbing tide
Her half-drown'd face, and lifts it o'er the waves,
From Severn's banks, ev'n to this barren down,
Our foremost men have prest their fainty rear,
And not one Saxon face has been beheld;
But all their backs and shoulders have been stuck
With foul dishonest wounds: now here, indeed,
Because they have no further ground, they stand.
Aur. Well have we chose a happy day for fight;
For every man, in course of time, has found
Some days are lucky, some unfortunate.
Alb. But why this day more lucky than the rest?
Conon. Because this day
Is sacred to the patron of our isle;
A Christian and a soldier's annual feast.

Alb. Oh, now I understand you. This is St. George of Cappadocia's day. Well, it may be so, but faith I was ignorant; we soldiers seldom examine the rubric, and now and then a saint may happen to slip by us; but if he be a gentleman saint, he will forgive us.

Conon. Oswald undoubtedly will fight it bravely.
Aur. And it behoves him well, 't is his last stake.
But what manner of man is this Oswald? Have ye ever seen him?

[*To* Albanact.

Alb. Never but once; and that was to my cost too; I followed him too close, and to say the truth, somewhat uncivilly, upon a rout; but he turned upon me as quick and as round as a chafed boar, and gave me two licks across the face to put me in mind of my Christianity.

Conon. I know him well; he 's free and openhearted.

Aur. His country's character; that speaks a German.
Conon. Revengeful, rugged, violently brave;
And once resolved is never to be moved.
Alb. Yes, he is a valiant dog; pox on him.
Conon. This was the character he then maintain'd,
When in my court he sought my daughter's love,
My fair, blind Emmeline.
Alb. I cannot blame him for courting the heiress of Cornwall: all heiresses are beautiful; and as blind as she is, he would have had no blind bargain of her.
Aur. For that defeat in love he raised this war.
For royal Arthur reign'd within her heart
Ere Oswald moved his suit.
Conon. Ay, now Aurelius, you have named a man;
One, whom besides the homage that I owe,
As Cornwall's Duke, to his imperial crown,
I would have chosen out from all mankind
To be my sovereign lord.
Aur. His worth divides him from the crowd of kings;
So born, without desert to be so born;
Men set aloft to be the scourge of heaven,
And with long arms to lash the under world.
Conon. Arthur is all that's excellent in Oswald,
And void of all his faults. In battle brave,
But still serene in all the stormy war,
Like heaven above the clouds; and after fight,
As merciful and kind to vanquish'd foes
As a forgiving God: but see, he's here,
And praise is dumb before him.

Enter King Arthur, *reading a letter, with* Attendants.

Arth. [*reading*]. Go on, auspicious Prince, the stars are kind:
Unfold thy banners to the willing wind,
While I, with airy legions, help thy arms,
Confronting art with art, and charms with charms.
So Merlin writes; nor can we doubt the event,
[*To* Conon.
With heaven and you to friends. Oh, noble Conon,
You taught my tender hands the trade of war;
And now again you helm your hoary head,
And under double weight of age and arms,
Assert your country's freedom and my crown.
Conon. No more, my son.
Arth. Most happy in that name!
Your Emmeline, to Oswald's vows refused,
You made my plighted bride.
Your charming daughter, who like Love, born blind,
Unaiming hits with surest archery,
And innocently kills.
Conon. Remember, son,
You are a general, other wars require you;
For see the Saxon gross begins to move.
Arth. Their infantry embattled, square and close,
March firmly on to fill the middle space,
Cover'd by their advancing cavalry.
By heaven, 't is beauteous horror:
The noble Oswald has provoked my envy.

Enter Emmeline, *led by* Matilda.

Ha! now my beauteous Emmeline appears,
A new, but oh, a softer flame inspires me;
Ev'n rage and vengeance slumber at her sight.
Conon. Haste your farewell; I 'll cheer my troops, and wait ye.
[*Exit* Conon.
Em. Oh father, father, I am sure you are here,
Because I see your voice.
Arth. No, thou mistakest thy hearing for thy sight;
He is gone, my Emmeline,
And I but stay to gaze on those fair eyes,
Which cannot view the conquest they have made.
Oh starlight night, dark only to thyself,
But full of glory, as those lamps of heaven
That see not when they shine!
Em. What is this heaven, and stars, and night, and day,
To which you thus compare my eyes and me?
I understand you when you say you love;
For, when my father clasps my hand in his,
That 's cold, and I can feel it hard and wrinkled;
But when you grasp it, then I sigh and pant,
And something smarts and tickles at my heart.
Arth. Oh, artless love! where the soul moves the tongue,
And only nature speaks what nature thinks.
Had she but eyes!
Em. Just now you said I had.
I see them, I have two.
Arth. But neither see.
Em. I am sure they hear you, then;
What can your eyes do more?
Arth. They view your beauties.
Em. Do not I see? You have a face like mine,
Two hands, and two round, pretty, rising breasts,
That heave like mine.
Arth. But you describe a woman.
Nor is it sight, but touching with your hands.
Em. Then 't is my hand that sees, and that 's all one;
For is not seeing touching with your eyes?
Arth. No, for I see at distance where I touch not.
Em. If you can see so far, and yet not touch,
I fear you see my naked legs and feet
Quite through my clothes; pray do not see so well.
Arth. Fear not, sweet innocence;
I view the lovely features of your face;
Your lips' carnation, your dark shaded eyebrows,
Black eyes and snow-white forehead: all the colours
That make your beauty and produce my love.
Em. Nay, then, you do not love on equal terms.
I love you dearly without all these helps.
I cannot see your lips' carnation,
Your shaded eyebrows, nor your milk-white eyes.
Arth. You still mistake.
Em. Indeed I thought you had a nose and eyes,
And such a face as mine: have not men faces?
Arth. Oh, none like yours, so excellently fair.
Em. Then would I had no face; for I would be
Just such a one as you.
Arth. Alas! 't is vain to instruct your innocence,
You have no notion of light or colours.
[*Trumpet sounds within.*
Em. Why, is not that a trumpet?
Arth. Yes.
Em. I knew it.
And I can tell you how the sound on 't looks;
It looks as if it had an angry fighting face.

Arth. 'T is now, indeed, a sharp unpleasant sound,
Because it calls me hence, from her I love,
To meet ten thousand foes.
Em. How do so many men e'er come to meet?
This devil trumpet vexes them, and then
They feel about for one another's faces,
And so they meet and kill.
Arth. I 'll tell ye all when we have gain'd the field.
One kiss of your fair hand, the pledge of conquest,
And so a short farewell.
[*Kisses her hand, and exit with* Aurelius, Albanact, *and* Attendants.
Em. My heart and vows go with him to the fight;
May every foe be that which they call blind,
And none of all their swords have eyes to find him.
But lead me nearer to the trumpet's face;
For that brave sound upholds my fainting heart;
And while I hear, methinks I fight my part.
[*Exit, led by* Matilda.

The Scene represents a place of Heathen worship; the three Saxon Gods, Woden, Thor and Freya, placed on pedestals. An altar.

Enter Oswald *and* Osmond.

Osm. 'T is time to hasten our mysterious rites,
Because your army waits you.
Osw. Thor, Freya, Woden, all ye Saxon Powers,
[*Making three bows before the three images.*
Hear and revenge my father Hengist's death.
Osm. Father of gods and men, great Woden, hear;
Mount thy hot courser, drive amidst thy foes;
Lift high thy thundering arm, let every blow
Dash out a misbelieving Briton's brains.
Osw. Father of gods and men, great Woden, hear;
Give conquest to thy Saxon race, and me.
Osm. Thor, Freya, Woden, hear, and spell your Saxons,
With sacred Runic rhymes, from death in battle.
Edge their bright swords, and blunt the Britons' darts.
No more, great Prince, for see my trusty fiend,
Who all the night has wing'd the dusky air.
[Grimbald, *a fierce earthy* Spirit, *arises.*
What news, my Grimbald?
Grim. I have play'd my part;
For I have steel'd the fools that are to die;
Six fools, so prodigal of life and soul,
That for their country they devote their lives
A sacrifice to mother earth and Woden.
Osm. 'T is well; but are we sure of victory?
Grim. Why ask'st thou me?
Inspect their entrails, draw from thence thy guess:
Blood we must have, without it we are dumb.
Osm. Say, where 's thy fellow-servant, Philidel?
Why comes not he?
Grim. For he 's a puling sprite.
Why didst thou choose a tender airy form
Unequal to the mighty work of mischief?
His make is flitting, soft, and yielding atoms,
He trembles at the yawning gulf of hell,
Nor dares approach the flame, lest he should singe
His gaudy silken wings.
He sighs when he should plunge a soul in sulphur,
As with compassion touch'd of foolish man.
Osm. What a half-devil 's he!
His errand was to draw the lowland damps
And noisome vapours from the foggy fens,
Then breathe the baleful stench, with all his force,
Full on the faces of our christen'd foes.
Grim. Accordingly he drain'd those marshy grounds,
And bagg'd them in a blue pestiferous cloud,
Which when he should have blown, the frighted elf
Espied the red-cross banners of their host,
And said he durst not add to his damnation.
Osm. I 'll punish him at leisure:
Call in the victims to propitiate hell.
Grim. That 's my kind master, I shall breakfast on them.

[Grimbald *goes to the door, and re-enters with six* Saxons *in white, with swords in their hands. They range themselves three and three in opposition to each other. The rest of the stage is filled with* Priests *and* Singers.

Woden, first to thee,
A milk-white steed, in battle won,
We have sacrificed.
Chor. We have sacrificed.

Ver. Let our next oblation be
To Thor, thy thundering son,
Of such another.
Chor. We have sacrificed.

Ver. A third (of Friezland breed was he),
To Woden's wife, and to Thor's mother;
And now we have atoned all three,
We have sacrificed.
Chor. We have sacrificed.

2 *Voc.* The white horse neigh'd aloud.
To Woden thanks we render.
To Woden we have vow'd.
Chor. To Woden, our defender.
[*The four last lines in Chorus.*

Ver. The lot is cast, and Tanfan pleased;
Chor. Of mortal cares you shall be eased,
Brave souls to be renown'd in story.
Honour prizing,
Death despising,
Fame acquiring
By expiring;
Die, and reap the fruit of glory.
Brave souls to be renown'd in story.

Ver. 2. I call ye all
To Woden's hall;
Your temples round
With ivy bound,
In goblets crown'd,
And plenteous bowls of burnish'd gold;
Where you shall laugh,
And dance, and quaff
The juice that makes the Britons bold.

[*The six* Saxons *are led off by the* Priests, *in order to be sacrificed.*

Osw. Ambitious fools we are;
And yet ambition is a godlike fault,
Or rather, 't is no fault in souls born great,
Who dare extend their glory by their deeds.
Now Britany, prepare to change thy state,
And from this day begin thy Saxon date.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

[*A battle supposed to be given behind the scenes, with drums, trumpets, and military shouts and excursions; after which, the* Britons, *expressing their joy for the victory, sing this song of triumph.*

Come, if you dare, our trumpets sound;
Come, if you dare, the foes rebound:
We come, we come, we come, we come,
Says the double, double, double beat of the thundering drum.

Now they charge on amain,
Now they rally again;
The gods from above the mad labour behold,
And pity mankind that will perish for gold.

The fainting Saxons quit their ground,
Their trumpets languish in the sound;
They fly, they fly, they fly, they fly.
Victoria, Victoria, the bold Britons cry.

Now the victory 's won,
To the plunder we run;
We return to our lasses like fortunate traders,
Triumphant with spoils of the vanquish'd invaders.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter Philidel.

Phil. Alas, for pity, of this bloody field!
Piteous it needs must be, when I, a Spirit,
Can have so soft a sense of human woes!
Ah! for so many souls, as but this morn
Were clothed with flesh, and warm'd with vital blood,
But naked now, or shirted but with air.

[Merlin, *with* Spirits, *descends to* Philidel, *on a chariot drawn by dragons.*

Mer. What art thou, Spirit, of what name and order?
(For I have view'd thee in my magic glass)
Making thy moan among the midnight wolves
That bay the silent moon: speak, I conjure thee.
'T is Merlin bids thee, at whose awful wand
The pale ghost quivers, and the grim fiend gasps.

Phil. An airy shape, the tenderest of my kind,
The last seduced, and least deform'd of hell;
Half-white, and shuffled in the crowd, I fell;
Desirous to repent, and loth to sin,
Awkward in mischief, piteous of mankind,
My name is Philidel, my lot in air,
Where next beneath the moon, and nearest heaven,
I soar, and have a glimpse to be received,
For which the swarthy demons envy me.

Mer. Thy business here?

Phil. To shun the Saxon wizard's dire commands,
Osmond, the awfull'st name next thine below,
'Cause I refused to hurl a noisome fog
On christen'd heads, the hue and cry of hell
Is raised against me for a fugitive sprite.

Mer. Osmond shall know a greater power protects thee;
But follow thou the whispers of thy soul,
That draw thee nearer heaven.
And, as thy place is nearest to the sky,
The rays will reach thee first, and bleach thy soot.

Phil. In hope of that I spread my azure wings,
And wishing still, for yet I dare not pray,
I bask in daylight, and behold with joy
My scum work outward, and my rust wear off.

Mer. Why, 't is my hopeful devil; now mark me, Philidel,
I will employ thee for thy future good.
Thou know'st, in spite of valiant Oswald's arms,
Or Osmond's powerful spells, the field is ours.

Phil. Oh master! hasten
Thy dread commands, for Grimbald is at hand,
Osmond's fierce fiend, I snuff his earthy scent;
The conquering Britons he misleads to rivers,
Or dreadful downfalls of unheeded rocks,
Where many fall that ne'er shall rise again.

Mer. Be that thy care, to stand by falls of brooks
And trembling bogs, that bear a green-sward show.
Warn off the bold pursuers from the chase:
No more they come, and we divide the task.
But lest fierce Grimbald's ponderous bulk oppress
Thy tender flitting air, I 'll leave my band
Of Spirits with united strength to aid thee,
And force with force repel.

[*Exit* Merlin *on his chariot.* Merlin's *Spirits stay with* Philidel.

Enter Grimbald *in the habit of a Shepherd, followed by* King Arthur, Conon, Aurelius, Albanact *and* Soldiers, *who wander at a distance in the scenes.*

Grim. Here, this way, Britons, follow Oswald's flight;
This evening, as I whistled out my dog,
To drive my straggling flock, and pitch'd my fold,
I saw him dropping sweat, o'erlabour'd, stiff,
Make faintly as he could to yonder dell.
Tread in my steps: long neighbourhood by day
Has made these fields familiar in the night.

Arth. I thank thee, shepherd;
Expect reward: lead on, we follow thee.

Phil. sings. Hither this way, this way bend,
Trust not that malicious fiend;
Those are false deluding lights,
Wafted far and near by sprites.
Trust them not, for they 'll deceive ye,
And in bogs and marshes leave ye.

Chor. of Phil. Spirits. Hither this way, this way bend.
Chor. of Grim. Spirits. This way, this way bend.

Phil. sings. If you step, no danger thinking,
Down you fall, a furlong sinking.
'T is a fiend who has annoy'd ye,
Name but heaven and he 'll avoid ye.

Chor. of Phil. Spirits. Hither this way, this way bend.
Chor. of Grim. Spirits. This way, this way bend.
Philidel's Spirits. Trust not that malicious fiend.
Grimbald's Spirits. Trust me, I am no malicious fiend.
Philidel's Spirits. Hither this way, &c.

Conon. Some wicked phantom, foe to human kind,
Misguides our steps.

Alb. I 'll follow him no further.

Grim. [*speaks*]. By hell, she sings them back in my despite.

I had a voice in heaven, ere sulphurous steams
Had damp'd it to a hoarseness; but I 'll try.

He sings. Let not a moon-born elf mislead ye
From your prey, and from your glory.
Too far, alas, he has betray'd ye;
Follow the flames that wave before ye;
Sometimes seven, and sometimes one;
Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry on.

See, see the footsteps plain appearing,
That way Oswald chose for flying:
Firm is the turf, and fit for bearing,
Where yonder pearly dews are lying.
Far he cannot hence be gone;
Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry on.

Aur. 'T is true, he says; the footsteps yet are fresh
Upon the sod, no falling dew-drops have
Disturb'd the print.

[*All are going to follow* Grimbald.

Phil. sings. Hither this way.
Chor. of Phil. Spirits. Hither this way, this way bend.
Chor. of Grim. Spirits. This way, this way bend.
Philidel's Spirits. Trust not that malicious fiend.
Grimbald's Spirits. Trust me, I am no malicious fiend.
Philidel's Spirits. Hither this way, &c.

[*They all incline to* Philidel.

Grim. [*speaks.*] Curse on her voice, I must my prey forgo;
Thou, Philidel, shalt answer this below.

[Grimbald *sinks with a flash.*

Arth. At last, the cheat is plain;
The cloven-footed fiend is vanish'd from us;
Good angels be our guides, and bring us back.

Phil. singing. Come follow, follow, follow me.
Chor. Come follow, &c.
And me. And me, And me. And me.
Ver. 2 Voc. And green-sward all your way shall be.
Chor. Come follow, &c.
Ver. No goblin or elf shall dare to offend ye.
Chor. No, no, no, &c.
No goblin or elf shall dare to offend ye.
Ver. 3 Voc. We brethren of air
You heroes will bear
To the kind and the fair that attend ye.
Chor. We brethren, &c.

[Philidel *and the Spirits go off singing, with* King Arthur *and the rest in the middle of them.*

Enter Emmeline *led by* Matilda.

Scene—*Pavilion.*

Em. No news of my dear love, or of my father?
Mat. None, Madam, since the gaining of the battle;
Great Arthur is a royal conqueror now,
And well deserves your love.
Em. But now I fear
He 'll be too great to love poor silly me.
If he be dead, or never come again,
I mean to die: but there 's a greater doubt,
Since I ne'er saw him here,
How shall I meet him in another world?
Mat. I have heard something, how two bodies meet,
But how souls join, I know not.
Em. I should find him,
For surely I have seen him in my sleep.
And then methought, he put his mouth to mine,
And eat a thousand kisses on my lips;
Sure by his kissing I could find him out
Among a thousand angels in the sky.
Mat. But what a kind of man do you suppose him?
Em. He must be made of the most precious things,
And I believe his mouth, and eyes, and cheeks,
And nose, and all his face, are made of gold.
Mat. Heaven bless us, madam, what a face you make him!
If it be yellow, he must have the jaundice,
And that 's a bad disease.
Em. Why then do lovers give a thing so bad
As gold to women, whom so well they love?
Mat. Because that bad thing, gold, buys all good things.
Em. Yet I must know him better. Of all colours,
Tell me which is the purest and the softest?
Mat. They say 't is black.
Em. Why then, since gold is hard, and yet is precious,
His face must all be made of soft black gold.
Mat. But Madam——
Em. No more; I have learn'd enough for once.
Mat. Here are a crew of Kentish lads and lasses,
Would entertain ye, till your lord's return,
With songs and dances, to divert your cares.
Em. O bring them in,
For though I cannot see the songs, I love them;
And love, they tell me, is a dance of hearts.

Enter Shepherds and Shepherdesses.

1 *Shepherd sings.*

How blest are shepherds, how happy their lasses,
While drums and trumpets are sounding alarms!
Over our lowly sheds all the storm passes;
And when we die, 't is in each other's arms.
All the day on our herds and flocks employing;
All the night on our flutes, and in enjoying.
Chor. All the day, &c.

Bright nymphs of Britain, with Graces attended,
Let not your days without pleasure expire;
Honour 's but empty, and when youth is ended,
All men will praise you, but none will desire.
Let not youth fly away without contenting;
Age will come time enough for your repenting.
Chor. Let not youth, &c.

[*Here the men offer their flutes to the women, which they refuse.*

2 *Shepherdess.*

Shepherd, shepherd, leave decoying;
Pipes are sweet, a summer's day;
But a little after toying,
Women have the shot to pay.

Here are marriage vows for signing,
Set their marks that cannot write;
After that, without repining,
Play and welcome, day and night.

[*Here the women give the men contracts, which they accept.*

Chor. of all. Come, shepherds, lead up, a lively measure.
The cares of wedlock are cares of pleasure;
But whether marriage bring joy or sorrow,
Make sure of this day, and hang tomorrow.

[*The dance after the song, and exeunt Shepherds and Shepherdesses.*

Enter on the other side of the stage Oswald *and* Guillamar.

Osw. The night has wilder'd us, and we are fallen

Among their foremost tents.

Guil. Ha! What are these?
They seem of more than vulgar quality.

Em. What sounds are those? They cannot far be distant.
Where are we now, Matilda?

Mat. Just before your tent:
Fear not, they must be friends, and they approach.

Em. My Arthur, speak, my love, are you return'd
To bless your Emmeline?

Osw. [*to Guil.*] I know that face;
'T is my ungrateful fair, who, scorning mine,
Accepts my rival's love. Heaven, thou art bounteous,
Thou owest me nothing now.

Mat. Fear grows upon me:
Speak what you are; speak, or I call for help.

Osw. We are your guards.

Mat. Ah me! we are betray'd; 't is Oswald's voice.

Em. Let them not see our voices, and then they cannot find us.

Osw. Passions in men oppress'd are doubly strong.
I take her from king Arthur; there's revenge:
If she can love, she buoys my sinking fortunes.
Good reasons both. I 'll on——. Fear nothing, ladies,
You shall be safe.

[Oswald *and* Guillamar *seize* Emmeline *and* Matilda.

Em. and Mat. Help, help! a rape, a rape!

Osw. By heaven ye injure me, though force is used,
Your honour shall be sacred.

Em. Help, help, oh Britons, help!

Osw. Your Britons cannot help you.
This arm through all their troops shall force my way,
Yet neither quit my honour nor my prey.

[*Exeunt, the women still crying.*

[*An alarm within; some Soldiers running over the stage—Follow, follow, follow.*

[*Enter* Albanact, *Captain of the Guards, with Soldiers.*

Alb. Which way went the alarm?

1 *Sold.* Here, towards the castle.

Alb. Pox o' this victory; the whole camp 's debauch'd:
All drunk or whoring. This way, follow, follow.

[*Exeunt.*

[*The alarm renews; clashing of swords within for awhile.*

Re-enter Albanact, *Officer and Soldiers.*

Offic. How sits the conquest on great Arthur's brow?

Alb. As when the lover with the king is mixt,
He puts the gain of Britain in a scale,
Which weighing with the loss of Emmeline,
He thinks he 's scarce a saver.

[*Trumpet within.*

Offic. Hark! a trumpet!
It sounds a parley.

Alb. 'T is from Oswald then,
An echo to king Arthur's friendly summons,
Sent since he heard the rape of Emmeline,
To ask an interview.

[*Trumpet answering on the other side.*

Offic. But hark! already
Our trumpet makes reply; and see both present.

Enter Arthur *on one side attended,* Oswald *on the other with attendants and* Guillamar. *They meet and salute.*

Arth. Brave Oswald! we have met on friendlier terms,
Companions of a war, with common interest
Against the bordering Picts: but times are changed.

Osw. And I am sorry that those times are changed;
For else we now might meet on terms as friendly.

Arth. If so we meet not now, the fault 's your own;
For you have wrong'd me much.

Osw. O you would tell me
I call'd more Saxons in to enlarge my bounds;
If those be wrongs, the war has well redress'd ye.

Arth. Mistake me not, I count not war a wrong.
War is the trade of kings, that fight for empire;
And better be a lion than a sheep.

Osw. In what, then, have I wrong'd ye?

Arth. In my love.

Osw. Ev'n love 's an empire too; the noble soul,
Like kings, is covetous of single sway.

Arth. I blame ye not for loving Emmeline;
But since the soul is free, and love is choice,
You should have made a conquest of her mind,
And not have forced her person by a rape.

Osw. Whether by force, or stratagem, we gain,
Still gaining is our end, in war or love.
Her mind 's the jewel, in her body lock'd;
If I would gain the gem, and want the key,
It follows I must seize the cabinet.
But to secure your fear, her honour is untouch'd.

Arth. Was honour ever safe in brutal hands?
So safe are lambs within the lion's paw;
Ungriped and play'd with, till fierce hunger calls,
Then nature shows itself; the close-hid nails
Are stretch'd and open'd to the panting prey.
But if, indeed, you are so cold a lover——

Osw. Not cold, but honourable.

Arth. Then restore her.
That done, I shall believe you honourable.

Osw. Think'st thou I will forgo a victor's right?

Arth. Say rather, of an impious ravisher.
That castle, were it wall'd with adamant,
Can hide thy head but till tomorrow's dawn.

Osw. And ere tomorrow I may be a god,
If Emmeline be kind: but kind or cruel,
I tell thee, Arthur, but to see this day,
That heavenly face, though not to have her mine,
I would give up a hundred years of life,
And bid fate cut tomorrow.

Arth. It soon will come, and thou repent too late;
Which to prevent, I 'll bribe thee to be honest.
Thy noble head, accustom'd to a crown,
Shall wear it still; nor shall thy hand forget
The sceptre's use. From Medway's pleasing stream
To Severn's roar be thine.
In short, restore my love, and share my kingdom.

Osw. Not, though you spread my sway from Thames to Tyber;
Such gifts might bribe a king but not a lover.

Arth. Then prythee give me back my kingly word
Pass'd for thy safe return; and let this hour,
In single combat, hand to hand, decide
The fate of empire, and of Emmeline.

Osw. Not that I fear, do I decline this combat:
And not decline it neither, but defer.
When Emmeline has been my prize as long

As she was thine, I dare thee to the duel.
Arth. I named your utmost term of life; tomorrow.
Osw. You are not fate.
Arth. But fate is in this arm.
You might have made a merit of your theft.
Osw. Ha! theft! Your guards can tell I stole her not.
Arth. Had I been present——
Osw. Had you been present she had been mine more nobly.
Arth. There lies your way.
Osw. My way lies where I please.
Expect (for Oswald's magic cannot fail)
A long tomorrow, ere your arms prevail:
Or if I fall, make room, ye blest above,
For one who was undone, and died for love.
[*Exit* Oswald *and his party.*
Arth. There may be one black minute ere tomorrow:
For who can tell what power, and lust, and charms,
May do this night? To arms, with speed, to arms.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter Arthur, Conon, *and* Aurelius,

Conon. Furl up our colours, and unbrace our drums;
Dislodge betimes, and quit this fatal coast.
Arth. Have we forgot to conquer?
Aur. Cast off hope:
The embattled legions of fire, air, and earth,
Are banded for our foes.
For going to discover, with the dawn,
Yon southern hill, which promised to the sight
A rise more easy to attack the fort,
Scarce had we stept on the forbidden ground
When the woods shook, the trees stood bristling up,
A living trembling nodded through the leaves.
Arth. Poplars and aspen-boughs, a panic fright.
Conon. We thought so too, and doubled still our pace;
But straight a rumbling sound, like bellowing winds,
Rose and grew loud, confused with howls of wolves
And grunts of bears, and dreadful hiss of snakes;
Shrieks more than human. Globes of hail pour'd down
An armed winter, and inverted day.
Arth. Dreadful indeed!
Aur. Count then our labour 's lost:
For other way lies none to mount the cliff,
Unless we borrow wings and sail through air.
Arth. Now I perceive a danger worthy me.
'T is Osmond's work, a band of hell-hired slaves.
Be mine the hazard, mine shall be the fame.
[Arthur *is going out, but is met by* Merlin, *who takes him by the hand and brings him back.*

Enter Merlin.

Mer. Hold, sir, and wait Heaven's time; the attempt 's too dangerous.
There 's not a tree in that enchanted grove
But number'd out and given by tale to fiends,
And under every leaf a spirit couch'd.
But by what method to dissolve these charms
Is yet unknown to me.
Arth. Hadst thou been here (for what can thwart thy skill?)
Nor Emmeline had been the boast of Oswald,
Nor I, forewarn'd, been wanting to her guard.
Conon. Her darken'd eyes had seen the light of heaven;
That was thy promise too, and this the time.
Mer. Nor has my aid been absent, though unseen,
With friendly guides in your benighted maze;
Nor Emmeline shall longer want the sun.
Arth. Is there an end of woes?
Mer. There is, and sudden.
I have employ'd a subtle airy sprite
To explore the passage and prepare my way.
Myself meantime will view the magic wood,
To learn whereon depends its force.
Conon. But Emmeline——
Mer. Fear not, this vial shall restore her sight.
Arth. O might I hope (and what 's impossible
To Merlin's art?) to be myself the bearer,
That with the light of heaven she may discern
Her lover first!
Mer. 'T is wondrous hazardous,
Yet I foresee the event, 'tis fortunate.
I 'll bear ye safe and bring ye back unharm'd;
Then lose not precious time, but follow me.
[*Exeunt omnes,* Merlin *leading* Arthur.

SCENE—*a deep Wood.*

Enter Philidel.

Phil. I left all safe behind:
For in the hindmost quarter of the wood
My former lord, grim Osmond, walks the round,
Calls o'er the names, and schools the tardy sprites.
His absence gives me more security.
At every walk I pass'd I drew a spell,
So that if any fiend abhorring heaven
There sets his foot it roots him to the ground.
Now could I but discover Emmeline
My task were fairly done.
[*Walking about and prying betwixt the trees.*

Enter Grimbald *rushing out; he seizes* Philidel *and binds him in a chain.*

Grim. O rebel, have I caught thee!
Phil. Ah me! what hard mishap!
Grim. What just revenge!
Thou miscreant elf, thou renegado scout,
So clean, so furbish'd, so renew'd in white,
The livery of our foes; I see thee through.
What makest thou here? Thou trim apostate, speak.
Thou shakest for fear, I feel thy false heart pant.
Phil. Ah mighty Grimbald,
Who would not fear when seized in thy strong gripe?
But hear me, O renown'd, O worthy fiend,
The favourite of our chief.
Grim. Away with fulsome flattery,

The fool of fools: thou know'st where last we met,
When but for thee the Christians had been swallow'd
In quaking bogs, and living sent to hell.

Phil. Ay, then I was seduced by Merlin's art,
And half persuaded by his soothing tales
To hope for heaven; as if eternal doom
Could be reversed and undecreed for me.
But I am now set right.

Grim. O still thou think'st to fly a fool to mark.

Phil. I fled from Merlin, free as air that bore me,
To unfold to Osmond all his deep designs.

Grim. I believe nothing, O thou fond impostor!
When wert thou last in hell? Is not thy name
Forgot and blotted from the infernal roll?
But since thou say'st thy errand was to Osmond,
To Osmond shalt thou go. March, know thy driver.

Phil. [*kneeling.*] O spare me, Grimbald, and I 'll be thy slave,
Tempt hermits for thee in their holy cells,
And virgins in their dreams.

Grim. Canst thou, a devil, hope to cheat a devil?
A spy, why that 's a name abhorr'd in hell.
Haste forward, forward, or I 'll goad thee on
With iron spurs.

Phil. But use me kindly then;
Pull not so hard to hurt my airy limbs,
I 'll follow thee unforced: look, there 's thy way.

Grim. Ay, there 's thy way, indeed; but for more surety
I 'll keep an eye behind. Not one word more,
But follow decently.

[Grimbald *goes out, dragging* Philidel.

Phil. [*aside.*] So catch him, spell.

Grim. [*within.*] O help me, help me, Philidel.

Phil. Why, what 's the matter?

Grim. O I am ensnared;
Heaven's birdlime wraps me round and glues my wings.
Loose me, and I will free thee;
Do, and I 'll be thy slave.

Phil. What, to a spy, a name abhorr'd in hell?

Grim. Do not insult. O! O! I grow to ground,
The fiery net draws closer on my limbs.

Phil. Thou shalt not have the ease to curse in torments;
Be dumb for one half-hour, so long my charm
Can keep thee silent, and there lie
Till Osmond breaks thy chain.

[Philidel *unbinds his own fetters.*

Enter to him Merlin *with a vial in his hand, and* Arthur.

Mer. Well hast thou wrought thy safety with thy wit,
My Philidel; go meritorious on.
Me other work requires, to view the wood
And learn to make the dire enchantments void.
Meantime attend King Arthur in my room,
Show him his love, and with these sovereign drops
Restore her sight.

[*Exit* Merlin, *giving a vial to* Philidel.

Phil. We must work, we must haste;
Noontide hour is almost past:
Sprites that glimmer in the sun,
Into shades already run.
Osmond will be here anon.

Enter Emmeline *and* Matilda *at the far end of the wood.*

Arth. O yonder, yonder, she 's already found;
My soul directs my sight, and flies before it.
Now, gentle spirit, use thy utmost art,
Unseal her eyes and this way lead her steps.

[Arthur *withdraws behind the scene.*

[Emmeline *and* Matilda *come forward to the front.*

Philidel *approaches* Emmeline, *sprinkling some of the water over her eyes out of the vial.*

Phil. Thus, thus I infuse
These sovereign dews.
Fly back, ye films, that cloud her sight,
And you, ye crystal humours bright,
Your noxious vapours purged away,
Recover, and admit the day.
Now cast your eyes abroad and see
All but me.

Em. Ha! what was that? Who spoke?

Mat. I heard the voice: 't is one of Osmond's fiends.

Em. Some blessed angel sure; I feel my eyes
Unseal'd, they walk abroad and a new world
Comes rushing on and stands all gay before me.

Mat. O heavens! O joy of joys! she has her sight!

Em. I am new-born; I shall run mad for pleasure.

[*Staring on* Matilda.

Are women such as thou, such glorious creatures?

Arth. [*aside.*] O how I envy her to be first seen!

Em. Stand farther; let me take my fill of sight.

[*Looking up.*

What 's that above that weakens my new eyes,
Makes me not see by seeing?

Mat. 'T is the sun.

Em. The sun? 't is sure a god, if that be heaven.
O if thou art a creature, best and fairest,
How well art thou from mortals so remote
To shine, and not to burn by near approach!
How hast thou lighten'd ev'n my very soul,
And let in knowledge by another sense!
I gaze about, new-born to day and thee;
A stranger yet, an infant of the world!
Art thou not pleased, Matilda? Why, like me,
Dost thou not look and wonder?

Mat. For these sights
Are to my eyes familiar.

Em. That 's my joy
Not to have seen before; for nature now
Comes all at once, confounding my delight.
But ah! what thing am I? Fain would I know;
Or am I blind, or do I see but half?
With all my care, and looking round about,
I cannot view my face.

Mat. None see themselves
But by reflection: in this glass you may.

[*Gives her a glass.*

Em. [*taking the glass and looking.*] What 's this?
It holds a face within it. O sweet face!
It draws the mouth, and smiles, and looks upon me,
And talks, but yet I cannot hear it speak.
The pretty thing is dumb.

Mat. The pretty thing
You see within the glass is you.
Em. What, am I two? Is this another me?
Indeed it wears my clothes, has hands like mine,
And mocks whate'er I do; but that I 'm sure
I am a maid, I 'd swear it were my child.
[Matilda *looks.*
Look, my Matilda, we both are in the glass.
O now I know it plain, they are our names
That peep upon us there.
Mat. Our shadows, Madam.
Em. Mine is a prettier shadow far than thine.
I love it: let me kiss my t' other self.
[*Kissing the glass and hugging it.*
Alas, I have kiss'd it dead; the fine thing 's gone.
Indeed it kiss'd so cold as if 't were dying.

[Arthur *comes forward softly, showing himself behind her.*

'T is here again.
O no! this face is neither mine nor thine:
I think the glass has borne another child.
[*She turns and sees* Arthur.
Ha! what art thou with a new kind of face
And other clothes, a noble creature too,
But taller, bigger, fiercer in thy look,
Of a controlling eye, majestic make?
Mat. Do you not know him, Madam?
Em. Is it a man?
Arth. Yes, and the most unhappy of my kind
If you have changed your love.
Em. My dearest lord!
Was my soul blind, and could not that look out
To know you ere you spoke? O counterpart
Of our soft sex! well are ye made our lords,
So bold, so great, so godlike are ye form'd.
How can ye love such silly things as women?
Arth. Beauty like yours commands, and man was made
But a more boisterous and a stronger slave
To you, the best delights of human kind.
Em. But are ye mine? Is there an end of war?
Are all those trumpets dead themselves at last,
That used to kill men with their thundering sounds?
Arth. The sum of war is undecided yet,
And many a breathing body must be cold
Ere you are free.
Em. How came ye hither, then?
Arth. By Merlin's art, to snatch a short-lived bliss;
To feed my famish'd love upon your eyes
One moment and depart.
Em. O moment worth
Whole ages past and all that are to come!
Let love-sick Oswald now unpitied mourn;
Let Osmond mutter charms to sprites in vain,
To make me love him; all shall not change my soul.
Arth. Ha! does the enchanter practise hell upon you?
Is he my rival too?
Em. Yes, but I hate him;
For when he spoke through my shut eyes I saw him,
His voice look'd ugly and breathed brimstone on me:
And then I first was glad that I was blind,
Not to behold damnation.

Phil. This time is left me to congratulate
Your new-born eyes, and tell you what you gain
By sight restored, and viewing him you love.
Appear, you airy forms.

Airy Spirits *appear in the shapes of men and women.*

Man sings. O sight, the mother of desires,
What charming objects dost thou yield!
'T is sweet, when tedious night expires,
To see the rosy morning gild
The mountain-tops and paint the field!
But when Clorinda comes in sight,
She makes the summer's day more bright,
And when she goes away 't is night.

Chorus. When fair Clorinda comes in sight, &c.

Woman sings. 'T is sweet the blushing morn to view,
And plains adorn'd with pearly dew.
But such cheap delights to see,
Heaven and nature,
Give each creature;
They have eyes as well as we.
This is the joy all joys above,
To see, to see
That only she,
That only she we love!

Chorus. This is the joy all joys above, &c.

Man sings. And if we may discover
What charms both nymph and lover,
'T is when the fair at mercy lies,
With kind and amorous anguish,
To sigh, to look, to languish,
On each other's eyes!

Chorus of all Men and Women.

And if we may discover, &c.

Phil. Break off your music, for our foes are near.
[Spirits *vanish.*

Enter Merlin.

Mer. My Sovereign, we have hazarded too far;
But love excuses you and prescience me.
Make haste, for Osmond is ev'n now alarm'd,
And greedy of revenge is hasting home.
Arth. O take my love with us, or leave me here.
Mer. I cannot, for she 's held by charms too strong,
Which with the enchanted grove must be destroy'd,
Till when my art is vain. But fear not, Emmeline;
The enchanter has no power on innocence.
Em. [*to Arth.*]. Farewell, since we must part; when you are gone
I 'll look into my glass just where you look'd
To find your face again;
If 't is not there, I 'll think on you so long
My heart shall make your picture for my eyes.
Arth. Where'er I go my soul shall stay with thee:
'T is but my shadow that I take away.
True love is never happy but by halves;
An April sunshine, that by fits appears;
It smiles by moments, but it mourns by years.
[*Exeunt* Arthur *and* Merlin *at one door.*

Enter Osmond *at the other door, who gazes on* Emmeline *and she on him.*

Em. Matilda, save me from this ugly thing,

This foe to sight; speak, dost thou know him?

Mat. Too well, 'tis Oswald's friend, the great magician.

Em. It cannot be a man, he's so unlike the man I love.

Osm. [*aside.*] Death to my eyes, she sees!

Em. I wish I could not; but I'll close my sight,
And shut out all I can.——It will not be;
Winking, I see thee still, thy odious image
Stares full into my soul, and there infects the room
My Arthur should possess.

Osm. [*aside.*] I find too late
That Merlin and her lover have been here.
If I was fired before when she was blind,
Her eyes dart lightning now: she must be mine.

Em. I prythee, dreadful thing, tell me thy business here,
And, if thou canst, reform that odious face;
Look not so grim upon me.

Osm. My name is Osmond, and my business love.

Em. Thou hast a grizzly look, forbidding what thou ask'st,
If I durst tell thee so.

Osm. My pent-house eyebrows and my shaggy beard
Offend your sight, but these are manly signs;
Faint white and red abuse your expectations.
Be woman, know your sex and love full pleasures.

Em. Love from a monster, fiend!

Osm. Come, you must love, or you must suffer love:
No coyness, none; for I am master here.

Em. And when did Oswald give away his power,
That thou presumest to rule? Be sure I'll tell him;
For as I am his prisoner, he is mine.

Osm. Why then thou art a captive to a captive.
O'erlabour'd with the fight, oppress'd with thirst,
That Oswald whom you mention'd call'd for drink;
I mix'd a sleepy potion in his bowl,
Which he and his fool friend quaff'd greedily.
The happy dose wrought the desired effect.
Then to a dungeon's depth I sent both bound,
Where stow'd with snakes and adders now they lodge,
Two planks their beds, slippery with ooze and slime,
The rats brush o'er their faces with their tails,
And croaking paddocks crawl upon their limbs,
Since when the garrison depends on me.
Now know you are my slave.

Mat. He strikes a horror through my blood.

Em. I freeze, as if his impious art had fix'd
My feet to earth.

Osm. But love shall thaw ye.
I'll show his force in countries caked with ice,
Where the pale pole-star in the north of heaven
Sits high and on the frosty winter broods;
Yet there love reigns. For proof, this magic wand
Shall change the mildness of sweet Britain's clime
To Iceland and the farthest Thule's frost,
Where the proud god disdaining winter's bounds
O'erleaps the fences of eternal snow,
And with his warmth supplies the distant sun.

Osmond strikes the ground with his wand; the Scene changes to a prospect of Winter in frozen countries.

Cupid *descends.*

Cupid sings. What ho, thou Genius of the clime, what ho!
Liest thou asleep beneath those hills of snow?
Stretch out thy lazy limbs; awake, awake!
And winter from thy furry mantle shake.

Genius *arises.*

Genius. What Power art thou, who from below
Hast made me rise, unwillingly and slow,
From beds of everlasting snow?
Seest thou not how stiff and wondrous old,
Far unfit to bear the bitter cold,
I can scarcely move or draw my breath?
Let me, let me freeze again to death.

Cupid. Thou doting fool, forbear, forbear;
What! dost thou dream of freezing here?
At Love's appearing, all the sky clearing,
The stormy winds their fury spare;
Winter subduing, and spring renewing,
My beams create a more glorious year.
Thou doting fool, forbear, forbear;
What! dost thou dream of freezing here?

Genius. Great Love, I know thee now;
Eldest of the gods art thou:
Heaven and earth by thee were made,
Human nature
Is thy creature,
Everywhere thou art obey'd.

Cupid. No part of my dominion shall be waste:
To spread my sway and sing my praise
Ev'n here I will a people raise,
Of kind embracing lovers, and embraced.

Cupid waves his wand, upon which the Scene opens and discovers a prospect of Ice and Snow to the end of the stage.

Singers *and* Dancers, Men *and* Women, *appear.*

Man. See, see, we assemble
Thy revels to hold,
Though quivering with cold;
We chatter and tremble.

Cupid. 'T is I, 'tis I, 'tis I that have warm'd ye.
In spite of cold weather
I've brought you together;
'T is I, 'tis I, 'tis I that have arm'd ye.

Chorus. 'T is Love, 'tis Love, 'tis Love that has warm'd us.
In spite of cold weather
He brought us together;
'T is Love, 'tis Love, 'tis Love that has arm'd us.

Cupid. Sound a parley, ye fair, and surrender;
Set yourselves and your lovers at ease.
He 's a grateful offender
Who pleasure dare seize;
But the whining pretender
Is sure to displease.

Since the fruit of desire is possessing,
'T is unmanly to sigh and complain;
When we kneel for redressing
We move your disdain;
Love was made for a blessing,
And not for a pain.

A Dance, after which the Singers *and* Dancers *depart.*

Em. I could be pleased with any one but thee,
Who entertain'd my sight with such gay shows
As men and women moving here and there,
That coursing one another in their steps
Have made their feet a tune.

Osm. What, coying it again!
No more, but make me happy to my gust,
That is, without your struggling.
Em. From my sight,
Thou all thy devils in one, thou darest not force me.
Osm. You teach me well, I find you would be ravish'd;
I 'll give you that excuse your sex desires.
[*He begins to lay hold on her, and they struggle.*
Grim. [*within.*] O help me, master, help me!
Osm. Who 's that, my Grimbald? Come, and help thou me;
For 't is thy work to assist a ravisher.
Grim. [*within.*] I cannot stir; I am spell-caught by Philidel,
And pursed within a net,
With a huge heavy weight of holy words
Laid on my head, that keeps me down from rising.
Osm. I 'll read them backwards, and release thy bonds.
[*To* Emmeline.
Meantime go in;
Prepare yourself, and ease my drudgery.
But if you will not fairly be enjoy'd,
A little honest force is well employ'd.
[*Exit* Osmond.
Em. Heaven be my guard, I have no other friend!
Heaven, ever present to thy suppliants' aid,
Protect and pity innocence betray'd.
[*Exeunt* Emmeline *and* Matilda.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter Osmond *solus.*

Osm. Now I am settled in my forceful sway;
Why then, I 'll be luxurious in my love;
Take my full gust, and setting forms aside
I 'll bid the slave that fires my blood lie down.
[*Seems to be going off.*

Enter Grimbald, *who meets him.*

Grim. Not so fast, master, danger threatens thee.
There 's a black cloud descending from above
Full of heaven's venom, bursting o'er thy head.
Osm. Malicious fiend, thou liest! for I am fenced
By millions of thy fellows in my grove.
I bade thee, when I freed thee from the charm,
Run scouting through the wood, from tree to tree,
And look if all my devils were on duty.
Hadst thou perform'd thy charge, thou tardy sprite,
Thou wouldst have known no danger threaten'd me.
Grim. When did a devil fail in diligence?
Poor mortal, thou thyself art overseen:
I have been there, and thence I bring this news.
Thy fatal foe, great Arthur, is at hand.
Merlin has ta'en his time while thou wert absent
To observe thy characters, their force and nature,
And counterwork thy spells.
Osm. The devil take Merlin.
I 'll cast them all anew, and instantly,
All of another mould: be thou at hand.
Their composition was before of horror,
Now they shall be of blandishment and love,
Seducing hopes, soft pity, tender moans.
Art shall meet art; and when they think to win,
The fools shall find their labour to begin.
[*Exeunt* Osmond *and* Grimbald.

Enter Arthur *and* Merlin *at another door.*

Scene of the wood continues.

Mer. Thus far it is permitted me to go;
But all beyond this spot is fenced with charms.
I may no more, but only with advice.
Arth. My sword shall do the rest.
Mer. Remember well, that all is but illusion.
Go on; good stars attend thee.
Arth. Doubt me not.
Mer. Yet in prevention
Of what may come, I 'll leave my Philidel
To watch thy steps, and with him leave my wand,
The touch of which no earthy fiend can bear,
In whate'er shape transform'd, but must lay down
His borrow'd figure and confess the devil.
Once more farewell, and prosper.
[*Exit* Merlin.
Arth. [*walking.*] No danger yet, I see no walls of fire,
No city of the fiends, with forms obscene
To grin from far on flaming battlements.
This is indeed the grove I should destroy;
But where 's the horror? Sure the prophet err'd.
Hark! music and the warbling notes of birds:
[*Soft music.*
Hell entertains me like some welcome guest.
More wonders yet! yet all delightful too;
A silver current to forbid my passage,
And yet to invite me stands a golden bridge,
Perhaps a trap for my unwary feet
To sink and whelm me underneath the waves.
With fire or water let him wage his war,
Or all the elements at once, I 'll on.
[*As he is going to the bridge two* Sirens *arise from the water: they show themselves to the waist, and sing.*

1 *Siren.* O pass not on, but stay,
And waste the joyous day
With us in gentle play;
Unbend to love, unbend thee,
O lay thy sword aside,
And other arms provide,
For other wars attend thee,
And sweeter to be tried.

Chorus. For other wars, &c.

Both sing. Two daughters of this aged stream are we,
And both our sea-green locks have comb'd for thee.
Come bathe with us an hour or two,
Come naked in, for we are so:
What danger from a naked foe?
Come bathe with us, come bathe, and share
What pleasures in the floods appear.
We 'll beat the waters till they bound,
And circle round, around, around,
And circle round, around.

Arth. A lazy pleasure trickles through my veins;
Here could I stay, and well be cozen'd here.
But honour calls. Is honour in such haste?
Can he not bait at such a pleasing inn?
No, for the more I look the more I long.
Farewell, ye fair illusions, I must leave ye
While I have power to say that I must leave ye.
Farewell, with half my soul I stagger off:
How dear this flying victory has cost,
When if I stay to struggle I am lost!

[*As he is going forward* Nymphs *and* Sylvans *come out from behind the trees. A bass and two trebles sing the following song to a minuet.*

Dance with the song, all with branches in their hands.

How happy the lover,
How easy his chain,
How pleasing his pain!
How sweet to discover
He sighs not in vain!
For Love every creature
Is form'd by his nature;
No joys are above
The pleasures of love.

The dance continues with the same measure played alone.

In vain are our graces,
In vain are your eyes,
If love you despise:
When age furrows faces
'T is time to be wise.
Then use the short blessing,
That flies in possessing;
No joys are above
The pleasures of love.

Arth. And what are these fantastic fairy joys
To love like mine? False joys, false welcomes all.
Be gone, ye sylvan trippers of the green,
Fly after night and overtake the moon.

[*Here the* Dancers, Singers *and* Sirens *vanish.*

This goodly tree seems queen of all the grove;
The ringlets round her trunk declare her guilty
Of many midnight-sabbaths revell'd here.
Her will I first attempt.

[Arthur *strikes at the tree and cuts it; blood spouts out of it, a groan follows, then a shriek.*

Good heavens, what monstrous prodigies are these!
Blood follows from my blow; the wounded rind
Spouts on my sword, and sanguine dyes the plain.

[*He strikes again: a voice of* Emmeline *from behind.*

Em. [*from behind.*] Forbear, if thou hast pity, ah, forbear!
These groans proceed not from a senseless plant,
No spouts of blood run welling from a tree.

Arth. Speak what thou art; I charge thee speak thy being;
Thou that hast made my curdled blood run back,
My heart heave up, my hair to rise in bristles,
And scarcely left a voice to ask thy name.

[Emmeline *breaks out of the tree, showing her arm bloody.*

Em. Whom thou hast hurt, unkind and cruel, see;
Look on this blood, 't is fatal, still, to me
To bear thy wounds, my heart has felt them first.

Arth. 'T is she! amazement roots me to the ground!

Em. By cruel charms, dragg'd from my peaceful bower,
Fierce Osmond closed me in this bleeding bark,
And bid me stand exposed to the bleak winds
And winter storms, and heaven's inclemency,
Bound to the fate of this hell-haunted grove;
So that whatever sword or sounding axe
Shall violate this plant, must pierce my flesh,
And when that falls I die.

Arth. If this be true.
O never, never to be ended charm,
At least by me: yet all may be illusion.
Break up, ye thickening fogs and filmy mists,
All that belie my sight and cheat my sense,
For reason still pronounces 't is not she.
And thus resolved——

[*Lifts up his sword as going to strike.*

Em. Do, strike, barbarian, strike,
And strew my mangled limbs with every stroke;
Wound me, and doubly kill me with unkindness,
That by thy hand I fell.

Arth. What shall I do, ye powers?

Em. Lay down thy vengeful sword, 't is fatal here:
What need of arms where no defence is made?
A love-sick virgin panting with desire,
No conscious eye to intrude on our delights;
For this thou hast the Sirens' songs despised,
For this thy faithful passion I reward.
Haste then to take me longing to thy arms.

Arth. O Love! O Merlin! whom should I believe?

Em. Believe thyself, thy youth, thy love, and me.
They only, they, who please themselves are wise.
Disarm thy hand that mine may meet it bare.

Arth. By thy leave, reason, here I throw thee off,
Thou load of life; if thou wert made for souls,
Then souls should have been made without their bodies.
If, falling for the first-created fair
Was Adam's fault, great grandsire, I forgive thee:
Eden was lost as all thy sons would lose it.

[*Going towards* Emmeline, *and pulling off his gauntlet.*

Enter Philidel *running.*

Phil. Hold, poor deluded mortal, hold thy hand!
Which, if thou givest, is plighted to a fiend.
For proof, behold the virtue of this wand;
The infernal paint shall vanish from her face,
And hell shall stand reveal'd.

[*Strikes* Emmeline *with a wand, who straight descends*; Philidel *runs to the descent and pulls up* Grimbald, *and binds him.*

Now see to whose embraces thou wert falling.
Behold the maiden modesty of Grimbald,
The grossest, earthiest, ugliest fiend in hell.

Arth. Horror seizes me,
To think what headlong ruin I have tempted.

Phil. Haste to thy work; a noble stroke or two
Ends all the charms, and disenchants the grove.
I 'll hold thy mistress bound.

Arth. Then here 's for earnest.

[*Strikes twice or thrice, and the tree falls or sinks; a peal of thunder immediately follows, with dreadful howlings.*

'T is finish'd, and the dusk that yet remains
Is but the native horror of the wood.

But I must lose no time; the pass is free;
The unroosted fiends have quitted this abode.
On yon proud towers, before this day be done,
My glittering banners shall be waved against the setting sun.

[*Exit* Arthur.

Phil. Come on, my surly slave; come, stalk along,
And stamp a madman's pace, and drag thy chain.
Grim. I 'll champ and foam upon it till the blue venom
Work upward to thy hands, and loose their hold.
Phil. Know'st thou this powerful wand? 't is lifted up:
A second stroke would send thee to the centre,
Benumb'd and dead, as far as souls can die.
Grim. I would thou wouldst, to rid me of my sense.
I shall be whoop'd through hell at my return
Inglorious from the mischief I design'd.
Phil. And therefore, since thou loathest ætherial light,
The morning sun shall beat on thy black brows;
The breath thou draw'st shall be of upper air,
Hostile to thee, and to thy earthy make,
So light, so thin, that thou shalt starve for want
Of thy gross food, till gasping thou shalt lie
And blow it back all sooty to the sky.

[*Exit* Philidel, *dragging* Grimbald *after him.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter Osmond, *as affrighted.*

Osm. Grimbald made prisoner and my grove destroy'd!
Now, what can save me? Hark, the drums and trumpets!

[*Drums and trumpets within.*

Arthur is marching onward to the fort:
I have but one resource, and that 's to Oswald;
But will he fight for me, whom I have injured?
No, not for me, but for himself he must;
I 'll urge him with the last necessity.
Better give up my mistress than my life.
His force is much unequal to his rival—
True; but I 'll help him with my utmost art,
And try to unravel fate.

[*Exit* Osmond.

Enter Arthur, Conon, Aurelius, Albanact *and* Soldiers.

Conon. Now there remains but this one labour more;
And if we have the hearts of true-born Britons,
The forcing of that castle crowns the day.
Aur. The works are weak, the garrison but thin,
Dispirited with frequent overthrows,
Already wavering on their ill-mann'd walls.
Alb. They shift their places oft, and skulk from war,
Sure signs of pale despair and easy rout:
It shows they place their confidence in magic;
And when their devils fail their hearts are dead.
Arth. Then, where you see them clustering most, in motion,
And staggering in their ranks, there press them home,
For that 's a coward heap.—How 's this? a sally?

Enter Oswald, Guillamar *and* Soldiers *on the other side.*

Beyond my hopes, to meet them on the square.
Osw. Brave Britons, hold, and thou, their famous chief,

[*Advancing*

Attend what Saxon Oswald will propose.
He owns your victory, but whether owing
To valour or to fortune, that he doubts.
If Arthur dares ascribe it to the first,
And, singled from a crowd, will tempt a conquest,
This Oswald offers:—Let our troops retire,
And hand to hand let us decide our strife.
This if refused, bear witness earth and heaven,
Thou steal'st a crown and mistress undeserved.
Arth. I 'll not usurp thy title of a robber,
Nor will upbraid thee, that before I proffer'd
This single combat, which thou didst avoid,
So glad I am on any terms to meet thee,
And not discourage thy repenting shame.
As once Æneas, my famed ancestor,
Betwixt the Trojan and Rutulian bands,
Fought for a crown and bright Lavinia's bed,
So will I meet thee, hand to hand opposed:
My auguring mind assures the same success.

[*To his men.*

Hence, out of view: if I am slain, or yield,
Renounce me, Britons, for a recreant knight,
And let the Saxon peacefully enjoy
His former footing in our famous isle.
To ratify these terms, I swear——
Osw. You need not:
Your honour is of force without your oath.
I only add, that if I fall or yield,
Yours be the crown and Emmeline.
Arth. That 's two crowns.
No more; we keep the looking heavens and sun
Too long in expectation of our arms.

[*Both armies go clear off the stage.*

[*They fight with sponges in their hands dipt in blood; after some equal passes and closing they appear both wounded,* Arthur *stumbles among the trees,* Oswald *falls over him; they both rise;* Arthur *wounds him again, then* Oswald *retreats. Enter* Osmond *from among the trees, and with his wand strikes* Arthur's *sword out of his hand, and exit.* Oswald *pursues* Arthur. Merlin *enters and gives* Arthur *his sword, and exit: they close, and* Arthur *in the fall disarms* Oswald.

Arth. Confess thyself o'ercome, and ask thy life.
Osw. 'T is not worth asking when 't is in thy power.
Arth. Then take it as my gift.
Osw. A wretched gift,
With loss of empire, liberty and love.

[*A concert of trumpets within proclaiming* Arthur's *victory; while they sound,* Arthur *and* Oswald *seem to confer.*

'T is too much bounty to a vanquish'd foe,
Yet not enough to make me fortunate.
Arth. Thy life, thy liberty, thy honour safe,
Lead back thy Saxons to their ancient Elbe.
I would restore thee fruitful Kent, the gift

Of Vortigern for Hengist's ill-bought aid,
But that my Britons brook no foreign power
To lord it in a land sacred to freedom,
And of its rights tenacious to the last.

Osw. Nor more than thou hast offer'd would I take;
I would refuse all Britain held in homage,
And own no other masters but the gods.

Enter on one side Merlin, Emmeline *and* Matilda; Conon, Aurelius, Albanact, *with British* Soldiers *bearing* King Arthur's *standard displayed.*

On the other side, Guillamar *and* Osmond, *with Saxon* Soldiers *dragging their colours on the ground.*

[Arthur *going to* Emmeline *and embracing her.*

Arth. At length, at length I have thee in my arms,
Though our malevolent stars have struggled hard
And held us long asunder.

Em. We are so fitted for each other's hearts,
That Heaven had err'd in making of a third
To get betwixt and intercept our loves.

Osw. Were there but this, this only sight to see,
The price of Britain should not buy my stay.

Mer. Take hence that monster of ingratitude,
Him who betray'd his master, bear him hence,
And in that loathsome dungeon plunge him deep
Where he plunged noble Oswald.

Osm. That indeed is fittest for me,
For there I shall be near my kindred fiends,
And spare my Grimbald's pains to bear me to them.

[*Is carried off.*

Mer. [*to Arth.*] For this day's palm, and for thy former acts,
Thy Britain freed, and foreign force expell'd,
Thou, Arthur, hast acquired a future fame,
And of three Christian worthies art the first.
And now at once to treat thy sight and soul,
Behold what rolling ages shall produce;
The wealth, the loves, the glories of our isle,
Which yet, like golden ore, unripe in beds,
Expect the warm indulgency of heaven
To call them forth to light.

[*To* Oswald.

Nor thou, brave Saxon prince, disdain our triumphs:
Britons and Saxons shall be once one people;
One common tongue, one common faith shall bind
Our jarring bands in a perpetual peace.

Merlin waves his wand, the Scene changes and discovers the British Ocean in a Storm. Æolus in a cloud above; Four Winds hanging, &c.

Æolus *singing.*

Ye blustering brethren of the skies,
Whose breath has ruffled all the watery plain,
Retire, and let Britannia rise
In triumph o'er the main.
Serene and calm, and void of fear,
The queen of islands must appear;
Serene and calm, as when the spring
The new-created world began,
And birds on boughs did softly sing
Their peaceful homage paid to man,
While Eurus did his blasts forbear
In favour of the tender year.
Retreat, rude winds, retreat
To hollow rocks, your stormy seat;
There swell your lungs, and vainly, vainly threat.

Æolus ascends and the Four Winds fly off: the Scene opens and discovers a calm sea to the end of the house. An island arises to a soft tune, Britannia seated in the island with Fishermen at her feet, &c.; the tune changes, the Fishermen come ashore and dance awhile, after which Pan and a Nereid come on the stage and sing.

Pan *and* Nereid *sing.*

Round thy coasts, fair nymph of Britain,
For thy guard our waters flow:
Proteus all his herd admitting
On thy greens to graze below.
Foreign lands thy fishes tasting,
Learn from thee luxurious fasting.

Song of three parts.

For folded flocks on fruitful plains,
The shepherds' and the farmers' gains,
Fair Britain all the world outvies;
And Pan as in Arcadia reigns,
Where pleasure mix'd with profit lies.

Though Jason's fleece was famed of old,
The British wool is growing gold:
No mines can more of wealth supply:
It keeps the peasant from the cold,
And takes for kings the Tyrian dye.

[*The last stanza sung over again betwixt* Pan *and the* Nereid, *after which the former dance is varied and goes on.*

Enter Comus *with three* Peasants, *who sing the following song in parts.*

Comus. Your hay it is mow'd, and your corn is reap'd;
Your barns will be full, and your hovels heap'd:
Come, my boys, come;
Come, my boys, come;
And merrily roar out harvest home,
Harvest home,
Harvest home;
And merrily roar out harvest home.

Chorus. Come, my boys, come, &c.

1*st Man.* We have cheated the parson, we 'll cheat him again,
For why should a blockhead have one in ten?
One in ten,
One in ten,
For why should a blockhead have one in ten?

Chorus. One in ten,
One in ten,
For why should a blockhead have one in ten?

2*nd Man.* For prating so long like a book-learn'd sot,
Till pudding and dumpling burn to pot?
Burn to pot,
Burn to pot,
Till pudding and dumpling burn to pot?

Chorus, Burn to pot, &c.

3*rd Man.* We 'll toss off our ale till we cannot stand,
And hoigh for the honour of Old England,
Old England,
Old England,
And hoigh for the honour of Old England.

Chorus. Old England, &c.

[*The dance varied into a round country dance.*

Enter Venus.

Venus. Fairest isle, all isles excelling,
Seat of pleasures and of loves,
Venus here will choose her dwelling,
And forsake her Cyprian groves.

Cupid, from his favourite nation
Care and envy will remove;
Jealousy, that poisons passion,
And despair that dies for love.

Gentle murmurs, sweet complaining,
Sighs that blow the fire of love;
Soft repulses, kind disdaining,
Shall be all the pains you prove.

Every swain shall pay his duty,
Grateful every nymph shall prove;
And as these excel in beauty,
Those shall be renown'd for love.

Song by Mr. Howe.

She. You say, 't is love creates the pain,
Of which so sadly you complain;
And yet would fain engage my heart
In that uneasy cruel part.
But how, alas! think you, that I
Can bear the wound of which you die?

He. 'T is not my passion makes my care,
But your indifference gives despair:
The lusty sun begets no spring,
Till gentle showers assistance bring:
So love, that scorches and destroys,
Till kindness aids, can cause no joys.

She. Love has a thousand ways to please,
But more to rob us of our ease:
For wakeful nights and careful days
Some hours of pleasure he repays;
But absence soon, or jealous fears,
O'erflow the joys with floods of tears.

He. By vain and senseless forms betray'd,
Harmless Love 's the offender made;
While we no other pains endure
Than those that we ourselves procure:
But one soft moment makes amends
For all the torment that attends.

Chorus of both.

Let us love, let us love, and to happiness haste;
Age and wisdom come too fast;
Youth for loving was design'd
He alone. I 'll be constant, you be kind
She alone. You be constant, I 'll be kind.
Both. Heaven can give no greater blessing
Than faithful love, and kind possessing.

After the dialogue, a warlike concert: the Scene opens above, and discovers the Order of the Garter.

Enter Honour, *attended by* Heroes.

Mer. These who last enter'd are our valiant Britons,
Who shall by sea and land repel our foes.
Now look above, and in heaven's high abyss
Behold what fame attends those future heroes.
Honour, who leads them to that steepy height,
In her immortal song shall tell the rest.

Honour *sings.*

St. George, the patron of our isle,
A soldier and a saint,
On that auspicious order smile
Which love and arms will plant.

Our natives not alone appear
To court this martial prize;
But foreign kings, adopted here,
Their crowns at home despise.

Our sovereign high, in awful state,
His honours shall bestow;
And see his sceptred subjects wait
On his commands below.

[*A full chorus of the whole song, after which the grand dance.*

Arth. [*to Mer.*] Wisely you have whate'er will please reveal'd,
What would displease, as wisely have conceal'd;
Triumphs of war and peace at full ye show,
But swiftly turn the pages of our woe.
Rest we contented with our present state:
'T is anxious to inquire of future fate.
That race of heroes is enough alone
For all unseen disasters to atone.
Let us make haste betimes to reap our share,
And not resign them all the praise of war.
But set the example, and their souls inflame
To copy out their great forefathers' fame.

CONTENTS.

ACT I.

ACT II.

ACT III.

ACT IV.

ACT V.

APPENDIX.