





3 3333 02154 9718

Vol. 1

793.11 Macdonell 2030.8

Historical plays for children

REFERENCE


127

REFERENCE

79 3.11 M

20308

THE CENTRAL CHILDREN'S ROOM
DORRIS WEAVER CENTER
20 WEST 53 STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation



HISTORICAL PLAYS FOR
CHILDREN

In Preparation

THE SECOND SERIES

SAXON AND NORMAN

MAGNA CHARTA } ONE-ACT PLAYS
EDWARD III. } IN ONE BOOK

AND OTHERS

HISTORICAL PLAYS

FOR

CHILDREN

BY
AMICE MACDONELL

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

FIRST SERIES

ALFRED THE GREAT

ROBIN HOOD

THE ARMADA

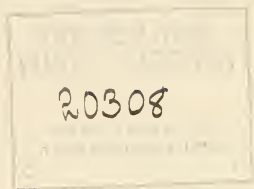
THE ENTERPRISE OF THE
"MAYFLOWER"

LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & SONS

44 & 45 RATHBONE PLACE

1909

[All rights reserved]



PUBLISHED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
LEAGUE OF THE EMPIRE

C793.11

M

ALFRED THE GREAT



STAGE DIRECTIONS

FOR this play one exit and entrance, right or left, is required. No proscenium curtain is necessary. Two of the boys, in acting clothes, come on the stage, after the Prologue and between the scenes, and arrange chairs, &c., in view of the audience.

No scenery is needed. Places can be indicated by placards, as—"Palace of King Alfred."

For all the scenes, curtains of some plain colour, green or brown holland, for instance, make a good conventional background, across which a long evergreen garland, caught up at regular intervals, may be hung.

To indicate a small room (such as the Neatherd's hut), a screen can be put in front of the background curtains. For outdoor scenes, large boughs set in a pot, or even wooden chairs completely covered with greenery, will represent bushes.

PROPERTIES

ACT I

SCENE I.—ALFRED'S CHILDHOOD. IN THE PALACE OF KING ETHELWULF. Two large chairs. Book. Bows and arrows.

ACT II

SCENE I.—ABOUT TWENTY-FOUR YEARS LATER. EARLY IN 878. IN KING ALFRED'S PALACE, WINCHESTER. Three chairs. Bench. Table, with cups, jugs, food, drinking-horn, for a feast. Harp.

SCENE II.—SOME DAYS LATER. MOORLAND IN WEST COUNTRY. Bushes. Bundles. Books.

ACT III

SCENE I.—SPRING, 878. IN THE NEATHERD'S HUT, ATHELNEY. Bench. Stones or bricks for a fire. Iron pot. Fagots. Dough for cakes. Bow and arrows. Book.

SCENE II.—AFTER EASTER, 878. IN KING ALFRED'S STRONGHOLD, ATHELNEY. Benches. Table, with jug, cups, dishes, bread. Fagots. Distaffs. Harp. Standard. Sword. Shield.

SCENE III.—NEAR WHITSUNTIDE, 878.—BY THE BATTLE-FIELD OF ETHANDUNE. Bushes. Herbs, linen, ointment for wounds. Standard. Raven banner.

ACT IV

SCENE I.—LATER IN KING ALFRED'S REIGN. IN KING ALFRED'S PALACE, WINCHESTER. Night-time. Stage darkened. Two chairs. Table, with candle lit. Lantern. Books. Writing materials. Plans of ships.

SCENE II.—TOWARDS THE END OF KING ALFRED'S REIGN. IN KING ALFRED'S PALACE, WINCHESTER. Two large chairs. Sheaf of corn. Standard. Plan of Athelney Monastery. Jewel.

DRESSES

The Saxon dress, with its ample folds and flowing lines, is very simple and it has a distinctly classical character.

Except for the crown, the royal dress differed little from that of other people. The men wore a plain tunic to the knee, fastened round the waist with a piece of folded cloth or an ornamented belt. The tunic (the chief and characteristic Saxon garment) fitted tight round the neck and fastened in front. It was often open at the sides, from the hips downwards. A cloak, generally short, was fastened on

the right shoulder with a brooch. It was sometimes pulled up to make a hood; other coverings for the head being conical hats, quite Phrygian in shape, as were the helmets. The legs were swathed with bands of leather or other material.

The women had a long gown over which was often worn a "super-tunic" to a little below the knee with wide sleeves, beneath which appeared those of the long under-dress, tight to the wrist. A hood or veil wrapped the head and shoulders, giving a nun-like look to the whole dress. A circular cloak, which could be raised in front over the arms was often worn.

The crown sometimes formed part of the conical regal helmet; it was also a band with high, branching points, or a simple fillet of gold.

For official dress, ecclesiastics wore a long cloak (chasuble) pointed in front and behind and projecting upwards to a point behind the head. Under this was the dalmatic or super-tunic with wide sleeves, and reaching to below the knee. Beneath this showed the under tunic (alb) to the ankle, with tight wrist sleeves.

The mitre was probably not worn in England till after Alfred's time. Asser might wear the black Benedictine habit.

Saxon civil and military dress differed very little, as a rule. Warriors are often represented clad in their tunic and armed with spear, bow, battle-axe, and a round, convex shield (made of leather and iron), with a circular boss and projecting spike in the middle. The sword was broad and double-edged.

Saxon and Danish dress were much alike, but the Danes were often clad in black. They were expert bowmen; they had the round shield, and also shields which are described as "moonlike."

It will not be difficult or expensive to give a general idea of the costume. Each actor could be dressed, on a rough average, for about 3s., exclusive of shoes and stockings.

To get a good effect, it is best to keep the proportion of colours even; to choose full, simple colours, like those of the old illuminations, and not "art" shades.

For materials, sateen at $4\frac{3}{4}$ d. or $6\frac{3}{4}$ d. can be used, but the cheapest woollen stuff or house flannel makes better folds, and gives the massive appearance of the woollen and linen garments of early times. "Horticultural Sheeting," 50 inches wide, 1s. a yard (Messrs. Cookson, Wellington Mills, Manchester) is very useful and can be dyed with Maypole soap.

For boys the measurements required are: chest, waist, neck to knee, arm, head.

For girls: bust, waist, neck to ground, arm, head.

Helmets and caps can be made of carpet-felt (48 inches wide, $8\frac{1}{2}$ d. a yard), stiffened with size and covered with silver tinsel, 1s. $0\frac{1}{2}$ d. a yard; crowns, of cardboard or buckram painted with gold. For large quantities of gilding or silvering it is easier and cheaper to use gold, or aluminium silver powder (about 6d. an ounce) mixed with "white polish." Borders and dress patterns can be stencilled with this or with paint. Gold braid ($4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per dozen yards, Burnet & Co., 22 Garrick Street, Covent Garden), is also useful.

Weapons can be made of wood, blackleaded and then silvered.

Tunics and dresses should be made with no seam on the shoulder. A piece of stuff, double the length of garment required, is folded in half, selvedge to selvedge; the neck is cut out in the centre of the top of the fold. The folded stuff on either side of the neck-opening forms the shoulder and the sleeve. The sides of the garment are slightly

shaped to the figure. Keep in mind the making of an old-fashioned chemise. Unless the stuff is very wide it may be necessary to add to the length of the sleeves.

In the big circular cloaks, the neck-opening is sometimes not in the centre, but placed so as to make the cloak shorter in front. The ecclesiastical cloak or chasuble is shaped into a point before and behind and when spread out is elliptic in shape.

The girls' shoes will not show under their long dresses. The boys can have felt soles inside their stockings or have white canvas shoes. White stockings, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. a pair, can be dyed with Maypole soap, the canvas shoes being painted with dye to match. The legs must be bound with long strips of brown or other coloured stuff, starting at the ankle and coming up, criss-cross-wise to the knee.

Ancient standards were often made of wood. The Golden Dragon was the ensign of Wessex. But here, Alfred's device might be a cross, "Maltese" in shape. Both the Cross, and the Raven on the Danish Standard, could be painted on a piece of stuff fastened to a horizontal piece of wood set on the top of a pole—like a church banner.

The illuminated MSS. are our chief authority for Anglo-Saxon dress. An eleventh-century MS. (Cottonian Collection) in the British Museum, marked "Claudius B. 4," gives pictures of many costumes of the time. Pictures of Saxon dress are in J. R. Green's "Short History of the English People," illustrated, vol. i.

F. W. Fairholt's "Costume in England" (Bohn's "Artists' Library"), has descriptions and pictures of ecclesiastical, civil, and military dresses.

Most of the tunes are in well-known collections of old melodies.

The Latin verse, from the hymn, "Pange lingua," by

Bishop Fortunatus (530-609), is a real echo of King Alfred's time, as it would almost certainly be known and sung in Saxon England of the ninth century.

The tune is "Tantum Ergo" in G, from ancient "Canticle" (Novello & Co., 6d.).

The harper's first song is to "Sweet Innisfallen," "National Song Book," &c. (Boosey & Co., 3s.).

Chorus—Act II., Scene 1, "Dulce Domum," "Songs of the British Islands," &c. (W. H. Hadow, Curwen, 2s. 6d.).

Harper's Songs—Act II., Scene 1, and Act III., Scene 2, "Afton Water," "National Song Book," &c.

Chorus—Act III., Scene 3, "See the Conquering Hero comes," Handel's "Judas Maccabæus" (Novello & Co.).

Chorus—Act IV., Scene 2, "Forty Years On," "Harrow School Songs," No. XIII. (Joseph Williams & Co., 3d.).

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

KING ALFRED, as a child and afterwards as a man.

KING ETHELWULF, father of Alfred.

ETHELBERT } Alfred's brothers.
ETHELRED }

A BISHOP.

ASSER, a monk of St. David's.

ETHELNOTH, ealdorman of Somerset.

EADULF, a thane of Sussex.

A HARPER.

MESSENGER.

A NEATHERD.

A REEVE.

A SAXON YOUTH.

OH THERE, a voyager.

GUTHRUM, the Danish King.

A DANISH PRISONER.

QUEEN OSBURGA, mother of Alfred.

QUEEN ELSWITHA, Alfred's wife.

MILBURGA, a Saxon lady.

NEATHERD'S WIFE.

Several of the smaller parts may be taken by the same actor.

ACT I

SCENE I.—Alfred's childhood. In the Palace of King Ethelwulf.

ACT II

SCENE I.—About twenty-four years later. Early in 878. In King Alfred's Palace, Winchester.

SCENE II.—Some days later. Moorland in West Country.

ACT III

SCENE I.—Spring, 878. In the Neatherd's hut, Athelney.

SCENE II.—After Easter, 878. In King Alfred's stronghold, Athelney.

SCENE III.—About Whitsuntide, 878. By the battlefield of Ethandune.

ACT IV

SCENE I.—Later in King Alfred's reign. Night-time. In the Palace of King Alfred, Winchester.

SCENE II.—Toward the end of King Alfred's reign. In the Palace of King Alfred, Winchester.

ALFRED THE GREAT

PROLOGUE

Spoken by the HARPER

LO, I come to tell the story
Of our England's mighty King,
Far-off founder of her glory,
Alfred wise and good I sing.

Through the mists that shroud the ages,
Through the changes and the strife,
Alfred shines in ancient pages,
Mirror of the hero's life.

Now, ten hundred long years later,
In this happy reign, we see
This our country, wider, greater
Than King Alfred dreamt 'twould be.

Still his counsel wise endureth,
Still his light shines on our way,
Him to follow, good ensureth
To the children of to-day.

ACT I

SCENE I

Alfred's Childhood

Palace of KING ETHELWULF, Winchester. Two chairs in centre of stage.

Enter left in procession, singing; KING ETHELWULF and QUEEN OSBURGA (a book in her hand), ALFRED, ETHELBERT, and ETHELRED, BISHOP, ETHELNOTH and EADULF, MESSENGER. They move slowly round stage and sing twice.

TUNE—"Ancient Canticle."

"Pange lingua gloriosi
Lauream certaminis,
Et super Crucis trophæo,
Dic triumphum nobilem :
Qualiter Redemptor orbis
Immolatus vicerit."

[KING and QUEEN seat themselves centre, right and left. ALFRED stands on left of his mother, the other two PRINCES behind. BISHOP on right next KING. EADULF and MESSENGER on right.]

Alfred. In Heaven shall we sing songs like these, dear mother?

Osburga. The songs of Heaven are for the faithful soldiers of the Cross. If we would sing

with the saints hereafter, we must be wise, pure, and noble here on earth, and lead a life of work and prayer. The books writ of old by holy men show us the way. (*Points to book which she holds in her hand.*) Here is wisdom more precious than gold. (*Turns to KING.*) My lord, seest thou this fair book? I did promise it to the one of my sons who could first learn what is written therein.

[*Opens book on her knee.*

Alfred (*pointing to open page*). It tells of saints, and warriors noble as Beowulf who slew the fen monster. See; tales of wise Ina, framer of laws; here did Egbert, our father's father, smite the Mercians and was over-lord of the English, south of the Humber; this tells how holy Etheldreda built the monastery on Ely marsh. A skilful monk did write it all; he has painted the first letter in shining gold.

Bishop (*aside*). The child glows with eagerness and grace. He will prove an apt scholar one day. (*To ALFRED.*) What is that letter on the page, that gleams so bright?

Alfred. 'Tis K; King is the word, I know.

Bishop. Thus glorious in our chronicles should be the memory of kings. Kings—anointed with God's oil, called by His people, armed to fight His foes—their names should shine out from the pages of our dimmer lives.

King. Aye, but kingship is o'erladen with cares and sorrow. Little rest have I known since I was

called to the throne of the great Egbert. It irked me sore to take the rule. Little time have I had since, to do aught but fight. Thou hast helped me, good Bishop; so have the books which thou wast wont to read me. Which of my sons has learnt the poems that are set forth so fairly in this book? Which has won the prize which thou, dear lady, held out to them?

Ethelbert. Not I! I love to hunt in the gay, green wood. I hate four walls, and am fainer to hear the song of a lark than the squeak of a mouse. Summer is coming; little I reckon if I read or not!

King. No book will e'er be thine, wild thing of the woods! (*Turns to* ETHELRED.) But Ethelred is not like thee; he frequents shrines and holy fanes. What hast thou done?

Ethelred. Nay, my father, I could not remember the verses, no, nor spell a sentence out. Red and green letters, black words on parchment, see you, 'tis all alike. Full well I love to hear the priests sing from the Psalm Book; nor man nor fiend should drag me from Church. But clerks' learning is too hard for me.

Bishop. Three months ago, thou didst promise, lady, that the first of these Athelings who could learn it, should have the costly book which is in thy hand. Because I love these princes, I undertook the task of teaching them. Alfred worked day by day, and he alone was never cast down.



So Alfred, youngest of thy sons, has merited the prize.

Queen. Verily, he has.

Alfred. Ah, mother, (*points*) see, e'en the binding is set with gold. Scarce can I believe the book is mine.

Ethelbert. I cannot read nor learn and never shall. Read thou thy book for me.

Ethelred. Thou and the priests can do the same for me.

King. My children, 'tis an old saw which says, "The field is mown of what was sown." In the years to come, each of you will keep the promise of his childhood.

Queen. Ah, Alfred, I have watched, unknown, thy daily work. The merit is thine indeed. Good Bishop, (*gives book to BISHOP*) give him the book. (*To ALFRED.*) Strive to be like the heroes of the chronicle.

Bishop (*holding book*). A book is a faithful friend in times of trouble. (*To ALFRED.*) Take thou this book, for here is a message to thee. (*ALFRED advances, takes book from BISHOP.*) The warriors and saints of the English have lit bright torches, and thou, O child, shalt bear the light onward through dark times.

Alfred. I am too little to fight or work.

Bishop. Aye, now thou art, my Alfred, but one day, one day—keep thy book in safety for future years.

Alfred (examining book). How fair 'tis writ !

Ethelred. I marvel that Alfred, the youngest of us, should win the book.

Ethelbert. He is so little, we are almost grown.

Ethelwulf. Yea, almost grown enough to take the yoke of government which wearies me. (*To ETHELBERT.*) Thou wilt have the rule of Kent ere long. Alfred, thou the youngest, art still my chiefest hope, though, methinks, I ought to rejoice that thy toilsome days are yet far off. Go to your woodcraft, my sons. Take your bows and arrows.

Ethelred. Alfred learns readily the forest lore.

Ethelnoth. Aye, 'tis sooth. His little bow is bent craftily ; the good goose feather goes right to the mark. Soon he'll learn the use of knife and spear, and venture in the thicket where the wild boar turns at bay.

Ethelbert. Alfred has ever the luck of the forest in our sports ; 'tis strange that he should also win the book.

Bishop. Happy child ! on whom Heaven smiles, alike at work or play. The strong arm and the swift foot will not make thee, hereafter, less wise in council, less faithful in prayer. But now, my princes, away to the woods and take pleasure while you may.

Queen. Go forth, my sons, into the forest ; the sun shines, the cuckoo calls ; summer is coming ! Farewell.

Alfred. Farewell, dear mother. As I run under the leafy trees, I shall still see the heroes' names in shining letters. [*The three brothers go out left.*]

Bishop. He that is a wondrous child will one day be a wondrous man. How humbly he took the prize, yet what a manful spirit did he show in working for it. His brothers soon grew weary, but Alfred's courage upheld him to the end.

Queen. My heart rejoices at thy words. Ah me, patience must be his companion in these times of trouble and strife.

King. 'Tis true indeed. The days grow ever darker. Warfare, naught but warfare, have I had. At Ockley we smote the heathen in the Andreds-weald, but year by year, the fierce Norsemen return in their black ships; oftener they come now and longer is their sojourn.

Eadulf. They've wintered now in Thanet.

King. The storms grows; wars and perils threaten us. Each of my sons when he reigns will have need of grace and high courage.

Bishop. We'll meet the powers of darkness leagued against us.

King. Alas, but I am weary. I would fain lay down sword and axe, take pilgrim's staff and go to Rome, that blessed city. There, one day will I visit the tombs of the Apostles and lay my offerings, gold, fair cloths embroidered, at the holy Father's feet. I will send Alfred too, despite his tender years, across the seas, that he may be anointed

there in Rome and hallowed to the crown of Wessex which he shall wear when I am dead.

Queen. Alfred will not be King until the reigns of his elder brothers are past. The day is far away, and who knows what tempests may gather ere then?

King. Youngest in years, eldest in wisdom! I would that the ages of my sons were reversed and that Alfred might reign before his brothers. (*Rises.*) Then he would accomplish all that I have left undone.

[*QUEEN rises, BISHOP stands between KING and QUEEN.*

Bishop. O King, whom I have loved, and thou, wise and noble Osburga, one day Alfred will wear the crown of Wessex and I shall see him take the helm to steer our ship, perchance through wild seas and amid perilous rocks—

And he, at last, shall heal our country's woes,
And with his good sword vanquish all her foes.

[*BISHOP goes out left, then KING and QUEEN, ETHELNOTH and EADULF, MESSENGER.*

SPEAKER OF THE PROLOGUE *sings*:

TUNE—"Sweet Innisfallen."

Play where the grass is deep and green
In forest glades, oh, happy child!
Where the blue of heaven laughs between
The rocking boughs of woodland wild.

ALFRED THE GREAT

At thy glad touch the blue-bells ring,
And at thy voice, upon the spray,
The blackbird and the robin sing ;
The squirrel starts again to play.

And to thine eyes the form appears
Of hero bold or saint so mild,
For thee, as them, come toil and tears ;
So play, while summer lasts, sweet child !

Now have near twenty-four years rolled away, since, as a child, Alfred won the book. You see fresh scenes and new figures on our stage. Alfred is grown a man—fair, wise, and strong, as was foretold. Father and mother both are dead. His brothers died also, when each, as king, had bravely done his part against the heathen foe ; Ethelred, the last, sleeps at Wimborne after the fierce fight on Ashdown. Alfred, youngest of the sons of Ethelwulf, is King, called by the voice of the people to his father's throne. The Bishop set the crown of Wessex on his head ; sceptre and sword were given him after the ancient custom ; with shouts and the clash of arms they hailed him King. Hard strife has he had since then, and fought many pitched battles against the Danes. But peace smiles for a moment now. Alfred comes with Elswitha, the fair lady he wedded from among the Mercians. They enter Winchester and all the land-folk rejoice to see them in the lengthening days, and little dream of danger close at hand.

ACT II

SCENE I

Early in the year 878.

Palace of King Alfred, Winchester. Long table set towards right of stage, with dishes, cups, &c., for a feast; three chairs and a bench.

Enter ETHELNOTH; MILBURGA, *with food on a dish, EADULF with jug or drinking-horn.*

Ethelnoth. The King and his lady come. Set forth the tables for a feast.

Eadulf. Aye, indeed; let's eat and drink. (*Spreads out food.*) We've seen enough o' fighting. Eight pitched battles, in one year, had we. This arm of mine, struck by a Danish arrow, is scarce yet healed.

Milburga (*looks at arm*). Ah me!

Eadulf. 'Twas when we fought them, off the coast by Swanage.

Ethelnoth. We had the victory.

Eadulf. Aye, we drave the black ships hence. The wolves were scattered; they did not devour the flock that time.

Milburga. They may return. Those who escape the Danes, when they fall upon our villages, can only gasp of fire and sword and flying people. "From the fury of the Northmen, deliver us!" so says the prayer.

Ethelnoth. Amen, indeed ; but we've dealt them blows of late, I trow. We have rest for a little, and we need some rest. (*Takes up cup.*) See you, I drink to peace—our flocks and herds—the corn that grows fast in the lengthening days.

ETHELNOTH *and* EADULF *sing* :

TUNE—" *Dulce Domum.*"

Sing with us, ye merry shepherds,
 Summer is a-nearing !
 Now winter's gone away
 Sing we a carol gay,
 Rain nor snow nor wind a-fearing ;
 For green grass and corn are springing,
 Soon the sickle mows the hay,
 Soon ripe sheaves of corn we're bringing,
 Shepherds, pipe a merry lay !

MILBURGA *sings* :

Turn your wheel, ye merry maidens,
 Winter was a-dying.
 Speed with the even tread,
 Pull fine the flaxen thread,
 Sing, the shuttle send a-flying !

All sing together :

For green grass and corn are springing,
 Soon the sickle mows the hay,
 Soon ripe sheaves of corn we're bringing,
 Shepherds, pipe a merry lay !

Ethelnoth. Now let us hence and meet the King!
[*All go out left.*]

Enter, left, KING ALFRED with QUEEN ELSWITHA, BISHOP, ETHELNOTH, EADULF, MILBURGA. ALFRED stands centre, ELSWITHA beside him BISHOP and MILBURGA on left by QUEEN, ETHELNOTH and EADULF by KING on right.

Ethelnoth. Hail to thee, Alfred our King!

Milburga. Hail, Lady Elswitha!

Alfred. We greet you all; Ethelnoth, ealdorman of Somerset, Eadulf of Sussex, and all our people gathered in Winchester. I must talk of weighty matters with my wisest men. Meanwhile, we'll have a feast.

Eadulf. 'Tis spread. They bring the horns of mead.

Elswitha. The sun shines on our revelry to-day, but thou, my King, art sad.

Alfred. Not sad; I'll smile and take good cheer—only the care of this land lies ever on my heart.

Elswitha. Truly, but now the world seems blithe and gay. (*Turns to MILBURGA and THANES.*) Thanks for your welcome.

Milburga. We would give our all to thee!

Alfred (*leads ELSWITHA to seat at the table*). Come to the board, dear lady. It is no feast to me if thou art not loaf-giver. Good Bishop, be seated there. Guests gather round. (*They seat themselves.*) Let us rejoice in peace awhile. There's no mirth

without music. Where is the harper? Bid him advance and sing.

Enter, left, a HARPER.

Come, harper, crown this happy day with thy song.

Harper. I am old and my fingers are feebler than once they were. But I will sing for you, great King and most fair lady. Forgive the sadness of my song; boding of grief oppresses me. [*Sings.*

TUNE—"Afton Water."

The blush of the roses will wither away,

The hours of the summer they fly so fast,
The scent of the lily is gone with the day;

And would that sweet joy, sweet joy, could last!

Lo, all in a moment, the storm doth break,

The sky will grow dark on a cloudless day;
And we from our slumber to weeping awake,

And would that sweet joy, sweet joy, could stay!

Enter, left, a MESSENGER, in haste.

Harper. A messenger in haste! methinks prophetic was my strain!

Alfred (*rises, hand on sword*). What tidings are these?

Messenger. Ill tidings! Ill tidings, O my King! I scarce have breath to tell the news—the Danes are on us. (*All rise.*) Southward through Wessex now they swarm—town, hamlet, church, are all in flames!

Alfred (to ETHELNOTH). Reward him for his running. Send forth the call to arms! (To MESSENGER.) Bid my ealdormen and thanes meet me in council. Call out the whole force of the land. (MESSENGER goes out left.) Ethelnoth, make ready thy men in Somerset, and bid Ethelhelm of Wiltshire prepare for battle.

Ethelnoth. I will, my lord.

Alfred. Eadulf, go forth, and summons all the people here. (EADULF goes out, left.) Faithful Bishop, see that the Queen is placed in safety. We must march northward to meet them.

Re-enter EADULF.

Eadulf. Northward, my King! Nay, the Danes are coming also from the south. Our men have sighted the black ships; the Danes are in Devon; Exeter is set on fire; the churches sacked, the relics of the saints flung on the ground; the brethren tortured till they give the church's gold.

Elswitha. Alas, unhappy land! O people, stand by the King!

Ethelnoth and Eadulf. We will, till death.

Bishop. Come to safety, dear lady. We must be ready, if need be, for sudden flight. I will bestow our books in safety.

Alfred. Now forth to battle! Farewell, sweet lady.

Elswitha. Nay, I will never leave thy side!

Alfred. Heaven will reward thee! (*Turns to men.*) Now draw your swords!

[*Lifts his sword.*

Like the deep waters, onward come the foe;
But we will meet them, giving blow for blow.

[*ALFRED goes out, left, followed by
ETHELNOTH, EADULF, HARPER,
BISHOP, ELSWITHA and MILBURGA.*

SCENE II

A moorland in the West Country.

Enter EADULF, left, in haste; carrying a bundle.

Eadulf. O woeful day! The Danes have come from Chippenham; they march through Wessex; the heathen triumph; woe is me!

Enter, left, MILBURGA.

Milburga. Oh, where shall we go? Our farm is sacked and all in flames. Where shall we hide? (*Starts.*) Ah who comes?

[*EADULF draws sword.*

Enter BISHOP, carrying books.

Eadulf. 'Tis a friend.

Bishop. Aye, a friend, unhappy people! Hardly have I saved these books. I hid them in my cloak and fled across the moor.

Eadulf. Where is the King? Is the King slain? If it be so, then let us go back and die with him.

Bishop. Nay, speak low: he lives, stricken with sorrow for his people. Bravely he battled, but it was in vain. He is hiding now in the distant fens, till he can gather up the remnant of his host. I go now to him.

Eadulf. Tell me where is he? Trust me, for I am true.

Bishop. Across the Avon—southward from here, where the Tone meets another river in the marsh, there lies an island, hid in osier thickets, 'tis called Athelney.

Eadulf. I'll find the way across the fens and bring Milburga there.

Bishop. We will all gather to the King. They say an honest neatherd dwells by Athelney. He wanders far with his herds, and he will spy for us, and bring us news of what the foemen do.

Eadulf. Now, let us hence and join the King. Milburga, come; we are in direst peril here.

[*All go out left, BISHOP leading.*]

ACT III

SCENE I

Spring, 878.

Athelney. In the NEATHERD'S hut. Some stones or bricks, on right of stage to represent a fire; iron pot. Bench on left of fire.

Enter, left, the NEATHERD, with a bundle of fagots.

Neatherd. Well, I'm weary o' tending the kine and watching the pigs in the forest from dawn till night—and ever and ever the fear of the Danes, who'd burn our hut and slay us. (*Points to room.*) Though, well I wot, there's little for them to take here! (*Sits down.*) A fine harvest last year; berries on every bush; good grass a-springing now; cattle and swine fat enough too; but no good of herd or acorns, if the Danes be near to waste and harry the land. And alack, and worse than all, the King an exile. 'Twas as the days first grew longer that the heathen host poured in like floodtide. After fierce fighting, the foemen held the battle-stead and our King was forced to flee, dressed like a peasant, and to hide in the forest. (*Gets up.*) Think of that, Neatherd, says I to myself, many a time under the oak-trees. For I know what I know—I keep my secret close; not

even the kine shall hear that the King, yea, the King, is in hiding not so far from my hut here, waiting till the forces are gathered again. So—that's a secret. I will never tell my wife. She talks; she would let it out. So, mum, Neatherd. Ah, she comes, I can hear her.

Enter, left, NEATHERD'S WIFE, with dough on a wooden dish.

Neatherd's Wife. Idle, idle, idle! It is I must toil from morn till night!

Neatherd. Here are fagots enow for thy fire. (*WIFE snatches at fagots and begins piling them on stones.*) I'll go and tend the kine, and then come in and have some supper. Perchance a stranger——

Neatherd's Wife (looks up). What dost thou say?

Neatherd. Nay, naught. (*Aside.*) 'Tis hard to keep silence. I shall tell her all if I bide longer.

[NEATHERD goes out, left.]

Neatherd's Wife (sits on bench; kneads the dough and makes it into cakes). There now, he's gone! He can go and whistle and talk to the kine and the pigs, and I am left to toil and moil all alone. No living soul to speak with! Well, I must be at my work and make the cakes. He'll want his supper. (*Looks in pot.*) There's meat in the pot. Here is the dough. (*Feels.*) The stones are hot and ready now. (*Starts.*) What's that?—a step! It cannot

be the Danes. We're far too poor to rob. Who can it be?

Enter, left, KING ALFRED, disguised.

Alfred. Is any one about?

Neatherd's Wife. What dost thou want? I've naught to give.

Alfred. A few hours' rest is all I ask. I have been far to-day.

Neatherd's Wife (aside). I am afeared, though he looks well and speaks like our people. (*To KING.*) If thou stayst, remember there's naught here to steal.

Alfred (aside). Aye, 'tis poor enough. (*To NEATHERD'S WIFE.*) Trust me, good wife, I am an honest man.

Neatherd's Wife (aside). He looketh peaceable.

Alfred. I will sit down awhile and rest.

[*Seats himself on bench near fire.*]

Neatherd's Wife. Yea, rest thyself, but I have no time to talk. Busy am I from morn till night, morn till night; spinning, baking, brewing——

Alfred. Where is the Neatherd? I would speak with him.

Neatherd's Wife (aside). He hath a look which says "obey"! (*To KING.*) The Neatherd, dost thou ask? He's in the wood or on the meads. What dost thou want with him? Give me thy tidings. (*Steps up to KING.*) If 'tis a secret, why

then the better. Some folks are like a sieve, but I——

Alfred. Nay, I will see the Neatherd.

Neatherd's Wife. Thou foolish man! My husband's far in the forest with his herd. He's out till night-fall, wet or shine. Tell me; I'll tell him.

Alfred. I will wait till he comes back.

Neatherd's Wife (angrily). I tell thee, he won't be home till night!

Alfred. Peace, good wife, give me my one desire—a little quiet by the hearth.

Neatherd's Wife. Aye, quiet indeed, but thou shalt earn that rest. See these cakes upon the stones. Whate'er betide, don't let them burn. Move the cakes when they get brown.

Alfred. I understand.

Neatherd's Wife. I hope thou dost! Bide here then—I must go forth. No time for me to stand and idly chatter like a jay. Remember, turn the cakes! Forget not! (*Aside.*) Yon's a strange-looking sort o' man; he's a bright eye that seems to read your mind.

[NEATHERD'S wife goes out left.

Alfred (takes out arrows and bow and mends them). Poor wife! She little guesses I'm the King. Far have I fared to-day, seeking to gather my men; sending messengers; spying on the foe; striving to cheer the broken spirits of my people. I will not weep for my own woes, ah me! but for England

do I sigh ; that this fair land should be wasted and worn by cruel foes ; that the heathen should prevail ! O England, thy King shares thy sorrows, and will yet work thy saving. As a peasant, in these wilds, I suffer cold and hunger and learn the poor man's bitterest need. Ever next my heart I carry this book to heal my grief and strengthen me to fight again. (*Takes out little book from under cloak.*) I love to look on each page.

Wide is the shadow of the Rock
In this bare broken land ;
Though all the waves shall pass o'er me
I see Thy outstretched Hand.

Thus prayed a King, forced, even as I am, to flee from his enemies. In deepest sorrow, he was not utterly forsaken. David at last sat on his throne in peace. Even now, through the darkness, I discern the light far off. Oft, watching for the morning, have I seen how all is darkest just before the dawn. My daystar will arise ! (*Gets up.*) Now forth to cheer my men again. What's that ? An angry voice ; the Neatherd's wife ! The cakes—alack, they're somewhat burnt.

Enter, left, NEATHERD'S WIFE.

Neatherd's Wife. The cakes ! the cakes indeed ! They're burnt black ! Idle wight ! I trow thou'rt

ready enough to eat them up; too idle to keep watch!

Alfred. Prithee, forgive, good wife!

Neatherd's Wife. Good wife, quoth a,—good wife! Look at the cakes—burnt black as cinders. There they go, through the door. (*Snatches up cakes and throws them out, left.*) I'll send thee packing after them!

Enter, left, NEATHERD.

Neatherd. How now, wife? What's this thou'rt doing? Throwing cakes into the forest? One of them hit me. What's all about?

Neatherd's Wife (*points to KING*). That's what it is about! Seest thou that man? He promised to watch my cakes—the wretch has let them burn. (*Starts, and rushes up to NEATHERD.*) What is't? Thou tremblest!

Neatherd. Alack, alack the day! Wife, what hast thou done? This is, this is—the King!

[*Buries his face in his hands.*]

Neatherd's Wife. The King! (*Throws herself at KING'S feet.*) Oh, we are lost! Most miserable! It was my doing. Spare him, oh, spare him!

Alfred. In this mean disguise, thou couldst not know me, honest wife.

Neatherd's Wife (*wrings her hands*). I did not, I did not, my King!

Alfred. I read thee true of heart. No longer kneel.

[*Holds out hand.*

Neatherd's Wife (rises). Oh, pardon us, gracious King; our lives, our all, are thine.

Neatherd. I was even now upon thy errand, noble King, to hear if our men gather. I did not tell her that the King might come; and she received thee with contempt!

Alfred (to NEATHERD). Thou didst wrong not to tell her. Secrecy in wedded life makes strife. Good dame, thou hast a sharp tongue; treat no peasant as thou didst the King.

Neatherd. Our grief we ne'er can show.

Neatherd's Wife. I'll not speak another hard word, (*turns to NEATHERD*) not even to thee.

Alfred. The greatest and the least may make mistakes. As King, I pardon you heartily. (*Smiles.*) As guest, I crave your pardon for the cakes. They burned while my thoughts were elsewhere. Now, Neatherd, go forth, before nightfall, and seek Ethelnoth, bid him come to me here in Athelney. We must arm our people; and, ere long, in pitched battle will we meet the Danes!

[*ALFRED goes out left, followed by NEATHERD and his WIFE.*

SCENE II

After Easter, 878.

Inside the KING'S hut and stronghold, on another part of Athelney. A table towards right of stage, with dishes, cup, jug, bread upon it, two benches on right; stones for fire, fagots on extreme right: KING'S sword and shield on left of stage.

Enter, left, QUEEN ELSWITHA and MILBURGA, with distaffs. ELSWITHA seats herself on bench; MILBURGA beside her on right.

Elswitha. Full many an hour have I kept watch, and still the King doth not return. He goes to learn if reinforcements come, and journeys in the cold and rain; labouring sore and resting not, by night or day.

Milburga. Methinks, this land will never have peace. We shall never see our homes again. Would I had died at the sack of our village!

[Weeps.]

Elswitha. Weep not; while the King lives, there's hope for Wessex. Keep tears lest he be slain, for then we have no help. Now, set forth the table; the fish, good Eadulf brought us; bread and water. 'Tis little that we have, but what there is, set forth for the King.

[MILBURGA sets out loaf, cups, &c.]

Elswitha. Waiting, hoping, fearing; the days pass wearily, but my heart is at peace, believing

better days will come. Love keeps hope green.
Hark! a step! (*Rises.*) It is the King!

Enter KING ALFRED.

Welcome, oh welcome! We have hoped and feared so long.

Alfred. Sweet words are thine, dear lady. All is well.

Elswitha. Thou art back once more in safety; that is enough for me. Sit down. (*Leads him to table.*) How hast thou sped? Eat, for thou must be hungry.

Alfred. Hungry I am, indeed, and cold. The mist lies chill upon the fens.

Elswitha. Milburga, set fagots on the fire, and give more bread.

Milburga. I will. (*Aside.*) 'Tis our last loaf and all the meal is spent!

Elswitha (*watches KING, who sits silent*). Alfred is silent, full of sad thoughts; will the day of comfort never dawn? Peace! look! a stranger comes.

Enter, left, HARPER wrapped in a cloak.

Alfred. Who art thou? What's thy errand here?

Harper (*bows low*). A friend am I, most gracious King.

Elswitha (*aside*). He knows the King.

Harper. I've wandered far. Hunger has brought me here—for I have tasted naught since dawn.

Alfred. Stay here and rest; food shall be given to thee.

Elswitha. Alas, what shall we do? One loaf alone remains for thee, my King.

Alfred. I'll share it with the stranger. There's enough for both.

Elswitha. Yes, 'tis said, "Deal kindly with the stranger," so he shall share this loaf—our last.

[QUEEN *cuts loaf, hands it to KING and HARPER, then goes right and sits on bench. MILBURGA stands beside her; QUEEN takes up distaff.*

Harper. This food has renewed my strength. How can I repay thy kindness? Let my harp speak my thanks.

Alfred. Music ever comes well at the close of a feast, however humble.

Elswitha. Music brings back the thought of days which were too bright to last.

Harper (sings).

TUNE—"Afton Water."

The skies of the winter are chilly and grey,

When hard is the ground and dead are the flowers,
And such is, O sorrow, thy long, weary day,

And slow move the heavy and dull-creeping hours.

Though cold may be winter, the skies overcast,

And heavy the road to the wand'rer outworn;
The path is the roughest alway at the last,

And the hour is the darkest that comes before
dawn.

Elswitha. Sweet hope is in thy words.

Alfred. The song of a true bard carries a true promise. My courage is renewed by thy singing.

Harper. I take my harp once more. List well !
Prophetic is my strain. [Sings.

TUNE—"Afton Water."

Lo ! once was my music the herald of woe,
The message of strife and defeat did it bring ;
The prophet of victory now forth I go,
And follow to battle a conquering King !

Alfred. This is the minstrel who, before, on the eve of battle, sang a song of grief and warning.

Harper (rises). And now I hail thee, saviour of our land ! See, thy messengers come !

Enter, left, NEATHERD and WIFE in haste.

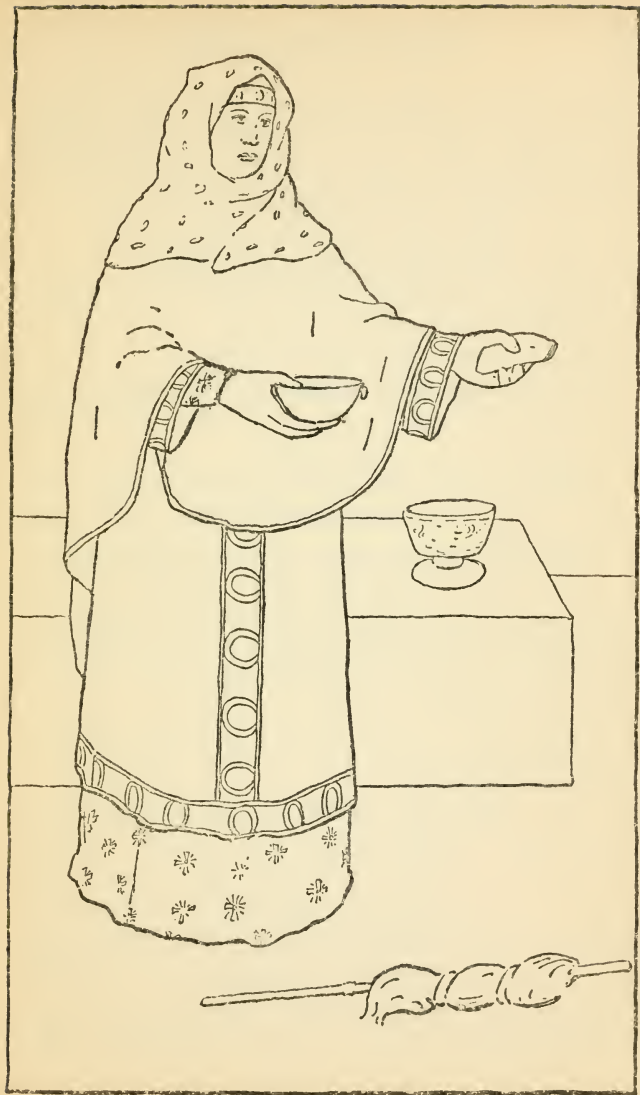
Neatherd. Room for us, hail ! O King, good news we bring !

Alfred (rises). What is it, swift your tidings tell—our reinforcements ?

Neatherd. Yea ! Thy men are sighted. All Wiltshire comes with Ethelhelm, the men of Hampshire come, and those from eastward and the Andredsweald ; stout-hearted men, rejoicing that the King still lives to fight.

Enter, left, ETHELNOTH.

Ethelnoth. I've roused my men through Somerset ; from coast and moorland they gather to thy standard.



Enter, left, EADULF.

Eadulf. They come ! Through the forest glades their battle-shout rings out, and their cry is still "King Alfred"—Oh ! a glorious sound.

Enter, left, BISHOP with standard.

Bishop. Hail, King Alfred ! Thy allies gather. Lift high thy standard ! The hour of battle has come.

Alfred. God will maintain His people's cause. We must go forth to meet our men. Who leads the van ?

Eadulf. Ethelhelm of Wiltshire comes first—behind were Segewulf and Wulfric, thy loyal thanes.

Alfred. Ethelhelm was at my side on Ashdown, he knows the wily foe. The moments fly ; we must not tarry, for the heathen host is all arrayed for battle. Give me my helmet, sword, and battle-axe. Thou, my Queen, thou alone, shalt gird me with my sword.

Elswitha. I will, my King. Thou goest to fight and end our sorrow.

[*QUEEN fetches sword and shield from left, fastens on sword and puts shield in his hand ; stands centre by KING, BISHOP between them ; MILBURGA, NEATHERD and WIFE, HARPER by QUEEN ; ETHELNOTH and EADULF on right, by the KING.*

Alfred (holds out his hand). Friends, who were

faithful in my darkest hours, stand firm now that the battle hour has come.

Bishop (raises the standard).

Now God our cause to honour bring,
And give the victory to our King !

[KING lifts his sword, and goes out, left,
followed by BISHOP, with standard,
ETHELNOTH, EADULF, with drawn
swords, MILBURGA with the QUEEN,
HARPER, NEATHERD and his WIFE.

SCENE III

*About Whitsuntide, 878, near the battlefield
of Ethandune.*

*Enter, left, QUEEN and MILBURGA, with herbs,
ointments, &c.*

Elswitha. The fight is raging by yonder hill. Hast thou the herbs and oil I bid thee bring—good to staunch wounds? Have all in readiness. Ah, if the King should fall!

Milburga. Woe worth that day! unhappy Queen!

Elswitha. Nay, I'll not weep; the King still lives. Here is the Bishop! (*Enter, left, BISHOP.*) Tell me, tell me, how goes the fight? How fares the King, my husband?

Bishop. Rejoice, sweet lady, rejoice! The King still leads our people on; our shield-wall stood firm; the Danes fell back, hill beyond hill, dismayed and scattered. The King led the charge straight up the height; the roar of battle could not drown

his shout, as, like the wild boar turned to bay, he charged ; mid singing arrows, crash of axes, he led the way. Up the hill, the standard of the Cross was borne triumphant, (*QUEEN clasps her hands*) and down the Raven banner fell !

Elswitha. Rejoice ! Yet, listen ! what is that ? The fight draws nearer now. There's another battle cry ! Good Bishop, can'st thou see ?

[*They all move, left.*]

Bishop. Be calm, 'tis naught. The foemen will not rally long. (*Points.*) Look where the King doth stand. He fights ; the Danes are flying.

Elswitha. Yet, methinks an arrow struck his hand. Ah ! he still grasps his sword. He turns him round and comes this way in haste. Go meet him ; we must bind his wound. (*BISHOP goes out left.*) Make ready now our herbs and ointments.

Enter, left, KING and BISHOP ; KING carries standard.

Ah, they come ! Wounded, my King ?

Alfred. 'Tis naught. Bind up my arm in haste. I must go forth again. The Danes are flying ; Guthrum their King is prisoner. I must away !

Elswitha (*binding wound while MILBURGA holds ointment, &c.*). Aye, but it bleeds amain. Well that I was taught leechcraft by the holy nuns in Mercia ; 'tis no scratch.

Milburga. Nay, indeed.

Alfred. I feel it not. Who would feel a smart when the foe fly before us, our men pursuing ?

Milburga. Our men remember burning villages, homes which the Danes have made desolate.

Enter, left, NEATHERD and WIFE.

Neatherd and Wife. They're scattered! Hail, victorious King! [*They move right of stage.*]

Enter, left, MESSENGER.

Messenger. They fly! They fly! The Danes fly onward to the sea! [*Moves to right of stage.*]

Enter, left, ETHELNOTH with Danish prisoner.

Ethelnoth. Two more Danes of high lineage have we ta'en captive with Guthrum their King.

Enter, left, EADULF with Danish banner.

Eadulf. Here is the Raven-banner, black ensign of the foe.

Alfred. Let all be guarded well.

Eadulf. Aye—and let us chase the fleeing Danes.

Alfred. Show mercy now; remember we are soldiers of the Cross. Their host is broken. We will now make terms of peace there in the west at Wedmore; then back to Winchester. (*Gives standard to BISHOP.*) Lift up our standard.

The days of storm and struggle now shall cease,
And to this land comes restfulness and peace!

[*KING and QUEEN stand centre, BISHOP behind them with standard, ETHELNOTH, EADULF, prisoner, on right; MILBURGA, NEATHERD and WIFE, MESSENGER on left. They sing.*]

TUNE—" *See the Conquering Hero comes.*"

Now we homeward singing go,
Gone the winter, gone our woe !
Summer's come, the earth is green ;
Long the winter sad hath been,
As the night-rack melts away,
Hail the rising of the day !

Seek the straying flock again
On the mountain, on the plain ;
Call thy sheep, O shepherd, now ;
Turn, O wand'rer, to thy plough,
Come to forest, come to field,
Lay down battle-axe and shield.

Tune the harps—the trumpets blow ;
Sing his glory as we go !
Bards recount, on land and sea
How he got him victory.
Hark ! his people march along
With King Alfred's triumph song !

[*During 2nd verse all form in procession
behind KING and QUEEN. BISHOP
with standard, EADULF and MIL-
BURGA, ETHELNOTH with prisoner,
NEATHERD and WIFE, MESSENGER ;
they march round stage and go out,
left, singing.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

Some years later.

KING ALFRED'S *Palace, Winchester. Stage darkened. Table set centre, with books, lantern, candle lit; two chairs.*

Enter, left, KING and BISHOP, seat themselves at table.

Bishop. How swiftly have the years gone by; when I look back, our stormy times seem but as yesterday.

Alfred. Light and darkness, joy and sorrow; thou and I, good friend, have seen many a changeful year in company.

Bishop. I have beheld my prophecy fulfilled. When thou wert only a little child, I foresaw great things for thee, my King. I have seen these great things accomplished. The work of freeing this land is near finished.

Alfred. Thine were wise lessons, faithful friend.

Bishop. My life draws to an end; the King reigns in security and beloved. I am ready to depart.

Alfred. Nay, I must have thy help a little longer. Thou must hear my plans and of all the work which I will do for my people, spite of their dull

hearts and mine own weariness and pain. My task is great and I must husband time. I could not count the hours at night, nor often by day, because of the thick clouds, till, after much pondering, I found a device. Seest thou my candles?

Bishop. Aye, my lord; each marked in twelve divisions.

Alfred. I bade Athelstan and Werwulf, my chaplains, bring wax and weigh it in a balance against pennies; and when so much wax had been measured out as weighed seventy-two pence, I bid them make thereof six candles of equal weight, each candle with twelve inches marked thereon; and four-and-twenty hours the candles burn.

Bishop. 'Tis a cunning device; but, my lord, is not the day long enough? Thou needst not spend the midnight hours in toil.

Alfred. Nay, have I not received bountiful blessings? In thankfulness I made a vow that, as half my possessions are dedicated to God's service, so half my nights and days should be spent in praise and prayer. My candles are good servants, seest thou, and watch with me. (*A knock.*) Who comes? 'Tis Ethelnoth from the western country.

*Enter, left, ETHELNOTH with plans of ships
in his hand.*

Go not, good Bishop; hear of the new ships we build. Greeting to thee, Ethelnoth of Somerset!

Ethelnoth. Greeting, my King! I have brought

the plan drawn on the parchment as thou didst command it to be made.

Alfred (*examines plans carefully*). Would we had many more like these !

Ethelnoth. We have taken some of the Danes' own boats. (*To BISHOP.*) Didst hear how the King worsted them in the river Lea, where their ships were lying? 'Twas harvest, and the King encamped by London that the folk there might get in their crops with safety. And as our King rides up the river, he espies a place where the stream could be turned from its course. This he did, and when the Danes saw the water was running off, they forsook the stranded boats and fled. We took the ships, and the stoutest of them we'll use against the Danes.

Alfred. 'Tis sooth ; but we must have better ships than those of the sea robbers, as we have it set forth here. (*Points to plan.*) Our ships shall not be of Danish nor yet of Frisian build. They must be longer, near twice the length of those which came against us ; rowed with sixty oars ; stronger, higher, more swift ; riding bravely on the waves. I tell you, the Danes have learned the secret of the sea, and our fair land, girt by the sea, shall learn and never forget that secret. One day our people shall build ships to sail far and wide ; the sea shall be their inheritance ; the salt waves the defence and guardian of their homes. The timber of the ships is oak ?

Ethelnoth. Aye, my King. Many a stout oak is marked in the forest for the hatchet, to build thy ships.

Bishop. The trees that sheltered us once so well in our necessity, will now defend our coasts. Verily I think the branches will rejoice and the green boughs sing.

Ethelnoth (aside). I know naught of the trees, but I know at the sight of these oaken ships the Danes will grin.

Alfred. Go forth. (*Gives* *ETHELNOTH* *plan.*) Set all in readiness. Ere morning the men must be at work, cutting the wood, making good beams, straight and strong. Build fast, brave Ethelnoth! There's peril in unreadiness! 'Tis only on the sea, now and for evermore, that we can meet and crush our foes!

Ethelnoth. Aye, my King.

[*ETHELNOTH* *goes out left.*]

Alfred. These are times for watchfulness. Spite of our treaty with Guthrum, we must be wary and prepared. Ah, what wounds has the long strife left on this land! Learning has perished; scarce one man south of the Thames can read his service-book.

Bishop. Grievous it is.

Alfred. In olden times men came here for all holy lore, but now I have to call wise men from Mercia and across the seas to teach my people; John, the skilful writer, and Grimbald from Gaul.

Bishop. These will help thee. I am old and weary; I would fain lay aside all cares of earth and seek a quiet cell among the rocks and forests, such as thy kinsman the blessed Neot found in Cornwall.

Alfred. Sorrow it is that we must part. Thou still wilt aid me?

Bishop. As St. Neot helped thee, so will my prayers—arising night and morning for the King. Moreover, I have brought Asser, the wise monk of St. David's, to aid thee in these toils.

Alfred. When comes he? He tarrieth on the way.

Bishop. My lord, a grievous fever held him long upon the journey, but he comes now to thy gates.

Alfred. Send him to me.

Bishop. I will, and then depart gladly. We shall not be divided, thou and I. *[Takes his hand.]*

Alfred. Nay, never. *[BISHOP goes out left.]*

Enter, left, ASSER.

Asser. Greeting, great King!

Alfred. Welcome to thee, monk of St. David's!

Asser. Far have I journeyed at thy bidding; from the utmost west into the Saxon country. For many a long mile I set my face to come hither, guided by thy folk who came along with me.

Alfred. The fame of thy learning has reached me. Thou shalt stay and serve me. I will reward thee plenteously.

Asser. My lord, it was at first with sorrow, as

thou knowest, that I left the place where I was born and bred and made a monk.

Alfred. Thou shalt return sometimes to thy monastery by the western sea.

Asser. Good, my lord. I will abide with thee all time I can. (*Aside.*) My heart is filled, on a sudden, with great love towards the King. I fain would serve him with all I have. (*Aloud.*) What wouldst thou have me do ?

Alfred. Thou shalt help me teach my people. Little time have I had for study ; my fingers are apter to hold a sword than a pen.

Asser. But thou hast written much, my King.
[*Points to books on table.*]

Alfred. I have set forth in English these wise books, writ in Latin ; the "Consolations" of Boethius, Orosius' "History of the World," the "Shepherd Book" of Pope Gregory, and chronicles of our Church made by Bede the blessed monk of Jarrow.

Asser. 'Tis a good work. No man hath writ books like these in English tongue. Hereafter, when the writings of thy nation are famed and many, men will still remember this of thee. My lord, what is that little book thou carriest underneath thy cloak ?

Alfred. I have carried that next my heart since childhood. This I had at Athelney and in my darkest hours. If in our reading we find a sentence of supremest grace, we'll write it in this little book.

Asser (*examines book*). My lord, there is no space; each page is written o'er. Shall I fetch more parchment? We may find many a pleasing sentence. (*Aside.*) Like a wise bee, this King seeks the sweets of learning everywhere.

Alfred. Yes, take more parchments. I shall have much for thee to do,—to draw plans of the monasteries I build, the schools I found. Come to me by morning early. And now, the night wears on; take thy rest—sleep to thee, sweet and well-earned, in my royal town, as on thy western mountains!

Asser. Wilt thou not rest too, my lord?

Alfred. Nay, I abide. Go now, and Heaven keep thee. [*ASSER bows and goes out left.*]

Alfred. Here, alone I stay, (*rises and walks right*) and the night is on the land. My people sleep while I am watching. Peace to them, wheresoe'er they are—in burg or lowly hut, in forest, moorland, or beside the sea. [*Opens little book.*]

Give to the king thy judgments, Lord,
 And, as Thou didst defend
 Me in the battle, so in peace,
 Thy help and counsel send!

[*Comes to table.*]

Swift burns the wax, the hour is past. Would that the time were longer. (*Writes a little and then rises.*) The wind oft blew out my light as I wended to the chapel. (*Gets lantern.*) So I had this lantern made, of ox-bone planed thin; it shows

the candle-light and shields the flame from the wild gusts which blow around my palace.

[Puts candle into lantern, stands and looks at his writing.]

Shine on my task,
Burn slow the waxen bars,
While I in solitude
Out-watch the stars.

[Goes out, left, with lantern.]

SCENE II

Towards end of King Alfred's reign.

KING'S Palace, Winchester. Two thrones set in centre of stage.

Enter, left, in procession, KING, QUEEN, BISHOP, ASSER, carrying Standard, ETHELNOTH, EADULF, NEATHERD and WIFE, MESSENGER, HARPER. They move slowly round stage, singing twice.

TUNE—*Ancient Canticle.*

Pange lingua gloriosi
Lauream certaminis,
Et super Crucis trophaeo
Dic triumphum nobilem :
Qualiter Redemptor orbis
Immolatus vicerit.

[KING seats himself on throne and places ELSWITHA beside him, BISHOP ETHELNOTH,

EADULF, MESSENGER, *by the KING*, ASSER,
HARPER, NEATHERD *and WIFE on left*
by QUEEN.

Alfred (aside). Echoes of childhood come to me; and voices whisper: "for the Soldiers of the Cross, in youth and age, the battle is the same." (*To his people.*) Our Witan have we gathered here. This is a day of solemn conclave and rejoicing. Peace reigns. Guthrum, who did embrace the Christian faith at Wedmore, thus far hath kept his pledge; the walls of London are restored.

Enter MILBURGA with a sheaf of corn; she kneels left and presents it to KING.

Alfred. What wilt thou?

Milburga. O King, receive this offering which I lay at thy feet.

Alfred. Right gladly. Why dost thou bring this corn?

Milburga (rising). The first-fruits of our harvest I give in thankfulness to our good King. We enjoy our land in safety, free from fear of Danes. We live in the King's peace. Men say that it is now as in the olden time, when you might leave gold bracelets by the wayside, and returning, find them there.

Alfred. We will keep peace for all our folk. This nation has many ancient laws—of Ina, King of Wessex, and Ethelbert, first Christian King of Kent, with laws of Mercia; dooms of holy bishops. These

I gathered, and wrote down such as pleased me. I showed them to my Witan, and they said the laws were good and they would keep these dooms.

Ethelnoth. So will we ever ; and thou, my King, wilt punish them who disobey. Here have we brought the unjust Reeve thou wottest of ; he has not judged thy people right. And here is the poor wight he has oppressed.

Alfred. Bring them both before me !

Ethelnoth (*moves left and calls to REEVE and SAXON YOUTH, outside*). Come ye before the King !

Enter, from left, REEVE and SAXON YOUTH.

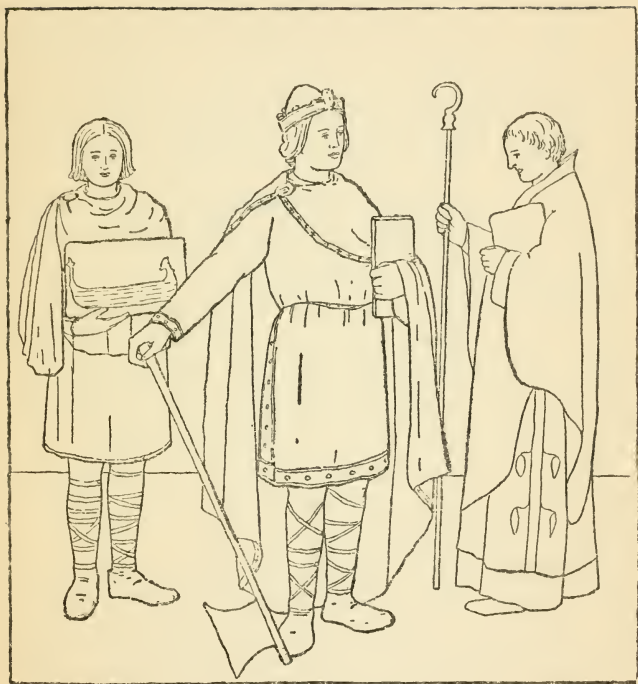
Reeve (*aside*). Alack the day ! Now I am brought before the high King's judgment seat ! Now is my doing discovered. All men will see my dooms are evil !

Saxon Youth (*aside*). Oh, perchance the King will know the truth. Vainly I lifted up my voice unto his Ealdormen and Reeves.

Alfred (*to REEVE*). I have heard this cause and carefully examined all thy sentence on this man. He hath already paid the bote for his offence.

Saxon Youth (*falls on his knees*). I have, my King ! fifteen pieces of silver have I paid ! [*Rises.*

Alfred. This youth and another fought together, and he who stands before us, seized the other by the hand and broke his finger—the forefinger which men call the “shooting” one, for it draws the bow, and fifteen silver pieces should he pay.



That is the law, and he hath paid it. (*To REEVE.*) Then, why hast thou demanded more; threatened to beat him? Didst thou so through malice?

Reeve. Nay, my lord, I hate him not.

Alfred. Was it for love or fear of any man—for greed of money?

Reeve. Nay, dread King, 'twas none of these.

Alfred. Then wherefore hast thou acted so unjustly?

Reeve. My King, I will confess to thee, 'twas lack of learning—I—I did not know the laws—I could not read or learn the dooms.

Alfred. Truly, I marvel at thy rashness. To take on thee the high office of the wise and yet never to study or learn wisdom. Either lay down that office now and its authority or set thyself at once to learn thy duty. Such is my behest!

Reeve. I'll strive to do so. (*Aside.*) Alas that I have wasted all my days in sloth, in eating, drinking, and neglect of learning!

Alfred (*to SAXON YOUTH*). Thou art young and hast time to learn better things than brawling on the highway. Here (*points to ASSER*) are wise teachers to instruct thee. Thou shalt enter my schools. Every free-born youth, who has the means, shall abide at his book till he can well understand the Saxon writing. And now we turn to other matters. Oh there, the voyager, has come to us. Bring him with haste.

Enter, left, OHTHERE.

Alfred. Greeting to thee, Ohthere! Men say thou hast fared far north and found strange lands and seas.

Ohthere. I sailed from Norway whale-fishing in the northern seas and I found a headland and then beyond a great new sea. I will tell thee all my travels, O King, for thy wisdom and graciousness to outland men is noised abroad.

Alfred. All thou tellest shall be set down. Fain would I know more of the world beyond our land.

Asser. Thy embassies go far. Yearly thy gifts are sent to Rome.

Alfred. And we will send messengers to Jerusalem and even to the Churches in the Indies. So shall light, once more, shine from our country.

Elswitha. With what sorrow has our joy been won!

Alfred (to ELSWITHA). How faithful and how wise thou ever wast, my Queen, true in adversity, open of hand, tender, mild-hearted. What can I give thee of lands who hast my all? But I will bestow on thee Wantage, where I was born, and Ethandune, my field of victory. And now we wait for Guthrum, the Danish King, who cometh to renew his pledge. (*To ETHELNOTH and EADULF.*) Go bring him to our presence! (*ETHELNOTH and EADULF go out, left.*) He ruleth in East Anglia and holds his folk, we trust, in peace.

Re-enter ETHELNOTH and EADULF *with* GUTHRUM.

We welcome thee unto our feasting, which celebrates the renewal of our treaty made with thee and thine at Wedmore.

Guthrum. I thank ye, noble King and Queen, for your good welcome. Here stands a Dane who was your foe, but one who holdeth to his oath. Times enough have I and my warriors raided this fair land. Methinks, I know its meadows and farmsteads well! (*Laughs.*) Bygone is bygone. Where's the man says we were not valiant, mighty in victory? so we are wise when defeated. Before thee, great King, I sheathe my sword, and swear whate'er my nation do, to live and die thy friend.

Alfred. Well it is that strife should end and stalwart foe be trusty friend—the land, in peace, grows rich for both of us.

[*Takes GUTHRUM'S hand.*]

Guthrum. More than this, my sword is plighted to thy cause. The Raven no longer brings us victory. Farewell, black standard, woven by the three sisters of Hubba, between the dawn and eve! The Cross has conquered, and under it I fight.

King. So be it. (*ASSER raises standard.*) In a white robe wast thou clad when the bishop baptized thee—and I stood thy sponsor. Guthrum and Athelstan, name of Christian warriors, art thou called. Now, in East Anglia, hold thy people and maintain our peace.

Asser. Here is the plan (*shows plan*) of the monastery, which thou hast purposed to build on Athelney.

Alfred. On the wooded isle, girt with fens and river, I build a monastery in thankfulness for my deliverance in troubled times.

Asser. The ground is marshy, unfit to build upon.

Alfred. Build on strong wooden piles, with bridges o'er the waters. John, the Old-Saxon, shall cross the sea and be abbot there, with Frankish priests to teach the people.

Asser. And other nations gather to the holy rule. There is a man of heathen birth, a Dane, who has besought that he may be a brother there.

Alfred. Admit him. From the lonely forests will their prayers ascend for us. I will richly endow the monastery. See you this jewel?

Ethelnoth. Aye, it is wondrous fair.

Alfred. The crystal holds the picture of one who bears two sceptres, of the heavenly and the earthly power. The craftsman here has writ the jewel's legend, "Alfred had me wrought." This I give into the treasury.

Asser. It will always proclaim thy love to Athelney.

Alfred. All ye my people should rejoice to-day, for there is peace in Winchester; westward and eastward too; in Sussex and in Kent. The walls of London are repaired.

Eadulf. Truly, right well the city of London is restored which was burnt and ruined.

Alfred. And peace be in those walls which I have raised again, and plenteousness for evermore!

Ethelnoth. So be it. Now art thou worthy not only to be King of the West Saxons but of all the English folk. Freely they come and bow them to thy sway.

Alfred. I wrought the work of peace amid the clash of arms. Desire not a soft life, if ye would have honour here, or live hereafter. Fair are these golden cups and jewels, and fair the books which we have written, but, without wisdom, every craft and power shall wax old and be forgotten.

Asser. Thy remembrance will not perish, my King. I will write down thy deeds, thy sayings. Thou hast a message for many.

Alfred. Wider and greater, this realm will be some day. God guide the people of our race, on land and sea, for evermore! Let them know, as ye do now, that I, King Alfred, strove to live worthily here, and, after my death, to leave my memory in good works, to those who come hereafter. [*They sing.*

TUNE—"Forty Years on."

Hail, mighty King! England's Shepherd for ever!
 Wielder of sword and the "Teller of Truth,"
 Shadows of time can thy name darken never,
 Through all the dim years thy saying is sooth:

“Live worthy here, and hereafter, in good deeds,”

Thus comes thy message the ages along,—
Loved one of England! We, never forgetting,
Bear on thy word with a jubilant song,

Over land! over sea!

Over land! over sea!

Where we go! where we go!

Where the winds of God do blow,

Where His winds and His mighty waves go!

Over land! over sea!

Steadfast in grief; ever waiting the morrow;

Holding a bright light that all men might see;
Guiding thy ship through the deep waves of
sorrow

Into the haven where thou wouldest be.

Giver of law, and the shield of the helpless,

Hope of the poor, the avenger of wrong;

Sealed with the blood of the brave and the faith-
ful,

Thy law and truth shall for ever stand strong.

Over land! over sea! &c.

Ten hundred years, we, from thee, set asunder,

Lift up our hearts and we hail thee, great
King!

Now looking back, we, in love and in wonder,

See whence our hope and our glory did spring.

“Live worthy here, and hereafter, in good deeds,”

Thus comes thy message the ages along.

Builder of England! we, never forgetting,

Bear on thy word with a jubilant song,

Over land! over sea! &c.

[*During singing of the last verse, KING and QUEEN, followed by BISHOP, GUTHRUM, ASSER with his book and standard, ETHELNOTH with plans of ships, EADULF and MILBURGA, NEATHERD and WIFE, MESSENGER, HARPER, OHTHERE, the REEVE and SAXON YOUTH, all march off, left, in procession.*

ROBIN HOOD



STAGE DIRECTIONS

THOUGH it can be given indoors, this play would be better acted in a field, garden, or, best of all, a wood ; if possible, on rising ground, with trees or bushes behind the actors. When an indoor scene is represented, a screen can be brought in as a background.

If the play is given in the house, green curtains, to suggest the forest, would make a conventional background ; across these curtains garlands of laurel or ivy could be hung. Two large bushes of greenery should be placed on either side of the stage. If nothing large enough can be had in a pot, wooden chairs can be completely covered with boughs and ivy ; they can be pulled aside for indoor scenes.

If logs of wood cannot be had, the foresters can sit on low benches covered with brown or green cloth. In no case are scenery or a proscenium curtain necessary. Localities can be always indicated by placards, as "Sherwood Forest," "King's Palace," &c. Two of the foresters in their acting clothes can come on to the stage after the Prologue and between the scenes to arrange benches, background screens, bushes, &c.

One exit and entrance, right or left, is required.

PROPERTIES

ACT I

SCENE I.—"SHERWOOD FOREST." Logs or benches, jugs, dishes, cups, bread, money chest, large key, money bags, scales, green cloth.

ACT II

SCENE I.—“HOUSE OF THE SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM.” Table, three chairs, money bags, papers, pens, spinning-wheel or distaff.

SCENE II.—“SHERWOOD FOREST.” Bush behind which fugitives can hide.

ACT III

SCENE I.—“THE KING’S PALACE.” Throne, bench, low chair, book, flowers, embroidery.

SCENE II.—“SHERWOOD FOREST.” Garlands of flowers, logs or benches, food, dishes, &c., as in Act I. Scene 1. Basket, money chest, key, money bags, hour-glass.

The number of ladies-in-waiting and foresters can be increased, or one actor can do two parts. Jock and Joan are played by quite young children.

The dress of the time of Edward I. is beautiful; the flowing robes, tunics, hoods, and cloaks are very effective, and neither difficult nor expensive to make. Each actor could be dressed, on a rough average, for about 3s., exclusive of shoes and stockings.

For the general effect, it is well to keep the proportion of colours even; to choose full, simple tones and never “art” shades. The background and the foresters’ dresses are green and brown, so scarlet, deep-blue, orange, black, gold, and white should be used for the other dresses. Bear in mind the colours of an illuminated manuscript. These full colours are seen to greater advantage by daylight than by artificial lights.

For dress materials, sateen at $4\frac{3}{4}$ d. or $6\frac{3}{4}$ d. a yard can be

got in good colours, but the cheapest woollen stuff or house flannel makes better folds and gives the massive effect of the woollen or thick linen garments of mediæval times. "Horticultural Sheeting," about fifty inches wide (Messrs. Cookson, Wellington Mills, Manchester), at 1s. a yard is useful and can be dyed effectively with Maypole soap.

For boys the measurements generally required are: chest, waist, neck to knee, arm, head.

For girls: bust, waist, neck to ground, arm, head.

Armour, consisting of a hauberk, with long sleeves, coverings for the legs, and a hood close fitting to the shoulders can be made of motor-cleaning material—"Kleenquick," at Whiteley's, 25 yards for 4s. 6d. It should be boiled in size, then blacklead and silvered. This stuff can be pulled into any shape, and looks very like chain-mail.

For helmets use carpet felt 48 inches wide, 8½d. a yard, stiffened with size and covered with silver tinsel, 1s. ½d. a yard; for crowns cardboard on buckram painted with gold. For large quantities of gilding and silvering it is easier and cheaper to use gold or aluminium silver powder, about 6d. an ounce, mixed with "White polish." Border patterns can be painted and stencilled with this or done with gold braid, 4½d. per dozen yards, from Burnet & Co., 22 Garrick Street, Covent Garden.

The swords can be made of wood, blacklead and painted with silver.

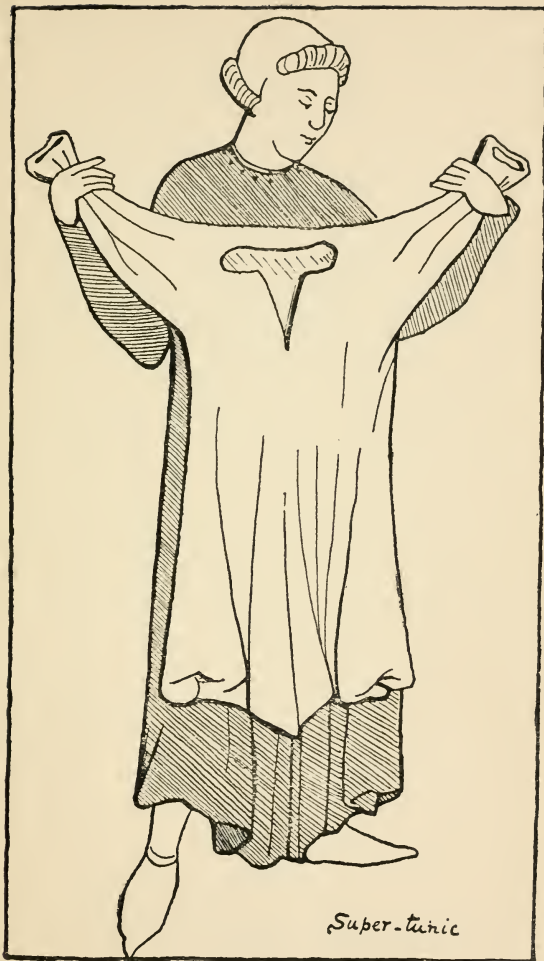
A surcoat or sleeveless tunic was put over the chain-mail suits of Edward I.'s time. The helmet was worn over the mail hood. Most of the men characters can wear the girdled super-tunic to the ankle or the knee, with rather wide sleeves, beneath which the long, tight sleeves of an under-garment appear. Circular cloaks should be worn, and big hoods fitting to the shoulder. The hood, a most

characteristic part of the dress of this period, can be easily adapted from Butterick's pattern of a jester's hood and cape. The women's straight dress—"princess robe," we should say—was wide and flowing, with loose sleeves, beneath which those of the under-garment appear tight to the wrist. On her monuments Queen Eleanor wears a long mantle; her hair hangs loose under her crown. Veils were worn; sometimes the head and shoulders were enveloped in a wimple or "gorget," which is wrapped round the neck and fastened by pins at the sides of the face, which are covered to the top of the ears.

The tunics and dresses should be made with no seam on the shoulder. A piece of stuff, double the length of the garment required, is folded in half, selvedge to selvedge; the neck-opening is cut out in the centre of the top of the fold. The folded stuff on either side of the neck-opening forms the shoulder and the sleeve. The sides of the garment are slightly shaped to the figure. Keep in mind the making of an old-fashioned chemise. Unless the stuff is wide, it is necessary to add to the length of the sleeves.

If adapted, Butterick's children's patterns can often be used as a foundation and guide.

The girls' shoes will not generally show below their long dresses. The boys can either have felt soles inside their stockings or wear canvas shoes. White stockings, 4½d. a pair, can be dyed brown or other colours, the canvas shoes being painted with Maypole dye to match. The legs could be bound with long strips of black or coloured stuff, starting round the foot and coming up the leg, criss-cross-wise to the knee; but in Edward I.'s time close-fitting boots or tight stockings (sometimes embroidered) and shoes were worn. In Act III. Scene 2, cloaks, hoods, and veils are worn as disguises over the other dress.



Super-tunic

FROM A THIRTEENTH-CENTURY MS.

Pictures of the costume of Edward I.'s reign and of mediæval dress suitable to this play are in J. R. Green's "Short History of the English People," vol. i. F. W. Fairholt's "Costume in England," vol. i. (Bohn's Artists' Library) has descriptions and pictures of ecclesiastical, civil, and military dress of the time.

Songs Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 6 are to tunes in "Pan Pipes" (Routledge, 3s. 6d.); Nos. 5, 7 to tunes in "Songs of the British Islands," W. H. Hadow (Curwen, 2s. 6d.); No. 3 to tune in "Minstrelsy of England" (Augener & Co., 4s.). All the tunes are in many collections of old English melodies.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

KING EDWARD I.

SIR RICHARD AT THE LEE.

THE BARON OF THE BLACK CASTLE.

THE SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM.

GUY
ANTHONY } The Baron's Men.

ROBIN HOOD.

SCARLET
LITTLE JOHN
MUCH
ALLAN-A-DALE
FRIAR TUCK } Robin Hood's Men.

JOCK.

MESSENGER.

QUEEN ELEANOR.

FIRST LADY-IN-WAITING.

SECOND " "

THIRD " "

SHERIFF'S WIFE.

JOAN.

AVISA, Mother of Jock and Joan.

MAID MARIAN, Daughter of Sir Richard at the Lee.

ACT I

SCENE I.—May Day. Sherwood Forest.

ACT II

SCENE I.—Next day. The House of the Sheriff of Nottingham.

SCENE II.—Some months later. Sherwood Forest.

ACT III

SCENE I.—The King's Palace.

SCENE II.—May Day; a year from the beginning of the play. Sherwood Forest.

“Robin Hood is absolutely a creation of the ballad-muse,” says Professor Child in his “English and Scottish Popular Ballads.” The story that he lived in the days of Cœur-de-Lion, it seems, has no firmer historical foundation than have the theories which would make him a proscribed follower of Simon de Montfort or an adherent of the Earl of Lancaster in the reign of Edward II. The earliest mention we have of Robin Hood is as the subject of ballads. The whole story of our hero is legendary.

“Edward” is the name of the King in the famous “Lytell Geste of Robyn Hoode”—which King Edward is not stated. The bold outlaw, face to face with the great first Edward, is a striking picture. It is, therefore, perhaps pardonable to depart from the commonest tradition, which connects him with Richard I., and to represent Robin Hood and his Merry Men in company with King Edward I. and Queen Eleanor.

ROBIN HOOD

PROLOGUE

Spoken by one of ROBIN HOOD'S archers

WE greet you all, and bid you stay
And look upon our little play !
Here is the tale of Robin Hood,
Whose court was in the gay green-wood,
Whose merry men went to and fro
More than six hundred years ago.
Knight, King, Maid Marian, you shall see
Come from the land of poesie !
Smile kind on them whose bows were bent
To shield the weak where'er they went ;
And you may give a little sigh
At helpless woe in days gone by.
And last we beg, if skies be grey
And winter here, believe 'tis May,
Our little stage the forest glade,
Our curtain of the fresh leaves made.
Come with us to the gay green-wood
In the good days of Robin Hood !

ACT I

SCENE I

Noon. May Day. Under an oak in Sherwood Forest.

Logs or benches in centre, and on left and right of stage ; food, jugs, dishes, treasure chest, scales, &c., on the extreme right of stage.

Enter, left, ROBIN HOOD, with SCARLET, LITTLE JOHN, MUCH, TUCK, ALLAN-A-DALE

All sing. TUNE—"The Mermaid." (Pan Pipes Collection, &c.)

Now he who would dull care forsake
 And live right merrily,
 Should take his good bow in his hand,
 And should hie to the green-wood tree, the green-
 wood tree,
 And should hie to the green-wood tree.
 For the boughs wave lightly overhead
 And the birds sing loud and free ;
 And 'tis merry, merry, hey-down, and merry, merry
 down,
 'Tis merry 'neath the green-wood tree, the green-
 wood tree,
 And 'tis merry 'neath the green-wood tree.

The sun shines bravely through the glade,
 And o'er the hill we go.
 At the sound of bold Robin Hood's shrill horn
 Each bends his trusty bow, his trusty bow,
 Each bends his trusty bow.

For the boughs wave lightly overhead
And the birds sing loud and free,
And 'tis merry, merry, hey-down, and merry, merry
down,
'Tis merry 'neath the green-wood tree, the green-
wood tree,
And 'tis merry 'neath the green-wood tree.

Robin Hood (to TUCK, who sinks down on right-hand log). What ails you? You look sad. Amongst us merry archers the May Day was wont to be a time of mirth and feasting!

Friar Tuck. Feasting! There speaks my master Robin Hood—king of good fellowship. It's food that aileth me, or rather I should say it is the great lack of it.

Scarlet (steps forward, stands centre). It must be near on noon. (Points up.) Look at the sun!

Friar Tuck (stands up, leans back, and gazes up at the sky). Hi! Some of you hold me up! I faint for hunger and cannot see the sun for emptiness!

[MUCH supports TUCK behind and then pulls him down on to right-hand log.

Much (steps forward). We have wandered many an hour, master, chasing the red deer. Yonder (points right) is meat roasted on the fire. Shall we not keep May Day with some feasting?

Robin Hood (seats himself on centre log). I will not dine to-day until we find a guest with whom to share our dinner!

Little John. Singing and archery and no meat kill any man. I must be propped up by this log until our guests do come! [Sits down on the ground.

Robin Hood. Poor Little John! I will not break my fast, I tell you, until a guest cometh!

Tuck (*lifts clasped hands*). Heaven send us guests in haste! (*To MUCH.*) Support me! I am so hungry I shall eat the oak leaves ere long!

Robin Hood. Little John! Little John!

Little John (*wearily*). Aye, master!

Robin Hood. Go, Little John, and look forth by yonder beech. (*Points left.*) Look up and down the glade and see if no man cometh.

Little John (*gets up slowly*). Since my master command it, I will go. [*Walks slowly to left of stage.*]

Scarlet (*looking towards left of stage*). Pray that some rich abbot be coming on his fat mule, laden with gold, costly raiment, and barrels of wine, white cakes and pasties.

Much (*sadly*). Oh, speak not of all this!

Scarlet (*fiercely*). I am not so faint with hunger that I would not try a turn of the quarter-staff with the strongest traveller that ever came this way!

[*Shakes his quarter-staff.*]

Robin Hood. Nay, Scarlet, we will use the next traveller who comes this road with courtesy.

[*Strings his bow.*]

Scarlet. May I not break his head with my quarter-staff?

Robin Hood. No. We'll keep that for others.

Scarlet. I care not who tastes of my good quarter-staff.

Robin Hood. The next travellers shall share our meal, whoe'er they be. (*Calls to LITTLE JOHN.*) See you any one coming, Little John?

Little John (*turns round*). Naught but oaks and beeches. (*Looks left again*.) Wait! (*Looks round again*.) Nay; alas, 'tis but a hare in yonder brake. I thought it had been a man in brown raiment!

Much (*aside*). His mind is distracted!

Robin Hood (*goes on stringing his bow*). Look longer, Little John! (*Rises*.) Hark ye all!

Allan-a-Dale,
Scarlet, Much, Tuck. } We hearken!

Robin Hood. It is May Day and we have no May Queen for our sports. Perhaps *she* too will come this blithe morning!

Allan-a-Dale,
Scarlet, Much, Tuck. } Our Queen of May!

Robin Hood. Verily. (*To LITTLE JOHN*.) See you aught?

Little John (*turns round*). Only two wood-doves flying away. Alas, for our dinner!

[*Raises his hands*.]

Much. I will come and look.

[*Goes left, to LITTLE JOHN*.]

Robin Hood (*sits down again*). Have patience!

Little John and Much (*shout*). Master! Master!

Much. Behold our company come!

[*Rushes back to TUCK*.]

Robin Hood. I said the guests would come.

Tuck (*falls on his knees*). Our dinner cometh! (*Jumps up and calls to LITTLE JOHN*.) In what guise comes our dinner to us?

Little John. A knight and a lady. (*Looks left*.) Downcast and sorrowful they seem; the lady weepeth.

Robin Hood (to LITTLE JOHN). Greet them and bring them to me.

[LITTLE JOHN *kneels to KNIGHT and MARIAN, who enter on left, looking sad and clad in ragged clothes.*

Knight (to LITTLE JOHN). What will you ?

Little John (*rising*). My master greets you and bids you dine with him.

Knight. Thanks, gentle friend, we will willingly do so, for my daughter is nigh to fainting with weariness and hunger.

Much. And so are we all !

Tuck. Oh, dinner ! dinner !

Little John (*brings KNIGHT and LADY to ROBIN HOOD*). Here, master, are your guests !

[LITTLE JOHN *is on left side of stage.*

Robin Hood (*holds out his hands*). You are welcome ! And you, gentle Lady ! (*Turns right to his men.*) Did I not say that they would come to share our dinner and make glad this day ? (*To KNIGHT.*) We have tarried for you and fasted till you came.

Knight. We thank you greatly.

Marian. Verily, kind friend. (*Glances right.*) At the sight of so many archers my heart did quake with fear !

Robin Hood (*points right*). These are my merry men, and I am Robin Hood.

Knight (*starts back*). Robin Hood—the outlaw !

Marian. Are you the fierce outlaw of the forest ?

Robin Hood. I am he ! (*Takes her hand and leads to a seat on centre log.*) Yet fear nothing, fair Lady. We are wild dwellers in the woods who live on what we kill with our bows and arrows. But no

courtesy shall be lacking to you. (*Stands on right of MARIAN.*) Bring the feast.

[ALLAN-A-DALE and MUCH *fetch food from right, set it on ground in front of centre log, and then return to their places on right.*

Robin Hood (*to KNIGHT, pointing to left-hand log*). Will you not be seated? (*KNIGHT sits down sadly*). You are sad, Sir Knight?

Knight. Verily I am, good King of the Woods.

Robin Hood (*pours out wine and fills a cup, which he hands to KNIGHT*). Well, here is somewhat to cheer you. Let us all fall to!

[ROBIN HOOD *hands round food and they all eat.*

Knight. Methinks you have saved my daughter's life. I could almost forget my griefs in seeing her revive.

Marian. I am indeed refreshed.

Little John (*comes from place on left and hands food to KNIGHT*). You must also eat, good Sir.

[*Returns to left.*

Knight. Alas, I have but little appetite.

Much (*springs forward*). Are you sick? I have most excellent herbs of the forest that will cure you.

Knight. Wise physician, no herbs of the forest could cure my ill, which is a sorrowing heart!

Robin Hood. But rest with us and cast care aside.

Scarlet. We in the woods are merry.

Knight. Would I could be merry too!

Much. Here we fear no ill.

Knight. While I must endure the scorn of my enemies.

Much (takes ALLAN-A-DALE'S hand). We live in good fellowship.

Knight. My friends have all forsaken me.

[Hides his face.

Marian. Alas, it is truth.

Robin Hood (sits on centre log right of MARIAN). Now, Knight and fair Lady, unfold to us your grief. (Turns right, to his men.) Have we not all of us known hard days?

Scarlet. Verily, master. There are brambles and mires in every man's road.

Little John (draws nearer KNIGHT). I could weep for pity.

Robin Hood. We'll fill up his cup. (Fills up cup.) Go on, good Sir. Who are you?

Knight. I am a knight of the West Country. In many a pitched battle have I fought, and with the cross upon my shield I slew the heathen in Holy Land. Sir Richard at the Lee is my name, and this is my daughter, who is called Marian.

Marian. Fair lands were ours; a castle by the swift river which rises in the western mountains.

Knight. It was a goodly heritage I had, but evil days fell on us.

Little John (with sympathy). Alack!

Knight. My brother slew by mishap a knight in a tourney, and to save my brother in his right I was forced to pledge all I had to the Sheriff of Nottingham.

Scarlet (angrily). The Sheriff of Nottingham! He is our deadly foe. He'd throw us poor archers in black donjons if he could catch us.

Knight. Well, it was to him I pledged my lands

and castle, and if I cannot pay him £400 before to-morrow eve, they are all forfeit. I can pay it no way.

Robin Hood. What will you do if you cannot get the money, good friend?

Knight. Alas, my lands and all will be the proud Sheriff's, and I shall go over the seas with my daughter to some distant land.

Little John. Alas, poor lady!

Knight. Beggars shall we be! (MARIAN weeps.) You have done us good service and given us bountiful entertainment; but, alack, I can only repay your kindness with this miserable coin (*opens his bag*). See, my bag is empty!

Tuck and Little John (LITTLE JOHN *looks in*; TUCK *rises and looks*; *both raise their hands*). 'Tis empty quite!

Robin Hood. No coin will I take now. But one day, Sir Knight, you shall pay me well for this dinner, and for your fair broad lands besides. Little John! (*Beckons to LITTLE JOHN, who comes over to right of ROBIN HOOD.*) Can we help the Knight?

Little John. Verily, master. I think we can.

Robin Hood. Little John and you, Scarlet, fetch out our treasury. Who has the key?

Much. I have the key! (*Produces big key.*)

[LITTLE JOHN *and* SCARLET *go to right of stage and fetch chest, which they set down in centre, front of stage. MUCH unlocks it. Then SCARLET returns to his place behind TUCK, and MUCH to his place on left of ALLAN-A-DALE. LITTLE JOHN stands right of ROBIN HOOD.*

Robin Hood. Who has the scales?

Allan-a-Dale. Here are the scales !

[*Holds up scales.*

Robin Hood. Weigh out £400. That will redeem the lands and castle.

[*ALLAN-A-DALE weighs out gold, which ROBIN HOOD takes and hands to KNIGHT.*

ALLAN-A-DALE goes back to his place.

Knight (hesitating). Nay—but, good Robin Hood!

Robin Hood. You shall return in a year and pay me.

Knight (rises). We ne'er can thank you——

Marian (rises). Nay, never, noble Robin Hood !

Knight. A year from to-day, ere it be high noon, we will stand beneath this oak and deliver you the £400.

Marian. And bless you for our kindest friend ! Never shall we think on Barnsdale or Sherwood without blessing Robin Hood and his brave men !

Robin Hood. It is well to succour a friend in hour of need.

Little John. Master (*aside*). Their raiment is full worn and ragged ; methinks we might furnish them somewhat better.

Robin Hood. Little John, you are right. Fetch hither our cloth, good Allan-a-Dale. (*To KNIGHT and MARIAN.*) Those who taste the hospitality of the woods should wear the merry livery of the forest.

Marian. Would you clothe us like trees in spring-time ?

Robin Hood. Little John must give you of our good cloth of Lincoln green.

[*ALLAN-A-DALE fetches cloth and spreads it out in front of stage.*

Scarlet (*comes forward with his bow*). Here is my bow to measure out the cloth.

[*He kneels and measures cloth, which ALLAN-A-DALE holds out.*]

Much (*stands on tiptoe and looks over TUCK's shoulder*). Look! To each good bow-length does he add a piece.

Tuck (*laughs*). He thinks that all men be as big as himself. Ha! ha!

[*When cloth is cut it is given to LITTLE JOHN. SCARLET and ALLAN-A-DALE return to their places.*]

Robin Hood. That is well.

Little John (*to ROBIN HOOD*). A brave Knight should not ride alone. Were it not seemly to have a squire to wait upon him and the gentle Lady?

Robin Hood. You speak truth. Go, Little John, with the Knight and the Lady. Guide them through the forest and wait on them with reverence. Fight their battles. Follow them wheresoever they bid you go!

Little John. I will, good master. Since you command, I will go with them to the world's end!

[*Goes over to left and stands behind KNIGHT.*]

Knight (*to LITTLE JOHN*). We shall have a trusty squire. He will return with us next year. (*To ROBIN.*) Faithfully we will repay the money, but never can we tell our thanks!

Robin Hood. I did it full gladly. Come back as you promise by noon on May Day!

Marian. We will, we will!

Robin Hood (*to MARIAN*). And I would ask a

boon, fair Lady. Come back and be our Queen of May in the forest!

Allan-a-Dale,
Much, Tuck, } Aye! aye! Our Queen of May!
Scarlet.

Marian. I will! I will!

[*Steps forward centre and sings.*

TUNE—"Phyllis in the new-mown hay."
 (*Pan Pipes Collection, &c.*)

I will be your Queen of May
 When a year has rolled away;
 You shall hold my court so gay,
 Boughs of green oak binding;
 Cuckoo flowers and buds of May
 For a bright crown winding.

Haste then, O sweet Spring! draw nigh!
 Summer, pass thou lightly by!
 Winter, when thy snowflakes fly
 And earth her rest a-taking,
 Silent like the woods we'd lie
 Until the spring's awaking.

I will be your Queen of May,
 Coming back upon this day;
 Green-woods, witness what I say!
 Ye birds, sing, my vow is binding!
 To the oak we'll find our way
 By roads or rough or winding!

[*MARIAN, the KNIGHT, and LITTLE JOHN*
go out left, followed by ROBIN HOOD
and his men.

ACT II
SCENE I

Next day

The house of the SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM ; narrow table slightly on right ; in centre of stage, jug and cups, three chairs.

Enter left, SHERIFF and BARON, with scroll and money bags ; they seat themselves at table, SHERIFF facing audience, BARON at right end of table. SHERIFF'S WIFE enters left and sits spinning on extreme right of stage.

Sheriff (*counting*). A hundred and ten, eleven—carefully—twelve—— [*A noise heard outside on left.*

Baron (*looks up angrily and bangs his fist on table*). There is a sound outside! We are watched.

Sheriff. Go on giving me my money! (*Sound comes again.*) Never have I peace from morn till night.

*Enter on left, ANTHONY and GUY, dragging in
JOCK and JOAN bound.*

What is it, sirrah ?

Baron (*points to JOCK and JOAN*). Who are these villains ?

Anthony. I know not nor care either! They have killed the King's deer in the forest——

Jock and Joan. 'Tis untrue! We——

Sheriff (*interrupts*). Silence! I know you! You have slain the King's red-deer, robbed on the high-road, frightened honest men——

Jock and Joan. We have not! We are innocent!

Enter from left AVISA in haste; goes centre.

Avisa. They are innocent! 'Tis a false tale which is told against them! (*points to ANTHONY*). Hark! (*To the SHERIFF*.)

Sheriff. Be silent!

[*Comes over to right and stands by BARON, facing left.*]

Avisa (*to BARON*). Listen, good Sir?

Baron. Fling them into the deepest donjon that you have!

Wife (*looks up from her work*). The donjon is terrible, close by the moat; the water creeps in at certain seasons of the year.

Jock and Joan. Cast us not there! We did no harm.

Avisa (*stands facing SHERIFF*). Have pity! (*Throws up her hands.*) Listen, wise judges; hear the truth. It was a false tale he told.

[*Turns and points to ANTHONY.*]

Anthony. You dare to say that I spoke false!

Avisa. Yea! I dare to say it.

Anthony. I'll shut you in the donjon if you are not silent.

Avisa (*turns right*). They did not slay the deer. Another man had done it, and he fled and left my children to be seized.

Baron. That is an idle tale. We have so often

heard folk say, "We did not slay the deer." Our ears are weary of the jest.

Avisa. A jest, say you? (*To SHERIFF'S WIFE, coming towards her.*) Sweet lady, will you entreat for my poor son and daughter?

Wife (*waves AVISA back*). I cannot. I know naught of the matter.

Avisa (*kneels*). For tender pity's sake——

Wife. Methinks I grieve for you, but in this world, poor grief is often unavailing. I beg you speak no more to me. [*Turns away.*]

Avisa (*rises up*). What shall I do when you have torn away my children?

Sheriff. You have the world to live in.

Avisa. But only sorrow for my company!

Baron (*rises angrily, bangs down his fist on the table*). I pray you take away these chattering jays. Bid all this idle clamour cease!

Anthony. Come! (*Seizes them again.*)

Sheriff. Take them away! (*To AVISA.*) It is vain! Go!

[*As JOCK and JOAN are taken out, they look back and say aside to AVISA:*]

Jock. Courage, good mother! If we escape death, we will fly to the forest and join the outlaw Robin Hood!

Joan. Join us, good mother, in the forest!

Baron (*shouts*). Will ye not take them hence?

Sheriff. Away with you all!

[*ANTHONY and GUY with JOCK and JOAN go out left, followed by AVISA weeping.*]

Baron (*sits down*). It is a lack of courtesy in

you, Sir Sheriff, to have this evil, ragged rabble clamouring here when I have made this journey to your house on weighty business.

Sheriff. I crave your pardon. I must do justice to all men.

Baron. I care not what *you* must *do*. I must have the lands. I need them.

Sheriff. Methinks £400 is but a little sum to pay for them.

Baron. What would you have ?

Sheriff. It should be £200 more methinks.

Baron. Well, I must have them, whate'er I pay !

Sheriff. Eight hundred were a little sum to pay for such fair lands. The castle stands by the river, guarded well ; from thence you behold o'er all the plain. There are deep meadows, cornland, forests full of deer——

Baron. These—these must be mine !

Sheriff. You must pay for them. Think of the danger that I run. The Knight, Sir Richard at the Lee, may return to pay me.

Baron (*leans back in chair and laughs*). Ha ! ha ! return and pay you ! He's dead, drowned, hanged. His bones lie white on some far shore.

Wife (*looks up*). Think what you do !

Baron (*leans his elbows on table*). Yea, we will think.

Wife. A curse will come on you if you defraud the Knight and his poor daughter.

Sheriff (*to WIFE*). You know not what you talk about !

Baron. We'll talk no more either. I must have

the lands and you want the gold, old money-bags !
 [*Unrolls parchment deed.*]

Sheriff. The gold ! The gold ! Yes ! Yes !
 (*Pauses.*) But tarry a little, 'tis not quite the hour.

Baron. I will not wait.

Sheriff. He may return ere the hour be come.

Baron (*stands*). Choose. Will you sign this paper, and have the money. If not, my horse is at the door, and I'll be gone !

[*SHERIFF signs paper and then clutches bags of gold.*]

Baron. Your Knight will not return, and I shall have my lands !

Wife (*rises*). Oh, you have done an evil deed !

Sheriff (*clasps bags*). Go hence and leave us ! Mind your spinning.

Wife. Oh, what a tangled web it is ! Beware ! Hark ! even now some one knocks at the gate.

[*Laughs, and goes out left.*]

Enter on left KNIGHT and MARIAN in poor clothes, followed by LITTLE JOHN, his green clothes hidden by a cloak and hood which he keeps over his face.

Sheriff (*falls back in his chair*). What ! is the Knight come ? What have I done ?

Baron. I know not. I have got my lands, I trust, you old rascal !

[*KNIGHT and LITTLE JOHN kneel.*]

Baron (*laughs*). Ha ! ha ! I thought so ! He is come to beg another month wherein to pay the money. See, how he humbly kneels. (*Stands up to KNIGHT.*) You cannot have another hour !

Sheriff. Nay, not one hour! (*Rises.*) I lent you gold, pure gold, in your great need.

Knight. Would you not grant us further delay?

Baron. Not a moment! (*Sits down and pulls SHERIFF into his seat.*) Drink to me, Sir Sheriff. The Knight may kneel awhile!

[*Fills cups, from which they drink.*

Sheriff. If you've no money, hence, wretches, from my hall!

Knight (*rises; LITTLE JOHN also*). You are un-courteous to let me kneel. (*Proudly.*) I have fought in battles and in the Holy Land, and served the King as well as you have ever done. That you should treat me thus!

Sheriff (*to BARON*). You had better give him money so that you hold the lands in peace.

Baron. Here's a bag of gold.

Sheriff. Nay, give him more, or you may rue it.

Knight (*stamps his foot down*). What is this you say? No, never shall false Baron or Sheriff hold my lands! Come hither! Come hither, good squire. (*LITTLE JOHN gives bag of money to KNIGHT, who strides up to table and flings down bag.*) Here is your money, Sheriff! Take it! I have paid you before the hour!

Baron (*to SHERIFF*). Wretch, you have cheated me! I must have the lands for which I paid you.

Knight (*scornfully*). So you have bought and sold my heritage!

Sheriff (*clutches at money*). I will keep the gold, if I die!

Baron (*to* SHERIFF). I will tell the King of your villainies, unjust judge!

Sheriff. But let me keep my money! (*Drops back in chair.*) I am sore stricken; I shall die.

Baron. That is naught to me! (*To* KNIGHT.) Where did you get the money to pay the debt? I'll find the rascal who has furnished you with gold to spite me! (*Springs up and rushes at* LITTLE JOHN.) Who is that muffled wretch? (*Pulls off his hood.*) What, green raiment! It is one of Robin Hood's outlaws, I trow! Seize him! 'Tis Robin Hood has lent you the money! 'Tis he! Seize him! Hi! Anthony! Guy! bind the cut-throat's servant!

[LITTLE JOHN *bends his bow*; BARON *springs back*.

Knight. I will protect the servant of good Robin Hood. [*Shields* MARIAN and LITTLE JOHN *with his sword, and they all three pass out left*.

Baron (*rushes after them, then turns*). They're gone! But I will be revenged. [*WIFE enters left*.

Wife. It seems your counsels have not prospered! (*Looks at* SHERIFF, *who sits silent and crushed.*) Look how he trembles!

Baron. Oh, let him tremble. That a miserable outlaw should have thwarted me. He is not far from here, and I will hunt him down.

Then I will give in the King's hand
The boldest outlaw in his land!

[BARON *goes out, left, with drawn sword, followed by* SHERIFF *supported by his* WIFE.

SCENE II

*Some months later. Sherwood Forest. A bush
on right of stage.*

*Enter left, ROBIN HOOD, TUCK, SCARLET, MUCH,
ALLAN-A-DALE; join hands and dance round
in a ring and then sing.*

TUNE—"Here's a Health unto His Majesty."
(*Minstrelsy of England.*)

Now bend your bows, my merry men,
And draw the trusty string,
And laugh and dance, *quid eventurum sit*—
Who knows what the day will bring?
And laugh and dance, *quid eventurum sit*—
Who knows what the day will bring?
And laugh and dance, *quid eventurum sit*—
Who knows what the day will bring?

Your winding horn, my merry men,
Loud through the woods doth ring;
The sun shines bright, *quid eventurum sit*—
Who knows what the day will bring?
The sun shines bright, &c.

Your arrows true, my merry men,
Straight to the mark they wing.
Where they go you know, *quid eventurum sit*—
Who knows what the day will bring?
Where they go, &c.

[ROBIN HOOD, SCARLET, MUCH, ALLAN-
A-DALE dance off left. TUCK whirls

round singing, "Who knows what the day will bring?" knocks against JOCK and JOAN, who rush in from left.

Jock and Joan. Save us! Save us!

Joan. We have escaped from the donjon!

Jock. The Baron's men are on our tracks!

Joan. They will slay us!

Jock and Joan. Hide us! Hide us!

[TUCK *pushes them behind and jumps in front of bush on right; ANTHONY and GUY rush in from left.*

Anthony and Guy. Where are those rascals? Have you seen the wretches?

Tuck (*spreads his dress and makes himself as big as he can*). What wretches?

Anthony. Why, they were flying through the wood.

Tuck. Which wood?

Anthony. This wood. They are knaves. Brother and sister who slew the king's deer. They've joined the outlaws. They broke loose from prison.

Tuck. What prison?

Anthony. Why, the Sheriff's prison, fool.

Tuck. Call me a fool? I am a friar.

Anthony. We care not who you are.

Guy. Why do you stand like that?

Tuck. That is my matter and not yours.

Anthony. Aye, why look you so into that beech-tree?

Tuck. Because I tire of looking on your face. (*Stamps.*) Get you gone!

Anthony. We are the Baron's men.

Tuck. I care not. I have a better master than yours.

Guy. Our master could throw yours in prison.

Tuck. And mine could slay you both. (*Picks up staff.*) I'll call him and his archers. Hi!

Anthony and Guy. Ho! murder! robbers! cut-throats! [*Both run out, left. TUCK brings out*

JOCK and JOAN.

Tuck. They are gone, gone.

Joan. O brother, are we safe?

Jock. Are they departed?

Jock and Joan. Oh, look and see.

Enter, on left, ROBIN HOOD, SCARLET, MUCH, ALLAN-A-DALE; then AVISA, who rushes up to JOCK and JOAN, embraces them, and takes their hands.

Avisa. Oh, they are safe! Both safe! (*Turns to ROBIN HOOD.*) Robin Hood, we have all escaped at last to you.

Robin Hood. Ye are all in safety now.

[Takes JOCK and JOAN by the hand and gives them to AVISA.]

Here in the green-wood I am king. No man shall hurt you. The bows of all my archers would be bent in your defence if you called. (*To AVISA.*) Good dame, you still look sad.

Avisa. Alas, I have cause.

Scarlet. Prithee, be of good cheer.

Avisa. Woe is me! We are lost.

Tuck. Nay, never.

Robin Hood. Say why you are sad, seeing that your son and daughter are in safety now. Dry your eyes and be comforted.

Avisa. It is for you I weep. O brave! O noble! O most valiant Robin Hood! They have seen Little John, and discovered where you abide. The Baron of the Black Castle desires to take your life. He is journeying to the King to tell him where you are. He thinks he will win honour of the King by giving the outlaw Robin Hood into his hands.

Scarlet. And they will hunt you down, master.

Robin Hood. I will lead them a brave dance, I promise, before they catch me—a Jack-o'-lantern dance, o'er fen and forest.

Avisa. The Baron has sworn that, if he should do nothing else for a whole year, he will hunt you through the land. He knows you lent the good Knight the money, and he hates you. He had bought the Knight's lands of the false Sheriff—the Sheriff's wife did tell me this.

Robin Hood. I will die fighting with my merry men!

Avisa (moves over to left of stage). If you die we have no protector.

Jock and Joan (run up to ROBIN HOOD and stand one on either side of him). If you die, we have no friend.

Scarlet. And we no leader.

Much. Our captain!

Scarlet. Prince of archers!

Tuck. King of the good green-wood!

All sing.

TUNE—"Come, live with me and be my love."
(*Pan Pipes Collection, &c.*)

Bow down, bow down, ye heavy hearts,
For all your comfort now departs ;
In pitying tears, dissolve, O sky,
If gentle Robin Hood should die !

Green-woods, your shining dress forego,
Look autumn-like and full of woe ;
Through all the leaves the wind would sigh
If gentle Robin Hood should die !

Who was our comfort and delight,
Good angels save from proud despite ;
For us on earth no help is nigh,
If gentle Robin Hood should die.

[ROBIN HOOD *goes out, left, followed by
the others in a mournful procession.*

ACT III

SCENE I

Some months later.

The KING'S Palace. Two chairs centre, and benches right and left of stage.

Enter, left, QUEEN, her THREE LADIES and MARIAN ; LADIES sit on right-hand bench, QUEEN on right-hand chair, MARIAN on a low chair beside her, left.

Queen. So, gentle Marian, you would leave us ?

Marian. Dear Queen, I only entreat your leave to go from your court for a little space.

Queen. Are you not happy at our court ? Spring is coming, and we shall have jousts and merry feasting soon.

Marian. I thank your Grace. But my father and I have a journey which we must make about this season of the year. Before we go we must return and set our affairs in readiness.

Queen. Do you go to some holy shrine—to Canterbury or to Ely ?

Marian. Nay, my father has visited far distant shrines and brought back boughs of palm such as the saints hold in their hands—but this journey is to no fair church.

Queen. Where do you go, then ?

Marian. To visit one who helped us in adversity.

Queen. Well, God speed you on your way. We have rejoiced to have you at our side. Draw up that seat, and unwind these threads for me.

[*MARIAN seats herself on left-hand bench and draws threads.*]

Queen (*turns right, to LADIES*). Is there any one of all our train so gentle, fair, and good? [*Points to MARIAN, then takes up her book and reads.*]

1st Lady (*to 2ND LADY*). I weary to hear the praise which our good Queen bestows on this maiden.

2nd Lady. Verily! She is but the daughter of a mean Knight of the west country, living doubtless in some rat-hole castle in the mountains.

3rd Lady. She and her father flaunt like peacocks now, but they say it is only a few years ago that this same Knight and his fair daughter were beggars.

1st Lady. Beggars?

3rd Lady. Yea, beggars dressed in rags; their lands and castle pledged.

2nd Lady. That is true, I warrant. I heard it from one who——

Queen (*looks up and closes her book*). What's that? What are ye whispering there amongst yourselves? Idlers! Set to your work! By Pentecost that tapestry must be finished. [*Reads again.*]

1st Lady (*crossly*). I wish the Queen would make that proud Marian finish it.

2nd Lady. Truly! (*Holds up her hands.*) Look at my unhappy fingers; they will be only bones by Pentecost.



Marian. Before Pentecost my father would make this journey, dear Queen.

Queen. Your father did the King good service in the Welsh wars. In winter snow, cold, hunger, was Sir Richard at the Lee ever foremost. I rejoice he holds his lands in peace. The King will not say your father nay, but ere you go you shall sing to us, Marian, a song to cheer us at our work.

Marian. Right willingly. (*Rises.*) What shall it be, my Queen?

Queen. What you will. Whatever song comes to your lips. (*To 3RD LADY.*) Here, take my book.

1st Lady (to MARIAN). I pray you sing naught to offend my ears.

2nd Lady. No loud, boisterous minstrelsy for me, I pray.

Marian. I'll do my best to please you.

[*Comes forward and sings.*]

TUNE—"The harp that once." (*Songs of the British Islands, &c.*)

Where merle and mavis sweetly sing,
 Oh, there I fain would be!
 Far, far away, in merry spring,
 Beneath the green-wood tree.

The winter seems to fill the day,
 But in my dreams I see,
 Lit with the sunshine, glittering gay,
 Waving the green-wood tree.

Then sink, red sun, into the West
 And hasten day to me,
 When like a bird I'll flee to rest
 Beneath the green-wood tree.

[KING enters, left, with SIR RICHARD AT
 THE LEE, and LITTLE JOHN.

*1st, 2nd, and
 3rd Ladies* } (*jump up*). The King! the King!

King (*waves for them to sit still*). Rest, gentle ladies. (*To MARIAN.*) That was a sweet song you sang. And now, nightingale, you will fly away and leave the court.

Marian. So please your Grace, my father and I would make this journey.

King. Yea, your father says even thus. (*To KNIGHT.*) I owe you for faithful service, and I will not fail to reward you, on the word of a King.

Knight. Since my fortunes mended, it has been my chief delight to serve you, my liege.

King. No boon you ask shall be denied.

Knight. I thank you. When I return, my sword is ready at your bidding. (*To MARIAN.*) Come, daughter. (*To LITTLE JOHN.*) And you, my trusty Squire!

King (*to LITTLE JOHN*). Your Squire rendered good service in the wars, they say.

Knight. He did. Come forward.

[*Turns left and pushes LITTLE JOHN
 forward towards KING.*

King. Men say you are a peerless archer.

Little John. Please your Grace, near as good an archer as bold Robin Hood.

King. Ha! ha! Robin Hood! The outlaw!
The gallows for such as he!

Little John (*bows*). I thank your Grace.

King. You have no need. (*To KNIGHT.*) This fellow of yours has a merry countenance.

Little John. Yea, I can make a merry jest when it serves me.

King. Make one, sirrah! (*Turns to QUEEN.*) This fellow pleaseth me.

Little John. The best jest I can think of on the moment would be to tell the King that I am one of this same Robin Hood's own cut-throat archers.

King. You are a waggish knave! But peace!

Knight (*to LITTLE JOHN*). Leave jesting now. Farewell, my King, and you, my gracious Queen. (*Bows.*) Farewell.

[KNIGHT, MARIAN, and LITTLE JOHN go out, left. KING seats himself by QUEEN on left chair, and puts some flowers into her hands.

Messenger (*enters from left*). My King! (*Kneels.*) The Baron of the Black Castle comes on urgent business and craves a hearing immediately!

King. Bring him into our presence.

[MESSENGER goes out, left.

Queen (*to LADIES*). You can stay here. But ply your needles.

Enter left, BARON of the Black Castle.

King. What will you? You have ridden in haste, it seems, and are heated and weary with swift travelling.

Baron. I come on urgent business, wherein your Grace's safety is concerned. I will deliver into your hands one who has long defied your Majesty.

King. Is it one of my Welsh rebels ?

Baron. Not Welsh—a nearer rebel.

King. Sit down and tell me who you speak of.

[**BARON** sits down on left-hand bench.

Baron. For a whole year I have hunted for this man and spent much gold and ridden over fens and moors, in snow, wind, and rain, to find him and deliver him into your hands.

King. You are much angered.

Queen (*aside*). His eyes are furious. He trembles and can scarce tell his tale for rage.

King. What man would you give into our hands ?

Baron. That villain, cut-throat, lurker in thicket shadows, Robin Hood !

King. Robin Hood !

Baron. Yea, the outlaw Robin Hood.

King. Verily, he is an outlaw, for he has slain our deer—has——

Baron (*interrupts*). He is the blackest villain in your land !

King. Methinks we have many——

Baron. But Robin Hood excels them all in wickedness.

1st, 2nd, and 3rd Ladies. The Saints preserve us !

King. Robin Hood has killed our deer, and should be sternly dealt with on that account ; but what else has he done ?

Baron (*jumps up*). I can call witnesses. Honest men can testify to what he has done.

King. Bring them in!

Baron (*calls*). Come, Anthony! Come, Guy!

King (*to ANTHONY*). What dost thou know of Robin Hood?

Anthony. He is a very terrible villain. (*Aside to BARON.*) That is right, is it not, my lord?

Baron (*aside to ANTHONY*). Speak on, knave!

Anthony. Robin Hood lives in the woods.

King. I know that.

Baron (*aside to ANTHONY*). Speak on!

Anthony. He is some ten feet high, so please your Grace.

King. I care not for his stature. What does he do?

Anthony. Do! He wears a gold crown and sits under the trees and kills all gentle travellers who come by, and he has sworn to slay the King one day—

King. That touches me somewhat. Enough; thou canst go. [ANTHONY *stands back, left.*

Anthony (*aside to BARON*). Was not that well said?

Baron (*aside*). Peace! (*To KING.*) Here is another (*pushes forward GUY*). He can tell much of Robin Hood.

King (*to GUY*). Who art thou?

Guy. So please you, I am Guy of the Field by the Windmill.

King. Guy of the Field by the Windmill, tell thy tale! When didst thou see Robin Hood?

Guy (*trembles*). I cannot speak! I shall die if I do even think of what I saw.

King. Go on, I command thee !

Guy. I did never see Robin Hood. Leastways, I came through the forest once, having, so please you, been many times there. Well, once I went. It was on a Friday, eight years ago come Martinmas. Did I say Friday? On my knees I crave pardon ; I speak false—it was a Tuesday.

Baron (*aside to GUY*). Tell thy tale faster.

Guy. Yes, I can speak fast. Well, as I say, I was in the forest on a Wednesday, and as I drew near to the trees I heard a strange sound——

1st, 2nd, and 3rd Ladies (*stopping their work*). O terror !

Guy. Verily, sweet ladies, it was all dark, and nothing could I see or hear ; so I knew Robin Hood must be near——

1st, 2nd, and 3rd Ladies. Terrible !

Guy. I knew he would be in some ditch or thicket, so, being a bold and hardy man——

1st Lady. What did you do, brave fellow ?

Guy. I gathered my cloak round me, put my hand to my ear, shut my eyes tight, and ran through the forest shouting and calling on the Saints.

2nd Lady. And then ?

Guy. And then—Oh, it is the truth I speak, as I live on cold water. Suddenly I struck something hard !

1st, 2nd, and 3rd Ladies. Oh !

King. Didst thou hit thy head against a tree ?

Guy. Against a tree? No tree, indeed ; it was that villain Robin Hood who felled me to the earth, and I fainted.

1st Lady. Ah me !

2nd Lady. How looks Robin Hood ?

Guy. Oh, he has horns, I think ; two long arms, two legs——

3rd Lady. How sensibly he speaks !

King. But thou wert lying fainting on the ground ?

Baron (*angrily to GUY*). Yes, knave, thou wert senseless.

Guy. Truly. But I know he has horns and roars like a lion. I lay on the earth, my King, like one dead. Yes, sweet ladies, like one dead—stiff, cold, lifeless.

King. And what after that ? for as thou'rt here we may believe that Robin did not utterly slay thee !

Guy. Oh ! afterwards, afterwards, I got up and went out of the forest.

King. Ha ! ha ! O Robin Hood, you are a mighty monster to frighten such brave men !

Baron. Robin Hood should be caught and hanged, your Grace.

King. Hanged ! Would that not be a mild punishment for such a villain ? Methinks before he dies I would fain see this Robin Hood.

Baron. See Robin Hood !

Anthony. He has sworn to kill the King.

Guy. Yea, and he will kill us. Dread King, do not make me your guide to the forest. I cannot break my head a second time. (*To LADIES.*) Oh ! what I suffered writhing there, good ladies, as I lay stiff, cold, and senseless on the earth.

3rd Lady. Alas ! poor man——

Guy. I was quite dead——

King (to GUY). Peace! I tell thee I will come to the forest and see Robin Hood. (To BARON.) You shall take me to the place where he haunts. Where is it?

Baron. In Barnsdale and Sherwood Forest he is oft found; but consider, my liege, the danger to yourself to go into the woods where Robin Hood and his archers stalk up and down with bow in hand. Give *me* men and your warrant—I fear naught in your service—and let me go and slay him myself!

King (to BARON *sternly*). I am the King and I alone do justice in my land. I need not your sword, my bold Baron, to keep order. If Robin Hood be all that you and these brave men declare him to be—why, no punishment is too bad for him. But I will see him with my own eyes. He must be a subtle rogue to have frightened so many wise people out of their wits.

Guy. Indeed, I am a broken, stricken man.

King. We will go armed fully, but disguised as travellers. (To BARON.) Prepare disguises for us. Get you russet cloth, black hoods, such as sober merchants wear upon their travels.

Guy (*sullenly*). We will do your bidding.

King. Hasten to get ready our disguises. (*Rises.*) No one must guess we are the King!

Queen. I would fain go along with you, my lord!

King (*sits down again beside her*). Nay, now, gentle lady, think you of the terrors you have heard of Robin Hood; he has horns, roars like a lion.

Queen. Were he the dragon that St. George did slay I'd have no fear of him!

King. Yet think. The way is hard ; rough roads, the trees our roof, moss for a bed, our table the gnarled roots of an oak.

Queen (rises). Tell me, did I fear to sojourn in the lone castle of Caernarvon among the fierce Welsh? Was I afraid to cross the seas and bide with you in camp while battle with the heathen raged around me? I trembled not at mountain savages or Saracens, and shall I be afraid to come with you in your own forests, even should we encounter the stoutest outlaw in your realm?

King. Bravely spoken, O my Queen!

Queen. I will go with you disguised. (*Sits down.*) I will be dressed as a merchant's wife. My ladies shall come with me.

1st Lady (aside). Ah me, my veil will be torn in the thickets!

2nd Lady (aside). Weep for each brave kirtle which the brambles shall devour.

3rd Lady (aside). Oh, the thought of the forest!—wolves, thorns, bears——

Guy. Cold, heat, darkness, starvation——

3rd Lady. Serpents, poisonous herbs——

Guy. Death, destruction, Robin Hood!

2nd Lady. I could weep!

Queen. Dry your eyes (*QUEEN and three LADIES rise*) and make ready our disguises. (*To 1ST LADY.*) You shall be attendant on the merchant's wife. (*To 2ND LADY.*) You shall be a prioress. (*To 3RD LADY.*) You, her attendant nun. We will not tarry long.

Baron (comes forward). Then do your way! I have tried to serve you.

King. We will not forget your service, eager servant! You shall have your reward!

Baron (*aside*). I want my vengeance! That is my reward!

King. To-morrow is May Day! We'll keep it in the forest. Come, *ma chère Reine* (*takes QUEEN'S hand*), we'll hasten to the fearsome wood and judge the outlaw Robin Hood.

[KING and QUEEN go out together, left, followed by LADIES - IN - WAITING, BARON, ANTHONY, and GUY.]

SCENE II

May Day morning; a year from beginning of play.

Under an oak in Sherwood Forest. Three logs or benches, centre and right and left; treasure chest and food on extreme right; jug and cups on extreme left of stage.

Enter, left, ROBIN HOOD, SCARLET, MUCH, and AVISA, who carries garlands.

Robin Hood (*stands centre, SCARLET on his right, MUCH and AVISA on left*). It is May morning! The lark sings high overhead. The sun shines on the meadows, and now his beams creep into the depths of the wood. Men, beasts, and birds must seek their food. Come, Scarlet! Come, Much! Let us away and bring some venison home for dinner. We'll dine at noon.

Scarlet. Heaven send some rich traveller this way!

Robin Hood (to AVISA). You will make ready our food when we return.

[ROBIN HOOD, SCARLET, and MUCH go out, left.

Avisa. Gladly will I do so. This is the day of all the year. [Comes centre of stage and sings.

TUNE—"Early One Morning." (*Pan Pipes Collection, &c.*)

Ere the dim morning had dawned in the forest,
We went through the deep dew and brought home
the May.

O month of gladness, banish our sadness,
Crown with thy bounty thy own festal day !

Maytime to honour, we hang up our garlands
On trees and o'er fresh streams that shine in the sun ;
White hawthorn bringing, with birds we're singing ;
Telling to all men thy reign has begun.

[AVISA goes out left.

Enter, left, 1ST LADY-IN-WAITING, 2ND LADY-IN-WAITING, and GUY, who carries a bundle. They move across the stage and stand on the right, facing audience.

1st Lady. I am fainting with hunger. It is more than two hours since we tasted food.

2nd Lady. My eyes are blind with weeping for my torn raiment !

Guy. I should not mind rags, or even gnawing hunger, if I were not so frightened.

1st Lady (*starts, catches hold of GUY'S arm*). What is it ? What frightens you ?

2nd Lady (*drawing nearer*). Yes, tell us! Do you hear anything?

Guy. No.

1st Lady. Do you see aught?

Guy (*pulling himself up*). Well, courage! What is that? (*Points right*.) It is tall and straight.

1st Lady (*looks*). Coward! It is a tree.

Guy (*listening, looks left*). Yet there's a sound! we are ended.

[*1ST LADY, GUY, 2ND LADY move farther to right.*]

2nd Lady. Fool! It is the King and Queen who come behind us.

Enter from left, KING, QUEEN, 3RD LADY, ANTHONY, and BARON. ANTHONY carries bundles. All are disguised.

King (*stands centre*). Here we are in the Forest of Sherwood!

3rd Lady (*aside*). A mean and wretched place.

2nd Lady. Full of trees—just rank and green.

Baron. Now we are near the haunt of Robin Hood. Any moment he may appear.

Guy. O misery!

King. There are plenty of trees to climb for safety.

Guy (*holds up his hands*). Alas, so many trees that I shall not know which to choose!

[*Looks round him in despair.*]

King. I care not for Robin Hood. But I would that we could get some refreshment for the Queen.

Queen. Nay, travellers must not look to find their dinners cooked on the bushes.

Guy (*in sudden terror*). The bushes! Bushes! Ha! (*Points right, and pulls back* 1ST and 2ND LADY *toward centre of stage.*) Something did stir in yonder bush!

1st Lady. It is the robbers! Hi! (*To GUY.*) Unmannerly knave! help me to a hiding-place.

3rd Lady and Anthony. They are on us!

[1ST LADY, GUY, 2ND LADY *move quickly behind* KING.]

Enter, left, ROBIN HOOD, SCARLET, MUCH.

King (*faces ROBIN HOOD*). Who are you?

Robin Hood. I am Robin Hood!

Baron (*aside*). Oh, that I might slay him where he stands!

1st Lady. Let me hide!

Guy. Feign to be dead!

King. We greet you, Robin Hood!

Robin Hood. And who are you?

King. Good as yourself am I.

Robin Hood. Ho! Remember I am king here in the forest.

King. Are you, indeed? We are travellers, but we are envoys of the King.

Robin Hood. We will treat you well if you are messengers of the King, who is a better man than his Sheriff. But remember, at a blast of my horn, archers come with bent bows to do my bidding. (*To KING.*) You are a proud fellow.



King. I am nearly as proud as is Robin Hood.

Scarlet (*moves towards the KING*). Try no jesting with us. [Seizes KING'S arm.

Robin Hood (*to SCARLET*). Leave him alone!

[SCARLET obeys and goes back to place behind ROBIN HOOD.

King (*to ROBIN*). You rule your subjects well.

Robin Hood. As well as the King of England rules his.

King. Ha! ha! You have more obedient subjects. None of your subjects are outlaws. But, come, we are hungry, and we command you to give us meat!

Robin Hood. "Command!" It is not thus that travellers speak to Robin Hood! Know that I can give meat here or not as I please!

Scarlet. Yes, indeed, and take your purses if we like in payment for the dinner!

Baron (*steps towards the KING and says aside*). Will you endure their insolence?

Robin Hood (*to KING*). No harm shall come to you. It is May Day and so you shall all dine with us. The ladies are weary, doubtless.

Guy. Doubtless they are—I am!

Robin Hood. You shall all dine here under this oak. Come, Scarlet, bring the venison which Avisia has cooked for us!

[SCARLET goes to right and fetches food, which he places on ground in front centre of stage. TUCK enters from left, followed by ALLAN-A-DALE; they spread out food.

Tuck, you have our wine !

Tuck. I'll get the wine for these gay travellers. (*Moves to left of stage, from which he fetches wine ; as he passes ANTHONY and GUY he says.*) You pale, knock-kneed fellows !

Anthony. He insults us !

[TUCK sets down wine on ground beside food in centre of stage, and then goes to his place on right, between MUCH and ALLAN-A-DALE.]

King. Silence ! (*To ANTHONY.*) He is our host now !

Robin Hood. Draw near all of us ! (*To QUEEN.*) Lady, will you sit here ? [*Points to centre log.*]

Queen. Thanks, Robin Hood, for your courtesy.

Robin Hood (*handing QUEEN to seat on centre log*). Never shall it be said that Robin Hood was lacking in courtesy to any woman living. (*To KING.*) Be seated here, good Sir. [KING sits down on centre log beside the QUEEN.]

1st Lady (*sits down on right-hand log*). This is well. Methinks the wood is finer than I thought.

2nd Lady (*sits on left-hand log*). Truly the boughs make a tolerable shelter.

3rd Lady (*sits down on left-hand log*). And the moss is soft !

Baron (*sits down on left log*). (*To KING.*) He is a crafty knave ! Beware ! Will you not seize him ?

King (*aside to BARON*). I will dine first. Betray not who I am, on your peril ! (*Points to ROBIN, who sits on right-hand log by 1ST LADY.*) There's a King with no cares.

Much (*points to food*). There are pasties of my own making.

Enter JOCK and JOAN *from left, with a basket between them, which they hand round to all.*

Jock and Joan. The wild-fowl's eggs came from the lake.

Enter, left, AVISA, with food, which she hands to QUEEN.

Avisa. You will not quarrel with the meats we've baked.

King. Nay, indeed, good dame. Moreover, all things taste well under the trees. Is not yours a jovial life?

Scarlet. The sorrowing all their cares lay down.

Queen. Where?

Allan, Tuck, Much,
Scarlet, Robin Hood. } In the green-wood.

Jock. We do not fear the tyrant's frown.

King. Where?

Allan, Tuck, Much,
Scarlet, Robin Hood. } In the green-wood.

Much. The hungry mouths with food are fed.

Anthony. Where?

Allan, Tuck, Much,
Scarlet, Robin Hood. } In the green-wood.

Avisa. The weary find a quiet bed.

Queen. Where?

Avisa. In the green-wood.

King. Ah, me. I would fain stay here!

1st Lady. And I !

2nd Lady. And I !

King. But it must not be. Robin Hood, it irks me sore to come to the hour of reckoning. First I must make payment for this food. We have eaten and drunk well.

Baron (aside). I trust that the food and drink is not poisoned !

King (rises and hands coin to ROBIN HOOD ; in rising the KING'S hood falls back a little from his face). Gentle host, take this gold piece for our entertainment.

Queen (to ROBIN HOOD). With our thanks——

[ROBIN HOOD rises ; takes coin in his hand, looks at it and then at the KING.

King. Why do you gaze first at me and then at the paltry coin in your hand ?

Robin Hood. Because your hood has slipped back, that is why I stare. The countenance upon this gold piece is the King's and it is yours likewise !
(*Kneels.*) You are the King !

<p><i>Jock, Joan, Avisa, Allan, Tuck, Much, Scarlet</i></p>	}	<p>(<i>fall on their knees</i>). The King ! The King !</p>
---	---	--

King. Yea, I am the King, Robin Hood !

Baron (springs up and rushes forward towards ROBIN HOOD). Robber ! butcher ! Seize him now ! Hang him upon the nearest tree.

[*All rise from their knees.*

King (pushes BARON back). Stand back ! No man shall lay hands on him here ! We have drunk his wine and ate his meat, and you shall not touch him

without my leave, though he be ten times an outlaw!

Baron (*moves back left*). O wretched spite!

King (*sternly to ROBIN HOOD*). You have slain my deer?

Robin Hood. Verily.

King. Robbed rich abbots?

Robin Hood. I took their wealth to give the needy.

King. You have defied my officers?

Robin Hood. I have.

King. You should die.

Allan, Tuck,
Much, Scarlet. } Alas! Alas!

Robin Hood (*bows*). So be it.

King. Yet, since you have shown us such kindness, we will spare your life on condition that you pay a fine.

Baron (*eagerly to KING*). Oh, let it be four hundred pounds!

King. Be it so. Four hundred pounds you pay before noon, and your life is saved. I swear this on the oath of a King whose word was never broken!

Scarlet. Alas, master.

King (*sits down again on centre log beside QUEEN*). Pay the four hundred pounds and you are safe. I have spoken. (*To ROBIN HOOD*.) Why do you hesitate?

Much. Alack! Alack!

Robin Hood (*to MUCH*). Have we the gold, Little Much?

Much. Alas, I fear not.

King. Play me no tricks! Look in your chest!

Robin Hood (to SCARLET). Scarlet, fetch our treasure chest.

[SCARLET *fetches chest from right, places it in front of KING, opens it and looks in, and holds up one coin.*

Scarlet. There is but one silver piece. My master gave the rest to a poor feeble man who came this way.

Avisa (*steps towards KING*). He helped us! Must Robin Hood die?

King. The law says he must, but I will pardon him if he pays the fine. (To SCARLET.) Look in that chest again.

[SCARLET *shakes chest and finally turns it upside down.*

Scarlet. It is quite empty! (*Drags it away and turns to ROBIN HOOD.*) O master! woe is me! Why stand you so unmoved? Did you not hear what the King has said?

[*Goes back behind right log.*

Much. You will be slain!

Allan. There is no mending the King's word.

King. Yea, my word is given. If you can pay the fine by noon, you live. You smile, Robin Hood. You have treasure hidden, I warrant.

[*Points right.*

Robin Hood. Nay, I swear I have nought. My chest and purse are empty as winter husks.

King. Then why do you look so proudly?

Robin Hood. I have a friend, my King, a valorous Knight who borrowed four hundred pounds of me,

and he promised to repay me beneath this very oak at noon upon May Day. 'Tis nigh the hour. He will come, and I shall have the money surely.

Baron. Now that is a marvellous tale! The Knight come back to pay a cut-throat in the forest! Ha! ha!

Anthony. Moreover, it is just on noon. (*Looks from side to side.*) I see no Knight.

Robin Hood. It is not yet high noon. I tell you he will come.

Baron. I tell you he will not!

King (*picks up hour-glass*). I will take the hour-glass in my hand and watch. If the sand run out before the Knight comes, I must deliver you to justice. But if your debtor comes with the money (*looks at BARON*) I will fling him in the deepest donjon who lays hand on Robin Hood!

Queen (*looks anxiously at hour-glass in the KING'S hand*). Alas, the sands run fast!

1st Lady. Poor archer!

Baron. I think your Knight has forgot to look in his calendar!

Robin Hood. He will come, I have no fear. Moreover, his fair daughter promised she would return and be our May Queen!

Anthony (*scornfully*). Your May Queen! Now you may have leave to hang me if that be true!

Robin Hood. I speak truly. See you, I will stand here and watch. (*Goes to left.*) Scarlet, go and look up towards the ford and call to me if the Knight and the Lady come.

Scarlet (*turns right*). I can scarce see for tears!

Robin Hood. I think they will not fail me!

Much (*peeps at hour-glass*). Master, it is near on the hour.

Avisa. My heart sinks!

Robin Hood (*looks round to them*). Have courage, good people!

Jock and Joan. Alas! Alas!

Robin Hood. Surely they will not fail me.

[*Turns front.*

Avisa. O time, stand still! I will hide my face!

[*Hides her face. All ROBIN HOOD'S people hide their faces.*

(*A pause.*)

Robin Hood (*triumphantly turns round*). Behold! They come!

<p><i>Jock and Joan, Avisa, Allan, Much, Scarlet, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Ladies, Queen, King.</i></p>	}	<p>They come! They come! Well done, brave Robin Hood!</p>
--	---	---

Baron. He has escaped me. O bitterness!

Anthony. Our chance is past!

Enter from left KNIGHT and MARIAN, followed by LITTLE JOHN. KNIGHT carries bag of gold.

Knight. Hail, brave Robin Hood! Here is your money doubled.

[*Gives money to ROBIN HOOD.*

Marian. Hail! all hail!

Knight (*starts back seeing the KING*). The King here! The Queen. [*Bows low.*

King (*rises*). How! Sir Richard at the Lee is Robin Hood's debtor?

Knight (*to KING*). In my need he lent me four hundred pounds to redeem my lands.

Marian. When we were in great extremity he helped us.

[ROBIN HOOD *walks right and puts money into KING'S hands, kneeling as he does so.*

King (*to ROBIN HOOD*). You prince of robbers, Robin Hood! (*ROBIN moves to right of KING.*) (*To KNIGHT.*) I said he should not die if he could pay his fine.

Knight (*to KING*). My liege, you will forgive him?

Marian (*steps towards KING*). Oh, pardon him, my King! (*To QUEEN.*) Dear Queen, beg for him.

Queen. I would fain do so.

King (*to MARIAN*). Did you promise to be Robin Hood's May Queen?

Marian. I did. I said I would.

King. Then you must keep your promise, fair maiden; it is my command.

Marian. Oh, gladly I obey!

King (*to ROBIN HOOD*). You shall have your money, Robin. Spend some of it on feasting hungry travellers. [*Gives money to ROBIN HOOD.*

Robin Hood (*bows low*). I thank you, gracious King.

Marian (*to KING*). And you'll forgive him evermore?

King (to MARIAN). Since you are his Maid Marian, I must pardon Robin Hood.

All. God save your Grace!

Knight (to BARON). 'Twas you would fain have bought my lands from the false Sheriff before the hour when they were his by right.

King (sternly to BARON). Then you and the Sheriff shall pay the price of your ill deeds. A year I banish you! Go, you and your hirelings, hence!

[BARON goes out left, followed by ANTHONY and GUY.]

Queen. So justice shall be done; but now, as it is May Day, let us be merry!

King. Robin, lead off the dance with your May Queen. Music, strike up!

Marian (takes ROBIN HOOD'S hand).

Till every glade in this wide wood

Echo the name of Robin Hood!

All sing.

TUNE—"Song of the Loom." (*Songs of the British Islands.*)

Oh, come now to the woods
And crown this jocund day;
Now each tall tree nods merrily,
So all hail, sweet May, merry month of May.
Oh, hail! all hail!

The winter time is past,
Beneath the sun's warm ray
There smiles in mirth the good green earth,
So all hail, sweet May, merry month of May,
Oh hail! all hail!

Oh, come now to the woods !
Hark ! what the sweet birds say !
The world is fair and we have no care,
So all hail, sweet May, merry month of May,
Oh, hail ! all hail !

[*All go out in procession, KING and
QUEEN, followed by KNIGHT, LADIES-
IN-WAITING, MARIAN with ROBIN
HOOD, LITTLE JOHN, SCARLET,
MUCH, ALLAN-A-DALE, TUCK, AVISA,
JOCK, and JOAN.*

EPILOGUE

Spoken by one of ROBIN HOOD'S archers.

Farewell, our little pageant's o'er,
Yet, ere we part, just one word more.
Now if you love the gay green-wood,
Think kindly on our play,
And if you love brave Robin Hood,
Come back another day !

THE
STORY OF THE ARMADA



STAGE DIRECTIONS

ONLY one exit and entrance, right or left, is needed.

No proscenium curtain is necessary. Two of the boys, in their acting clothes, can come on the stage after the Prologue and between the scenes and arrange tables, chairs, &c., in view of the audience.

No scenery is required. Localities may be indicated by placards, as, "Market-place," "Tilbury Camp," &c.

Curtains of some plain colour—green serge or brown holland, for instance—make a good conventionalised background for all the scenes. A long garland of evergreens, caught up at regular intervals with dark red bows, can be hung across the background curtains. A bush or large bunch of evergreens in a pot or tub, on either side of the stage, completes the setting of all the scenes. If nothing big enough can be had in a pot, two wooden chairs completely covered with boughs and ivy will make good bushes. Tables, chairs, &c., are brought in when required.

PROPERTIES

ACT I

SCENE I.—A MARKET. The stalls for the market can be trestle tables or boards laid on the backs of chairs. A bench, a pail or jug for milk, cheese, butter, loaf, lettuces, apple, vegetables, dried herbs, nosegay, baskets.

SCENE II.—A CELLAR. The stage is darkened. A

barrel, or chair covered with a cloth, behind which Jock can hide, lantern, money-bags.

SCENE III.—THE PALACE. The Council table and throne covered with red, if possible; chairs, money-bags, a chart, letters, &c.

ACT II

SCENE I.—THE HOE AT PLYMOUTH. Balls.

INTERLUDE.—The same scene.

SCENE II.—CAMP AT TILBURY. Baskets, bread, cheese, cup and jug.

SCENE III.—The same scene.

ACT III

SCENE I.—THE PALACE. Throne, chair.

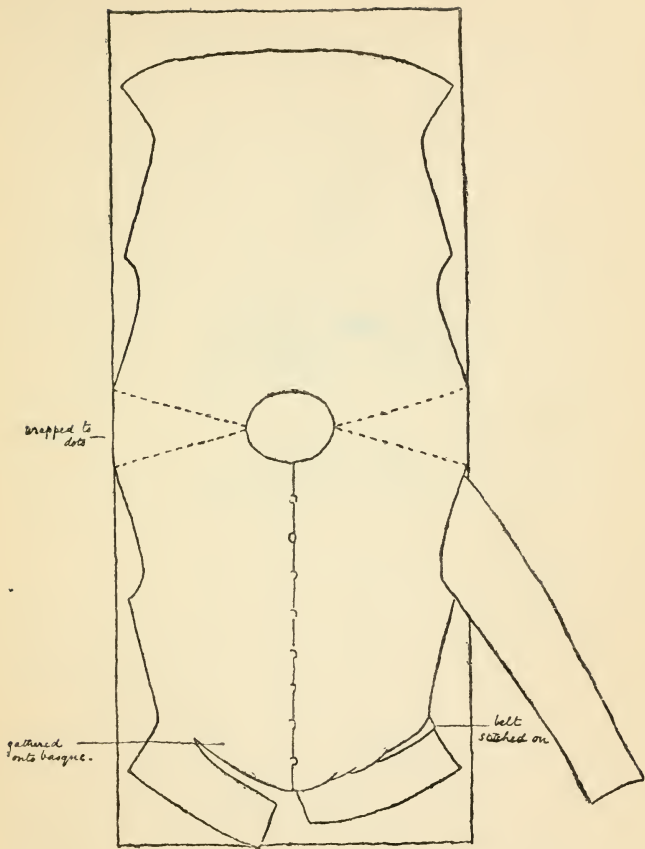
DRESSES

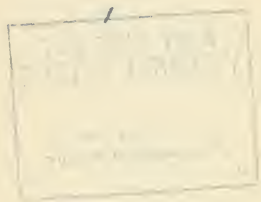
The clothes are not nearly so difficult to make as may be at first supposed. The chief characteristics of the Elizabethan dress can be given easily and with little expense. Each actor could be dressed, on a rough average, for about 3s., exclusive of shoes and stockings.

With regard to the whole effect, the proportions of the colours should be kept even; full colours and not "art" shades chosen. Plenty of black should be used. White can be kept mostly for the ruffs, cuffs, and perhaps the Queen's dress.

For all the dresses, sateen, in various colours, at 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. or 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per yard, is excellent, and Horticultural Sheeting, 50 inches wide, 1s. a yard (Messrs. Cookson, Wellington Mills, Manchester), can be dyed any colour with Maypole soap.

For boys, the chief measurements required are: chest, waist, arm, neck to waist, waist to knee, head.





For girls : bust, waist, arm, neck to waist, waist to ankle, head.

The boys must have full knickerbockers, stiffened with lino, and over these a big puff from the waist to the middle of the thigh. These puffs must be stiffened and have elastic run in at the top and bottom. They are about 41 inches round and 14 inches deep. To minimise undressing and to add to the bulky appearance, all this can be worn over the boys' own knickerbockers.

The boys wear a short, pouched coat, longer in front than behind, with a basque round the waist, and long, tight sleeves. Probably the whole coat, with the exception of the sleeves, was made in one piece, the fold on either side of the neck-opening being turned in, and so giving the overhanging appearance of the shoulder to be seen in portraits of the time. Capes are worn, and the courtiers have, as they said, "a little apish hatte cowched to ye pate like an oyster," with a feather. The other men can wear high hats of the Guy Fawkes type. These can be made of carpet felt in various colours.

The girls' skirts are very full, coming a little below the ankle. The farthingale can be made as a semi-circular cushion tied round the waist so that the dress stands out behind and on the hips like a table. In the case of the Queen, whose dress must be of the most exaggerated type, there can also be a stiff under-skirt.

The kirtle mentioned in Act I. Scene 3 can be represented as a short over-skirt. The bodices of Court ladies are very tight, long and pointed in front, the sleeves either tight, with small puffs, or else huge leg-o'-mutton sleeves. The sleeves and front of the bodices can be decorated with little bows, beads sewed on in patterns, or with black tape or gold braid stitched on in a sort of trellis work.

Stripes and slashings are a most characteristic trimming for the dresses of both girls and boys, for the puffs of the sleeves and for the puffs over the knickerbockers.

Gold braid, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide, can be got from Burnet & Co., 22 Garrick Street, Covent Garden, 12 yards for $4\frac{1}{2}$ d.

The ruffs, for both boys and girls, are made of coarse stiff muslin, $6\frac{1}{2}$ d. or $8\frac{1}{2}$ d. a yard, cut into strips about 5 yards long and 6 or 7 inches wide, fastened on to a band to fit the neck, every fold being stitched in front. The Queen's high collar is made of stiff muslin, on a frame of cap-wire.

All the actors can wear their ordinary shoes, with large rosettes to match their clothes fastened with safety-pins on to the shoe-laces. Very cheap white canvas shoes can be had and painted with Maypole soap. White stockings at $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. a pair can be dyed likewise.

Illustrations of Elizabethan dress are in S. R. Gardiner's "Outline of English History." J. R. Green's "Short History of the English People" has pictures of Queen Elizabeth, Raleigh, Cecil, Drake, and of country people, market women, &c., of the time. Much information as to the costumes is found in F. W. Fairholt's "Costume in England," vol. i., Bohn's Artists' Library.

All the music, except that of the last chorus, is in "Pan Pipes," published by Routledge & Sons, price 3s. 6d., and in other collections of old English songs.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

WILLIAM CECIL, LORD BURLEIGH.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE.

MASTER JOCK BURWOOD, Herb Merchant of London.

WILL OF BABBICOMBE, a West-Country Sailor.

DON PEDRO DE VALDEZ, a Spaniard.

THREE CONSPIRATORS.

A PAGE.

AP THOMAS, a Welshman.

DICKON, a Derbyshireman.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

LADY MARY HOWARD, Lady-in-Waiting.

MISTRESS NAN HANWAY, } Londoners.
MISTRESS ALICE BRIDGEWATER, }

Prologue, spoken by MASTER BURWOOD.

The number of Ladies-in-Waiting and Courtiers may be increased.

ACT I

SCENE I.—A Market near Cheapside, London.

SCENE II.—A dark cellar in a house near Cheapside.

SCENE III.—The Palace of Whitehall.

ACT II

SCENE I.—The Hoe at Plymouth.

INTERLUDE.—The Hoe at Plymouth. The Lighting of
the Beacons.

SCENE II.—The Camp at Tilbury.

SCENE III.—The Camp at Tilbury.

ACT III

SCENE I.—The Palace of Whitehall.

The action takes place at the end of the Summer of 1588.

THE
STORY OF THE ARMADA

PROLOGUE

(*Spoken by* MASTER BURWOOD)

WE come to show you in her glory
Elizabeth—whose mighty name
Comes to us down the distant ages
With high resounding and undying fame.

Here shall you see set forth before you
How English sailors Spain's Armada broke,
How, in the thunders of the driving tempest,
The Voice of God for England spoke.

We bid you ponder o'er our story ;
We bid you love and follow these brave men ;
Remembering that the sea and its dominion
For our inheritance was given then.

ACT I

SCENE I

Summer, 1588, London. A market. Two stalls, and a bench at back of stage.

Enter, left, JOCK, NAN, and ALICE. JOCK stands centre, in front of stalls; NAN and ALICE on either side. Each has a basket containing wares for market. They sing.

TUNE—"The Hunt is up."

Come, leave your beds, you sleepy heads,
The day is shining bright ;
The birds, I ween, to greet our Queen
Are singing with delight.

The streamlet flows, the wild-rose blows
In fragrance on your way,
The daisies sweet spring at your feet,
And nods the woodbine gay.

The hunter's horn shrill wakes the morn
In deeps of forest green ;
The shadows fly, and earth and sky
Awake to greet our Queen !

Jock (*tosses up his cap and catches it*). God save
Queen Elizabeth !

Nan. God save good Queen Bess !

Alice (*sets down her basket*). And keep her from all her enemies.

Jock. From Spaniards abroad and from traitors at home.

Alice (*clasps her hands*). Amen, amen, I say.

Nan (*to JOCK*). Shall we see the Queen pass by to-day?

Jock. Truly we shall, for she comes from Southwark, and stays to visit the most noble Sir Walter Raleigh at his fair Durham house in the Strand on her way back to the Palace of Whitehall.

Nan. And her Grace will pass by us here?

Jock. Verily. Her Grace will pass down Cheapside, and I doubt not that the sight of our goodly countenances will give her cheer.

Nan. She will not look at *thee*, Master Burwood!

Jock. Not so hasty, Mistress Hanway! Maybe, she *will* look at me! Well, as I said before, her Grace—whom Heaven keep (*lifts his cap*)—returns to Whitehall. We must shout and show the Queen that we citizens of London will stand true in these evil days and will protect her Majesty from all her enemies.

Alice. We will indeed; I will shout for the Queen till my voice is cracked; but these are bad times, when the King of Spain may come any minute and burn every one of us.

Nan. Maybe he won't come just this morning. Keep good hearts. We'd better spread out our

stalls for the market. Spaniards or no Spaniards coming, people want butter.

[*Bustles behind right-hand stall, puts out butter, turns to JOCK and points to pail or jug on the ground by the stall.*]

Nan. Here, friend, give me a hand. (JOCK rushes right and helps to lift milk on to the stall.) 'Tis good milk; you can see how heavy the cream is!

Jock. Something's heavy. I must rest.

[*Takes apple from his pocket and plays ball with ALICE.*]

Nan (to ALICE). Alice! Help me; you are always idle!

Alice (*indignant*). Idle! You're the first person ever called Alice Bridgewater idle.

[*Comes behind stall and stands left of NAN.*]

JOCK *plays with apple.*

I've been working since it was light, digging and washing these lettuces (*shakes lettuces*). They're famous lettuces.

Nan. Now this cheese I made, (*puts out bits of cheese*) it is the best cheese.

Jock (*pockets apple*). Then I will just taste it. (*Comes and tastes.*) 'Tis good.

Nan. Eat it not all. I shall have none to sell.

Jock. A bit of lettuce? (ALICE *hands him lettuce leaves.*) That's excellent.

Nan. Put out thy own wares now, Master Burwood.

Jock (*bustles to back of left stall*). My wares! My wares! Here they are. (*Scatters out bundles of dried herbs*.) What are butter, eggs, cheese? I can cure every ill with my herbs. Have you fever?

Nan. No.

Alice. No.

Jock. Broken bones?

Nan and Alice (*together*). No!

Jock. Have you not weak eyes? (*Looks at ALICE closely*.) I am sure you have weak eyes.

Alice. I trow I can see as well as you, and better.

Jock. Then, rheumatisms, agues, fainting fits? Take camomile, marjoram, and broom flowers in pickle.

Nan. I'll buy some against the winter days when I'm stiff with cold and rheumatisms.

Jock. Mistress Nan Hanway, thou art wise. (*Brings her some herbs*.) 'Tis one penny. (*Takes penny from NAN; sees a lady coming from left*.) Hi! hi! A new customer.

Enter on left LADY-IN-WAITING, followed by a little PAGE, with a basket.

(*Aside*). A noble lady. Madam, madam, my herbs are famed. Have you ague, cough, fainting fits?

Nan. We've cheese, butter, milk——

Alice. Eggs, lettuces, and cresses——

Jock. Marjoram, camomile tea! What d'you lack?

Jock, Nan, and Alice. What d'you lack? What d'you lack?

Lady. Give me one lettuce. I pray let it be fresh. Sometimes I can fancy the heart of a young lettuce, though after having tasted the choice plant called the potato which Sir Walter Raleigh has brought us from the New World, I can hardly eat this simple garden stuff.

[*Points scornfully to vegetables.*]

Alice. This is a fair lettuce. (*Aside.*) 'Tis plain she's a noble lady.

Nan (aside). A countess, at least. See her rich kirtle.

Jock. My lady, this cuckoo-pint; I gathered it myself in the fields beyond Westminster.

Lady. What dost thou sell this for, good man?

Jock. The root of cuckoo-pint well boiled makes starch to stiffen your ruffs.

Lady. I'll take some. It takes five pails of starch weekly to keep me in fresh ruffs. (*To NAN and ALICE.*) I need no more from you.

Nan. No cheese, your ladyship?

Lady. No cheese. (*To PAGE, pointing to lettuce and cuckoo-pint.*) Put these in thy basket and pay for them.

[*PAGE takes up things, pays money to each.*]

LADY turns and sails out left, followed by the PAGE.

Jock, Nan, and Alice (bowing). We thank you.

Jock. She pays us handsomely.

Nan. She's a fine dame.

Alice (to JOCK). Keep some of the cuckoo-pint for me. I'll have brave ruffs to wear o' Sundays. I wish her Grace could see my ruff!

Nan (to JOCK). When will the Queen come?

Jock. I cannot tell. The ringing of bells and the shouts of people by the Exchange will let us know of her coming.

Nan. Then I'll wait here and give her Grace these flowers which I begged from Sir Christopher Hatton's garden by Holborn. [*Shows a nosegay.*

Jock. Let me look at thy nosegay, good Mistress Nan. Toss it hither.

Nan. Toss it, indeed! They're flowers for a Queen!

[JOCK and NAN come centre, in front of stall; she gives him nosegay.

Have a care how you handle it.

Jock (*examines nosegay*). Roses red and white; that's well, for her Grace is the Rose of England. Lilies—that suits likewise, for she is a maiden queen; and marigolds, yes, we'll have the *gold*; Drake and his merry men will bring gold from the New World, but we'll have no "Mary," for that was the Queen of Scots. Take thy bunch.

Alice (to NAN). Art not afraid to give so mean a posy to the Queen?

Nan. Nay, for I was there when she rode to be crowned, and I did see her take the nosegays and tokens with most tender words. The bough of

herbs which a poor woman gave her at Fleet Bridge was seen in her chariot when she reached Westminster.

Alice. I remember how she smiled and lifted up her hands to those who could not get near for the crowds.

Jock (waves his cap). God save Queen Elizabeth, I say again, and send us no outlandish folk! Now have we a Queen who is one of us and mere English like ourselves!

[*JOCK fetches bench and sets it centre, in front of stalls; takes NAN and ALICE by the hand; leads them to bench.*

Can I trust ye with a secret?

Nan and Alice. Truly!

Nan. Sooner would I break every egg in that basket than break my oath.

Alice. I, too.

Jock (seats himself; NAN and ALICE sit either side, right and left). Then see you. (*Draws out a letter with care; snatches it from ALICE, who tries to examine it.*) You must not handle it so roughly. Listen, both of you! My name is writ in this letter.

Alice. Thy name?

Jock. It is. In this letter am I named—"John Burwood," see you?

Nan (looks at letter). It is so. "John Burwood, of Bucklersbury, Herb Merchant." What hast thou done, friend Jock?





Jock. Done! I am one of her Grace's servants. I am here bidden to be one of the men, sent by Lord Burleigh, to spy in London on the traitors who conspire against her Grace's life and realm. Hark you! There are deadly plots around us, and the King of Spain has companies of men in his pay (*glances behind him*) who are hid in this city—maybe in these very streets and alleys.

Alice (*clasps her hands*). I am terrified.

Jock. We may well be terrified, for there are plots to kill the Queen and set up the cruel King Philip in this land.

Alice. If the Spaniards come, they will throw us in prison; burn us. What can so small a people as we, do against Spain? We shall be destroyed. I tremble with terror.

Nan. This is no hour for trembling.

Jock. No, truly. We must meet danger with a stout heart. (*Puts by letter; lowers his voice.*) Yes, and meet cunning with cunning and craft with craft, I say. That's what my Lord Burleigh and Sir Francis Walsingham think, too. Now, listen. In the letter I am commanded to hide in a cellar under an empty house close by here (*points behind*), for there will certain evil men meet to plan deadly work—to betray their country.

Nan (*touches his arm*). Hush! hush! Some one comes!

Enter, on left, WILL OF BABBICOMBE. JOCK, NAN, and ALICE rise quickly.

Will (aside). Doubtless some traitors plotting mischief.

Jock (to NAN and ALICE). This is some vile and treasonable person come to spy on my conversation. (*To WILL.*) What is thy business, knave?

Will. Maybe it's batter business than yar'n!

Jock (springs at WILL and shakes him). Talk not thus to me! And in that villain-like voice!

Will (pushes JOCK off). Oi'll spake as oi loikes; and ye trate me not with civility, oi'll lay thee low amongst thy barskets, London huckster!

[*JOCK snatches up stick, on which herbs are tied; rushes at him again. NAN pulls JOCK away. ALICE pushes WILL away.*

Nan. Peace! Peace! ye firebrands! If the Queen's procession comes by, you will both be thrown in jail for brawling in the streets. (*To JOCK.*) Let him alone, friend Jock. Maybe he is honest even if you cannot understand his speech readily. Put up your cudgel.

Jock (looks angrily at WILL). I see thy swarthy face hidden under a good sailor's cap. (*Shakes stick at WILL.*) I'll have thee lodged in prison for a Spanish spy! (*Draws himself up proudly.*) I can do so. (*Bangs stick on ground.*) I've the power!

Will (throws himself on bench; laughs; holds his sides). A Spanish spy! Now, by my loife, that's a

good jast! Oi's sane and hurd much on my travels, but naver wurse oi takken for a Spani-urd before! A Devon sailor oi! Oi's sane more o' Spani-urds then most of ye, but they loved oi not! They loved not Long Bill o' Babbicombe!

Alice (with great interest). Your honour has been in the sea fights?

Will (to ALICE). Truly, fair Mistress, that has oi! Oi's fought her Grace's battle in many zeas, in hunger and tharst and cold and hate, and under the flag (*springs up and waves his cap*) of the most noble Sir Francis Drake!

Jock (*seizes his arm*). A Drake's man? A Drake's man?

Will. Aye, a Drake's man!

All. Long life to Sir Francis Drake!

Will. The terror of the Spani-urds!

Jock. You're a brave fellow, and I will give you my hand and welcome you with joy to the city of London. (*Shakes his hand.*) What can we do for you? Will you take some herbs to refresh you after your travels?

Will. Nay, oi's hale enough, though there be many of our sailors lying sick at Southampton.

Alice. Take something to eat, then.

Nan (*rushes to stall; fetches eggs*). Deign to eat a few of these eggs, fresh from the farm by White-chapel.

Will. Thanks, good Mistress, oi's hungry enough to ate the whole farmyard.

Alice (*fetches lettuce, &c.*). And take some of my lettuce and a pasty, good sir.

[*WILL sits down and eats.*

Will. Oi'll ate gladly; we sailors get but scant victual.

Jock. With joy we spread our plenty at the feet of the man who's fought the Spaniards.

Will. Oh! Oi's done that, by my troth! (*Begins to laugh again.*) Oi must laugh! (*Rocks to and fro.*) Oi must laugh!

Alice. What ails you?

Will (*puts hand on her arm*). Nay, nart, nart! Zo ye took oi for a Spani-urd! Oi for a Spani-urd!

Jock. I did. Your noble and sunburnt cheek—

Will. Did mislead ye. And oi, too, did mistake you, for oi took ye for a bunch of treasonmongers huddled together in a corner of the mearket-place.

Jock (*indignantly*). Treasonmongers! We are honest citizens. Moreover, I am an agent of my Lord Burleigh, the Lord High Treasurer of England! (*Draws himself up and flourishes stick.*) I am well thought of, I can tell you.

Will. Aye, that's sartain.

[*Takes off his cap to* JOCK.

Jock (*bows*). I give you thanks. (*Lowers voice.*) The land is honeycombed with dangers.

Alice. Scarce can we sleep in our beds for fear.

Nan. And if I do but hear a brawl in the street I think it is the black-eyed Spaniards come to slay

us. If I see a red light in the sky, I say to myself, "When King Philip comes, so will the fires at Smithfield light the skies."

Will. Not while Drake and Hawkins sail the seas, I warrant.

Jock. Not while the brave citizens of London live! (*NAN and ALICE go behind stalls, set goods in order.*) Look you! Her Majesty cometh this way.

Will. She comes this way? Than oi'll boide here, and the man of the West Country'll shout as loud as any of ye for the Queen!

Nan. I'll have my flowers ready!

Will. There's toime enough maybe? Let's have a dance! (*Jumps up; picks up bench; puts it back.*) Push back yor stalls and we'll fling up our heels and have a merry dance.

Nan and Alice. A dance! A dance!

[*They all push back stalls.*

Jock (stuffs in letter). Softly! softly! I have that upon me which must be used carefully. Remember my office.

Will. Aye, we'll remember yor office; but let's forget our griefs awhile. (*To NAN.*) Stick thy posy on his staff. (*Takes stick, ties nosegay on to it.*) Though zummer zun shine hot this morn and though foes be near, we'll have a Maypole and a merry dance!

[*They join hands; JOCK dances with NAN;*

WILL with ALICE.

(*Dance. TUNE—"Come Lasses and Lads."*)

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

*A cellar in a house near Cheapside. All is dark.
Boxes or cask at back of stage.*

Enter JOCK on tip-toe from left.

Jock. Soft! soft! I found the secret door to this black hole. (*Looks round.*) A nice place for honest Jock Burwood, Herb Merchant, of Bucklersbury, to be in! But I can spy upon the traitors. They'll meet in this cellar to plot the Queen's destruction. I'll hide in the dark. (*Fumbles about.*) What's this? An empty cask. I can hide behind it and listen, and bring word of what I hear to my Lord Burleigh. He seeks to find out the men who are hired to betray their country to the King of Spain.

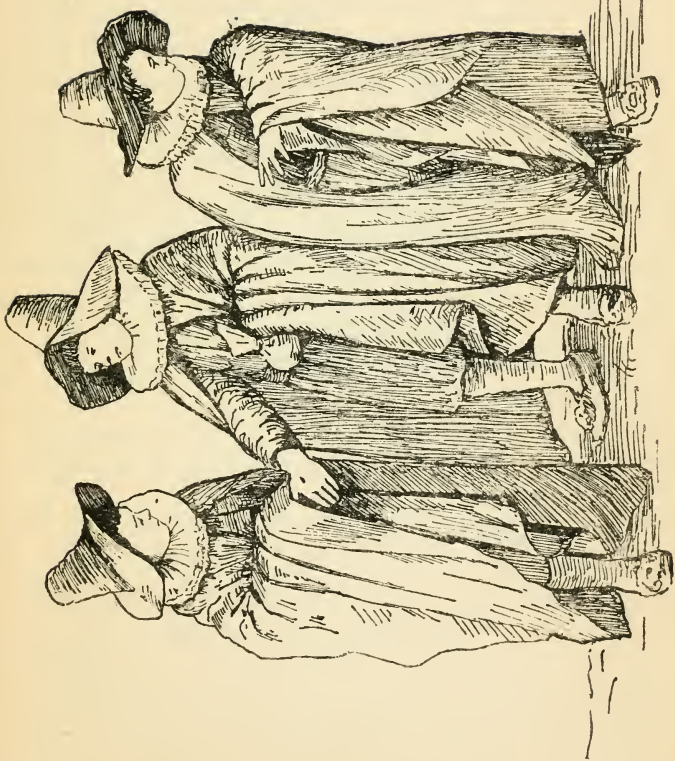
[He hides. All is still, then a faint tap, tap. Enter, on left, two CONSPIRATORS, muffled in black cloaks, hats drawn over eyes; one with a lantern.

First Conspirator. 'Tis here we were to meet.

Second Conspirator (*looks round anxiously*). Are we safe?

First Cons. (*takes him right*). Keep still and wait quietly.

Second Cons. But when shall we have the money which the King of Spain has sent for our enterprise?



First Cons. One of our people brings the money now.

Second Cons. I trust it will not be long before he comes, for I like not this place. Think you we are safe? 'Twere death if we were found. Shall I not search round us?

First Cons. You will make a sound if——Hark! Some one comes! Say the password!

Enter, on left, THIRD CONSPIRATOR in similar fashion; he carries money-bags.

First and Second Cons. "Doom of Elizabeth!"

Third Cons. (in low voice). "Victorious Spain."

First Cons. (to SECOND). All's well—'tis our friend. *(To THIRD.)* Well met.

Third Cons. Here am I.

Second Cons. Speak low! Speak low!

First Cons. We are well hid. 'Tis a secret door by which we came. Moreover, no man has dwelt in the house above for many a day.

Second Cons. They say a ghost walks here.

First Cons. Ghost! I care not so long as no spies walk here! *(Looks round carefully.)* Where's the money?

Second Cons. (eagerly). Aye, the money, the money! We risk not lives for nothing.

Third Cons. (opens cloak; FIRST and SECOND come close right and left of him). Here's money from the King of Spain. *(Draws out money-bags.)* He has not stinted us. *(To FIRST.)* Here, take your share.

First Cons. I will.

Second Cons. Give me my share of the gold.

Third Cons. There's more money for us later ; our work has but just begun. How can the Queen be got away ?

First Cons. Nay, I know not, for she is well guarded by the people, who love her well. The nobles of the realm are pledged for her safety.

Third Cons. Tush ! Men ever side with the strongest. England is poor, threatened by foes. She lacks ships ; food for sailors ; there's sickness in the fleet. The Spaniards will make light work of this ant-hill when they come. King Philip will present England to the Infanta as a little gift !

[*All laugh low ; faint sound heard.*]

Second Cons. (*clutches arm of THIRD*). What's that ? What's that ? Are we discovered ?

First Cons. 'Twas but a rat.

Second Cons. Or the ghost.

First Cons. Sheep-hearted ! (*To THIRD.*) How many ships hath the King of Spain in readiness to attack England ?

Third Cons. Some 130 ships, with many from Italy and Portugal. 'Tis the most splendid fleet that ever set sail. Well do the Spaniards call it the Invincible Armada. In my journeyings in and out of Spain I have seen them ; high as mountains stand the ships, so that the very waves seem wearied with their weight.

Second Cons. Marvellous !

Third Cons. Indeed, it surpasses all the undertakings of ancient or modern times. They will bring thousands of soldiers, with arms and food beyond reckoning. All the noblest families of Castile and Aragon have sent their sons upon this glorious enterprise. The Duke of Medina Sidonia commands, with all the great admirals of Spain—Don Pedro de Valdez, Orquendo, and the rest.

First Cons. When will they sail?

Third Cons. This summer—now; they are perhaps sailing while we speak. King Philip is roused at last. He will not let Elizabeth help his rebels in the Netherlands any more, or suffer Drake, that “Dragon of the Seas,” to plunder and burn the Spanish ships in their own harbours. Hark, something did stir!

First Cons. Truly I did hear a sound.

Second Cons. Oh, think you one of Burleigh’s spies is near? We are in peril! Let us fly! Quickly! Quickly! (*Rushes to door, left; others pull him back.*)

First Cons. Poltroon!

Third Cons. Fear not! Listen! The gay and cruel Elizabeth shall go. Soon shall her laughter be silent, and a better, even the King of Spain, shall reign in her stead. (*To FIRST.*) Remember you are pledged.

First Cons. I am—to the end.

Third Cons. (*to SECOND.*) And you likewise.

Second Cons. I am.

Third Cons. (*takes their hands*). The die is cast. We've thrown in our lot with the foes of England. Ours is the strong side! The game is ours! Friends, we shall not always be the poor cringing men we are now. We shall have honour and rich rewards when the banner of Castile waves over London!

First Cons. Aye, aye! the banner of Castile over London! Tread softly! [*All go out quietly, left.*]

Jock (*slowly comes from hiding-place*). They are gone! (*Looks carefully round.*) They are gone! Ha! ha! my masters. I know the way out of this rat-hole as well as you do. I have heard enough to content me. These brave tidings will I straight-way bring to my Lord Burleigh, and one day ye shall know, ye wretched hirelings and traitors, that your words are lies! [*Shakes his fist. Exit.*]

SCENE III

The Palace, Whitehall, London. A throne, Council table in front of it, in centre of stage. Chairs on right.

Enter, left, LORD BURLEIGH and SIR WALTER RALEIGH; they seat themselves, right, BURLEIGH next to throne, both facing audience.

Burleigh (*sighs wearily*). Full thirty years have I been her Grace's counsellor and we have encountered many a danger together. (*Points to*

papers.) There are fresh plots abroad; grievous perils. (*Points to throne.*) Any moment the Queen may be slain by poison or the traitor's dagger. It is but a little while since that some one hid in the garden to slay the Queen as she walked alone there at evening. Only her lion-like look—the look of old King Harry—daunted him, and he fled!

Raleigh. God save her Majesty from danger! She is the hope as she is the glory of this realm.

Burleigh. Alas! the death of the Queen of Scots has not secured us peace. Spain is set to compass our destruction. King Philip has spies throughout this land.

Raleigh. Everywhere among our own people we find receivers of the Spaniards' gold.

Burleigh (*shows papers*). Even to-day has news come to my ears through a spy who was present at the traitors' council. They plot the Queen's death and the immediate coming of the Spaniard!

Enter, left, SIR FRANCIS DRAKE.

Drake. The coming of the Spaniard, say you? 'Twill be the gladdest day of our lives when we see them come.

Raleigh. Truly, Sir Francis, and methinks that glad day is not far off. I have continually besought her Grace that we be well prepared. Alas, her Majesty spares gold. She has not paid the moneys she promised full often. Moreover, in one day, the royal temper changes a score of times!

Drake (*sits down right*). Her Grace's temper is variable as April with the shrewd winds of March and January mingled.

Burleigh (*turns to Drake*). This matter touches the safety of the realm.

Drake. Truly, my lord, and if the Armada which is now sailing against us makes a meeting with the Duke of Parma, it will go ill with us. I doubt the power of our General to protect us on the land.

Burleigh. Alas! the Queen will hear naught but that Leicester shall have the command on the land. I rejoice (*to DRAKE*) that we are better furnished on the sea. [DRAKE *bows to BURLEIGH*.

Raleigh. That is true. Hark you! Here comes her Grace! Room for the Queen!

[*All rise; then drop on one knee as QUEEN, attended by LADY-IN-WAITING and PAGE, enters left.*

Burleigh and Drake. The Queen!

Queen. My lords, we greet you well!

[*They rise from their knees; RALEIGH steps forward, offers to help QUEEN to mount her throne; she pushes him aside.*

Queen. Nay, we are not grown so old as to need the help of even your arm, my lord, in mounting to our throne.

[*Seats herself; LADY-IN-WAITING stands behind with PAGE left.*

Drake. Old! Age has no part in your Grace.

Raleigh. No part in our Fairie Queene, most glorious Gloriana! Would that my gentle friend Edmund Spenser were home from Ireland to sing your praise. Yet listen, Madam, to these faltering strains. [Steps forward and sings.

TUNE—"Come live with me and be my love."

The reddest rose will fade at last ;
 Fair lilies have their day,
 And buds which shine in morning light
 Ere eve must die away.

But thou, my Queen, untouched by time,
 Thy beauty bright doth stay,
 And when the world to darkness turns,
 It showeth no decay.

Take thou the glory of the stars,
 Unchanging thou as they—
 Take thou my heart's love for thine own,
 Which shall not pass away.

Queen. I like the song, Sir Walter. (RALEIGH bows.) Now, my lords, I will prove your words true, and that Time's hand has not rudely touched me, by dancing a measure before you to-night, and in a fairer gown than this poor rag. (*Displays her fine dress, turns and notices LADY-IN-WAITING wearing a handsome kirtle.*) You have a marvellous fine kirtle, good Moll. (*Rises, comes in front of table.*)

I will try it on. (LADY-IN-WAITING *takes off kirtle*, QUEEN *holds it against her own dress*.) Think you my new-fancied border becomes me? Is it not much too short and ill-becoming?

Lady-in-Waiting. Craving your Grace's pardon, it is verily much too short for your Majesty.

Queen. I'll not contradict you, Moll! but if it becomes not me as being too short, it shall never become you as being too fine, good Mistress Mary!
[*Flings kirtle to back of stage*.]

Lady-in-Waiting (*aside*). Alas, I shall not dare to wear my brave kirtle any more.

Queen (*sits down again*). My lords, I rejoice to see you here! Sir Francis Drake, we greet you well.

Drake (*bows*). Your Majesty's faithful servant.

Queen (*to BURLEIGH*). My Lord Burleigh, my most grave counsellor! Hi! Sir Spirit! Your cloak is awry!
[*Pulls his cloak; BURLEIGH quietly hitches up cloak*.]

Queen. Nay, sit, my lord. We know you suffer from the gout, and it is with your head and not your legs we would have you serve us.

Burleigh (*bows and sits down*). I thank your Highness. (*Coughs*.) With your leave, we must discuss grave matters. We speak of the many plots against your Grace. Your death would bring civil war.

Queen. My death! Tut! tut! I shall not die so soon. But if I did, and the King of Spain gave you a new ruler, I warrant, my lords, all your heads would

soon be flying. My ghost would come back and laugh at the gay scene ! (*Laughs, and then is grave again.*) Yet hearken ! For ourselves we have no fear ; but, seeing that our safety touches the good of our people, I will listen to your counsels. For myself, I am content, if need be, to die, and have no fear so to do. This will I say, England may have a greater, but never a more loving sovereign than Elizabeth.

Raleigh. And never sovereign more loving subjects.

Queen (smiles). I thank you. I will find means to mend your fortunes, my fond Walter. You have given us much. The tobacco herb is your gift, and the strange root of the potato ; you promise us gold from the treasuries of the New World.

[*RALEIGH kneels ; QUEEN pats him on the head ; he offers her a chain.*

Raleigh. Wear this, my Queen, as pledge of your poor servant's faith. [*Rises.*

Queen. That will I. (*Puts on chain.*) It pleases me. I'll wear it for your sake. (*To DRAKE.*) Nay, frown not, Sir Francis, but stand at my right hand. What would you counsel us ?

Drake (comes and puts hand on Council table). Madam, the time presses. A terrible danger threatens us now. Our spies assure us that the Spanish King is at last ready, and that his Armada will sail immediately. It is perhaps coming now while we speak. It is a fleet such as the world has not seen before.

It comes to attack us. Pray Heaven we be ready!
Let us not lose time!

Queen. Lose time?

Raleigh (*steps forward*). Truly, your Grace, delay is perilous. Time flies and will not return. Your Highness, the wings of man's life are plumed with the feathers of death!

Queen. A fair saying.

Drake. Nay, Madam, delay and hesitate no longer! Stop King Philip now, and stop him ever. Give me leave, and I will fly once more into the harbour at Cadiz and burn some of the ships if they have not already sailed.

Queen (*taps on table thoughtfully*). Truly King Philip's friends have stirred up my subjects, and the rebellions cost me more gold than ever you, Sir Francis, wrenched from the Spaniards. But I'll have no open war unless I be forced thereto by my enemies.

Drake. I did but singe King Philip's beard. I entreat I may finish my work and break the Armada before it comes in its full strength.

Queen. I say I will have no provoking of war. You shall not stir without my orders!

[*Bangs her fists on table.*]

Drake (*stamps his foot*). Pray Heaven you be not ruined! Madam, at least let us be prepared!

Queen. Prepared! Have I not given my dockyards to Hawkins, who will not suffer a beam or spar to be unready?

Raleigh. Truly, but——

Queen (*angrily to RALEIGH*). Silence! I have made Howard of Effingham my Lord High Admiral, and you, Sir Francis Drake—compasser of the world—Vice-Admiral.

Drake (*bows*). Your Grace, it was well done. But we must have men to serve under us: food to feed them, food in reserve; powder and shot. For this we must have money.

Burleigh. Your Majesty, war and sparing suit not together.

Queen. War and the makers of war suit well enough. I see you will all join with Drake to drag me into fighting.

Burleigh. We have sought peace and ensued it, but an end is come now to peaceful courses.

Drake. Your Highness's enemies are many.

Raleigh (*spreads his hands*). We have the lords of half the earth coming against us.

Burleigh. Truly.

Queen. Philip will turn back at the last.

Drake. That he will not! His heart is fixed on conquering England. He has commanded the Duke of Parma to have an army ready in Holland to come over as soon as the Duke of Medina Sidonia and his Armada land here. (*Shows a map.*) Look, Madam, on this chart, how easily they——

Queen (*interrupts; pushes away map*). I know! I know!

Drake. In my poor opinion we ought to have a sharp eye upon the Duke of Parma, lest they all come upon us in the same hour.

Burleigh. If so, I tremble for the realm, which will be at once overwhelmed with armed men.

Queen (impatiently). All this I have heard before, but the Spaniard tarries. I can ill spare the treasure (*grasps money-bags on table*) which shall perhaps be poured out in vain preparations.

Drake. Not vain, your Highness. Our ships made after Hawkins' plan are light and swift, and will do well against the heavy Spanish galleons. But we must have more.

Queen. More? What have we?

Drake. Your Grace knows your best ships, like the *Triumph*, the *Victory*, *Elizabeth Jonas*, the *Bear*. London, Southampton, and the coast towns will send ships; the Lord High Admiral—

Raleigh. He will command in the *Ark Raleigh* which I have built.

Drake. He will. My kinsman Hawkins has ships. The West Country men will come out after my flag; I can lead a squadron. Yet this is little indeed beside that which attacks us.

Queen. You speak, Sir Francis, as a bold and faithful servant. We shall not fail in courage either, if need be. For the meanwhile we will reserve our answer—

Drake. But, Madam—

Queen (angrily). Listen! I now command you to

do naught to provoke war, seeing that upon your own showing, we are in so poor a plight.

Drake. You will not treat for peace unarmed.

Queen (*rises, furious*). I will treat or not treat for peace as I will and no other way. He who dares to disobey me, I will send to the Tower—as I am King Harry's daughter!

[*Sweeps to door, left, followed by* LADY-IN-WAITING *and* PAGE; BURLEIGH *rises*; DRAKE *and* RALEIGH *rush after* QUEEN.

Drake. Listen, your Highness!

Raleigh (*kneels; clasps his hands*). I beseech your Majesty!

Burleigh (*holds out his hands*). I entreat!

[*Sinks down on chair*; QUEEN *goes out, left, with* LADY *and* PAGE.

Raleigh (*rises, stamps his foot*). Intolerable! and again I say, intolerable! (*Turns on* BURLEIGH.) Alas, my lord, cannot you move the Queen to see her necessity? These delays will ruin her. Men say you can do more with her Grace in one hour than seven others can in a year.

Burleigh (*rises wearily*). I will, Sir Walter. I am old, very old, and weary of strife. I have weathered storms full often. Yet I will urge this matter upon her to the uttermost. I would rather go to the Tower than that the neglect of this present time should imperil her Majesty and this country. (*To* RALEIGH.) Give me your arm; I have grown stiff

and tired in the Queen's service. (*Takes RALEIGH'S arm.*) Help me to the door. I will speak roundly with her Highness. Ah, me! Ah, me!

[*RALEIGH leads BURLEIGH to door, left; exit BURLEIGH, sighing deeply; DRAKE crosses to right of stage; RALEIGH turns to DRAKE, shrugs his shoulders.*

Raleigh. Here's tribulation.

Drake. Courage! The wind will veer round before long. At present it blows north-east by east! We must continue to set things in readiness that all be prepared at the changing of her Grace's humour. I will go straight to Plymouth. You follow me there. (*Takes RALEIGH'S hand.*) Long have we waited for this hour which is now close at hand, when we can once and for all do open battle with the Spaniard and against his whole might.

Raleigh (*raises his left hand*). Come Spain—come the whole world, and we will beat them back!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I

*Friday morning, July 29, 1588. The Hoe
at Plymouth*

Enter, left, SIR FRANCIS DRAKE and SIR WALTER RALEIGH, who play bowls. They stand right, RALEIGH towards centre of stage, and roll balls to left.

Drake. The wind is rising; there will be more storm anon. *[Looks towards audience.*

Raleigh. There was a tempest last night such as few remember at this season of the year.

Drake. But our good ships are as safe out in the Channel as here in Plymouth Sound.

Raleigh. Look out across the sea there! *(Points.)* My thoughts go westward—Westward Ho! The New World is there, and we must plant New Englands, Sir Francis.

Drake. Then must we win the sea.

Raleigh. One day we shall. Look! the sun breaks forth as a fair omen, and the waves dance merrily as our hearts. I'll throw again.

[Throws ball.

Drake. That was well thrown.

Raleigh. Truly it was so. If life is a game, would I might reach my goal as easily! Sometimes

(takes DRAKE'S arm) I think that I am Fortune's tennis ball, which she will throw where she likes.

Drake. She has sent you up high at present, Sir Walter. The Queen has you much in favour since the laying of your mantle at her Grace's feet that muddy morning.

Raleigh (laughs, shakes his cloak). Ha, ha! I said that because her royal foot had trod upon it the cloak should never be brushed again. Her Highness did commend the saying. [Laughs.]

Drake (slaps him on the shoulder). By my troth, you're a bold swaggerer, Raleigh. 'Tis mine to throw. Now for the mark! (Throws.) That rolls well; it should strike. It has verily! (They walk to left.) Even so would I hit the Spaniard. (They walk to right again.) Nay, I will lay on again!

[Throws and sends his opponent's ball away.]

Raleigh. Now, by my life, they are all scattered.

[Picks up a ball.]

Drake. Scattered they are! I'll throw once more—What's this?

[Looks up; enter on left, in haste, WILL OF BABBICOMBE.]

Raleigh (drops ball; puts hand on sword). What! have the Spanish ships been sighted?

Will (breathless). They be here! (Waves his arms.) They be here! The Spaniard be coom, Sir Francis! Tom Fleming—he's a zealous captain of these coasts—hath spied the Spanish fleet out yander, loike a great crescent seven moiles woide.

Drake. Where?

Will. They be makking for the Lizard! O've zent the news to the Lord Admiral.

Drake. 'Tis well. The Lord Admiral will rejoice.

Raleigh. Truly he will. At last. (*Clasps his hands.*) At last! (*To WILL.*) Here, fellow, take this for thy good news. (*Gives him money.*) Now, send through the land the tidings which will put joy into every true man's heart.

Drake. Ere dusk, the beacons must be lit upon the hills throughout the country and along the coast—Hastings, Rye, Folkestone, Dover——

Raleigh. They'll know the news in London before night!

Will. Oi tell ye, Sir Francis, the men are saddling their horses in hot haste. From Bideford, Barnstaple, Tavistock, Taunton, and many a town, they gallop to the coasts and besache you that they may join your fleet. Verily, Sir Francis, oi think men would embark in any rude cask if they moight be led by ye.

Drake. We will lead them. The hour has come for open battle.

Enter, left, soldiers and CITIZENS: JOCK, AP THOMAS, DICKON, NAN, ALICE on left. They rush on, and turn, facing audience. DRAKE stands centre, RALEIGH and WILL on left.

Citizens, &c. Open battle! To arms! To arms! The Spaniard's here!

Will. Long loife to Queen, the Lord High Admiral! Long loife to Sir Francis Drake! (*Exit WILL waving his cap, followed by CITIZENS, &c., shouting: Long life to Sir Francis Drake!*)

Raleigh (to DRAKE). Shall we not go and arm ourselves at once?

Drake. Nay, we throw again.

Raleigh. Throw again! Why, the balls are clean rolled away. Let us come! Let us come!

[*Exit RALEIGH, left.*]

Drake. I'll throw once more. Wherefore not? (*Throws ball; turns to audience.*) There's time to finish the game of bowls and then to beat the King of Spain! [*Exit.*]

INTERLUDE

Scene Same

Enter, left, WILL, NAN, ALICE, JOCK, who stand in a row facing the audience.

Will. They've lit the beacon now in Plymouth town,

And onward has the glaring war-flame sped.

Nan. The call to arms it goeth up and down,
From Lizard Point along to Beachy Head;
O'er Dover Castle is a bright beam shed.

Alice. To arms arise the merry men of Kent;
On Surrey's heath the fire is blazing red.

Jock. In London night shall not in sleep be spent.

All. The Spaniard's come! And wide the word
is sent!

Will. Now do the horse and rider gallop forth
By town and hamlet all the wakeful night.

Nan. The news is bounding onward to the north !

Alice. High o'er the plain shines bravely Lincoln's
light ;

On York and Durham, beacons soon are
bright,

And on the rocks of Peak and Wrekin drear.

Jock. Crownèd with fire Welsh mountains come
in sight.

All. From Michael's Mount to Carlisle doth
appear

In flames the tidings that the Spaniard's here.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

The Camp at Tilbury.

*Enter, left, JOCK, takes his place centre, standing
stiff, sword in hand.*

Jock. Now steady, most stout-hearted citizens !

Enter, left, NAN and ALICE with baskets.

Alice. And so this is the Camp at Tilbury ?

Jock. Aye, this is the Camp, to which come
valiant soldiers from all parts of her Grace's
kingdom. If the Spaniards come, we are prepared
to defend London to the uttermost.

Alice. Ye talk bravely !

Jock. I tell you the Duke of Medina Sidonia will

cross my dead body when he enters the house of John Burwood, herb merchant of Bucklersbury.

Nan. Good John Burwood, how long hast thou stood stiff like that?

Jock. Since dawn, dawn of day.

Nan. Hast stood there since dawn and hast thou eaten nothing?

Jock. But little, good Mistress Nan. I had maybe a trifle: a loaf of bread, perchance; some cheese, a drink of whey; some beer; there was a bit of roast meat I bought in the market, too; aye—and three eggs and some strawberries that an honest man from Maidstone gave me—but that was hours and hours ago!

Nan. Master Burwood, thou'lt die of hunger. Friend Jock, take a morsel (*opens basket*) of this bread.

Alice. Eat, good friend.

Nan. The cheese is of the best. (*Hands him cup, into which she pours milk.*) Drink this milk; thou'lt fall a-fainting an' thou take not something.

Jock (*sadly*). Maybe I shall, but this is no time for eating and revelling when we have King Philip at our very doors!

Nan. The more reason ye should eat and fill yourself with good courage and good victuals. You'll not get the one without the other, or my name's not Nan Hanway!

Jock. Mistress Hanway, I'll listen to thee.

Friends, you'll persuade me to take a mouthful—a mere morsel. True, we must eat to fight. I have stood so long that I am stiff. (*Stretches himself.*) My trusty sword——

Alice. I'll hold thy sword.

Jock (*hands ALICE sword*). Gently, good Mistress Alice Bridgewater, gently. The blade is sharp. (*Takes food from NAN and looks into her basket.*) This cheese is good. (*Sticks out his foot.*) Oh, my foot is stiffened with standing! I can't feel it!

Alice. Stamp thy foot! Stamp, John Burwood; that will waken thy foot.

[*JOCK stamps his foot and goes on eating.*

Nan. Aye, stamp and eat, good friend. Eat and spare not. It will strengthen thy heart. Each mouthful is destruction to King Philip.

Jock. It is. Give me yet another piece of thy cheese, Mistress Nan. (*Looks in basket, starts and looks up.*) Who's this?

Enter, left, AP THOMAS, a Welshman; JOCK, swallowing hastily, takes sword; stands stiff again.

Jock. Steady! most stout-hearted citizens! (*To AP THOMAS.*) Who art thou, light-footed? Where dost thou come from?

Ap Thomas. From Fales. Ap Thomas iss my name. I am come to fight the farry fierce Spaniards.

Jock. Fall in, son of the leek and the mountains, and join my Lord of Leicester's army gathered

here at Tilbury. [AP THOMAS *stands a little behind*
 JOCK; *draws sword and examines the blade.*

Enter, left, DICKON, a Derbyshire man.

And who art thou, long arms?

Dickon. I cum from Durbyshire. Aye, Durbyshire bred, they say, is long i'th' arm and thick i'th' head. But I'm no thick i'th' head. I never saw a Spaniard, but I'm cum to fight 'im.

Jock. Yes, fight him! That's what you've got to do. Now, stand fast and grip your swords. Here's another.

Enter, left, WILL OF BABBICOMBE, with barrel under his arm.

Jock. Ho! Babbicombe Will! Ho! What dost thou here?

Will. Oi'm come from Devon on an arrand of the Admiral. (*Points to barrel.*) Powder, my boys! Powder! (*Looks round.*) So, ye be mustering for battle? But ye land folks knows nart of the Spani-urds. Wey Devon sailors do; wey've met an in the Indies. Wey knows his ways and his prisons, wey do! No man forgets the Spani-urds' prisons!

Jock. Scorn to Spaniards! Stand fast!

Alice. Now will the Queen herself come to the Camp?

Jock. I stand not here to answer vain questions, but to fight and keep order. See my sword!

Will. 'Tis a trusty blade.

Jock. It is. Well, I tell you that her most gracious noble Highness would have taken the lead in the battle herself if my Lord of Leicester and we of the army had not begged her to stay in safety at Havering. But she comes to see her troops to-day.

Alice. She is ever foremost in the hour of danger. (*To WILL.*) Where is the dread Armada now?

Will. The most gallant Sir Francis Drake doth pursue it in the Channel, zo that the Duke of Zidonia does not make a meeting with the Duke of Parma. Else they would land together and march on London.

Jock. March on London! If they do, then we are ready!

Dickon. Aye, we're ready!

Jock (*slaps his chest*). Ready! Come on, ye traitors! Come on, proud despots of the world!

Will. The Spani-urd shall not close the high-ways of the zea!

Dickon. Aye, we'll keep our own.

Jock (*slaps DICKON on shoulder*). That we will, my merry man o' the Midlands! That we will! Hark! The trumpets sound afar! Listen! The folks are shouting; 'tis the Queen——

Dickon and Ap Thomas. The Queen?

Jock. Yea—her Grace is coming. Look!

[*Holds DICKON'S head in direction of QUEEN.*]

Dickon. Aye, aye; she's there. Aye, but she's bravely dressed!

Jock. She comes in state. Her Highness comes with Lord Hunsdon's guard. Here—make room! Make room! Room for the Queen! (*Bustles about; pushes others back.*) Room!

Enter, left, QUEEN, LADY-IN-WAITING, SIR WALTER RALEIGH and PAGE.

All. God save your Grace!

Nan (*aside*). Age has thinned her cheeks, but she smiles gaily. (*Curtseys and says aloud*) God keep your Grace!

Queen (*to NAN*). Thanks, my wench. (*Smiles and lifts her hand.*) Thank you all, good people.

Jock (*steps forward*). We rejoice—

Raleigh (*sternly*). Silence for the Queen!

Jock (*roars*). Silence!

Raleigh (*to QUEEN*). Your Majesty's soldiers are gathered here from the ends of your kingdom; from Cornwall to Berwick have they come to fight the Spaniards if they should land, and to protect your Grace from traitors who for gold would betray you into the hands of your enemies.

Queen. I will speak to my soldiers.

Raleigh. Please you to turn your eyes on those who listen afar off. I will watch closely, lest any treasonable person be lurking near.

Queen (*lifts her hand again; speaks towards audience, where the most of her soldiers are supposed to*

be gathered). My loving people! We have been asked by some that are careful of our safety to heed how we trust ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treason, but I do not desire to live if I am to distrust my faithful and loving people. I have the heart of a king—and of a King of England, too; and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm! I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder. I doubt not that, by your obedience to my general and your valour in battle, we shall shortly have a famous victory over these enemies of my God, my Kingdom, and my People!

[Exeunt, shouting "God save the Queen."]

SCENE III

The same scene.

Enter, left, NAN and ALICE; they stand right.

Enter JOCK in haste from left.

Nan and Alice. What news, what news, what news of the fight?

Jock. News of the fight? The Spaniards have come in all their strength. All their ships, *San Philip, San Martin, San this and that and t'other.* All their mightiest men; Medina Sidonia, de Valdez, dons and princes, soldiers, sailors, enough to frighten all the fiends!

Nan. Heaven save us!

Alice. Aye, indeed, look at the skies! They're black as night. I weep for our ships and for our men! (*Hides her face in her hands.*) Alas, alas!

Jock. Weep not! Weep not! Our small boats can live in rough seas; they move swifter than the heavy Spanish galleons. The storm fights for us. Sir Francis Drake and a good south-west wind are sweeping the Channel.

Nan. Maybe, we'll win.

Jock. If we do—if we do win through—by my faith, men will long remember this day!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III

SCENE I

The Palace, Whitehall, London.

Enter, left, QUEEN, followed by LADY-IN-WAITING, PAGE, LORD BURLEIGH, SIR WALTER RALEIGH, JOCK, NAN, and ALICE. QUEEN seats herself on throne in centre, sceptre and orb in her hands; LADY-IN-WAITING, PAGE, and RALEIGH on left; BURLEIGH on right. JOCK, NAN, and ALICE behind BURLEIGH. All standing, except QUEEN and BURLEIGH.

Burleigh (*rises and bows to QUEEN*). A great victory, your Majesty!

Raleigh. Truly my ears are deaf with the firing of pieces and ringing of bells. Hark! Ding, ding, dong, bell, Ding, ding, dong, bell; from Deptford to Westminster they make the old belfries shake!

Queen. My people do rejoice at our preservation. (*To BURLEIGH*.) What says Sir Francis of our scattered foes?

Burleigh (*shows a letter*). A messenger from Sir Francis Drake is lately come. May it please your Highness to hear him?

Enter, left, WILL OF BABBICOMBE.

Queen. Bring him forward. (*WILL bows and kneels.*) What is his message?

Will (*rises*). Sir Francis Drake doth zay that he doubts not boi the grace of Heaven so to handle the matter with the Duke of Zidonia as he shall wish himself at St. Mary Port among his orange trees! [*All laugh.*]

Queen. Among his orange trees! (*To WILL*.) Thou't a Devon lad?

Will. So oi be.

Queen. Our brave sailors in the West Country have done us good service. (*WILL bows low; steps back.*) What Drake hath not already done, methinks the tempests will soon accomplish.

Will. Truly, your Grace, for there be, day and noight, a starm in the North Zea that shakes heaven and earth.

Burleigh. The Spaniards go before it, thinking to round the Cape of Scotland and find water, and repairing of their galleons on the western coasts.

Raleigh. Even here, the heavens are black and the wind roars. The heavy ships of Spain will fare sorrily.

Burleigh. Your Grace has indeed seen marvels from your youth to now, near on three-score years.

Queen (*sharply*). You may spare your arithmetic, my lord, for those like yourself, whom it suiteth! Not so old! Not so old yet!

Raleigh. Nay, never, never! unfading Gloriana!

All. Unfading Gloriana!

Queen. My good people—But, see you, here comes Sir Francis himself.

Enter, left, SIR FRANCIS DRAKE.

Queen. What news of the foe, Sir Francis?

Drake (*bows and laughs*). Your Highness, in Spain 'tis reported that their Armada has won a great victory——

Queen. A great victory? A good jest!

Drake. Truly, for soon shall it be shown and (*to RALEIGH*) we will declare it, that this mighty fleet of 140 sail has been scattered by 30 of her Majesty's own ships of war.

Raleigh. Marvellous! marvellous!

Drake. And we have shuffled this invincible navy from Cornwall to Portland, where the Spaniards shamefully left Don Pedro de Valdez with his mighty ship; then, from Portland to Calais, where they lost Hugh de Monçado and his galleys; from Calais they were chased by squibs from their anchors.

Raleigh. It was by her Majesty's own most excellent counsel that the fire-ships were sent amongst them.

Drake (*bows*). We did take the fire-ships as a most prudent device. Never did anything please me more than to see the enemy flying with a southerly wind to the northward; as the Lord Admiral hath told you, though we had no powder nor shot and no food, we did put on a brag countenance and pursued as long as we were able.

Queen. You did well.

Drake. Your Highness, the winds and the waves have fought for us too. The ships are crushed on the rocks, and the noble dons in their velvet and jewels are robbed and slain by the wild islanders. Only a few are escaped to Spain, besides those who are in your Majesty's hands, to do with as your princely wisdom doth ordain.

Queen. What prisoners have you?

Drake. Foremost is Don Pedro de Valdez, leader of the Andalusian Squadron, a man of great estimation with the King of Spain. The Don is here.

Queen. Bring him hither.

Enter, left, DON PEDRO DE VALDEZ.

Drake (brings him forward). The leader of the Andalusian Squadron, Madam. They were a valiant foe, prepared to sell their lives with blows.

Queen (eyes DE VALDEZ carefully). Now, by my troth, 'tis a pity that an enemy's soul should be so nobly lodged. He is magnificent! (*To lady.*) See you, wench, they wear the sleeves slashed in Spain, and 'tis a brave fashion. (*To DE VALDEZ.*) Your ransom, my lord, must be great to be worthy of your nobleness.

De Valdez (haughtily). A goodly ransom can I promise you. I only desire now to be free from the presence of these base creatures. (*Looks round him.*) As for our defeat, his Majesty sent us to fight men and not the tempests.

Queen. We will send our prisoners back to recount the worthy achievement of their invincible and dreadful navy, and to tell King Philip another tale from that he looked to hear.

Drake. Yea, verily; for they did not in all their sailing round England so much as sink or take one ship, bark, pinnace or cockboat of ours, or even burn as much as one sheepcote in this land.

Queen. Ye have done your work well, and the storm has saved us from our enemies. "He blew with His winds and they were scattered," so shall it be remembered for ever. Most loving thanks I give to my Lord High Admiral and to you, Sir Francis Drake.

Drake (bows). I am right thankful that your Grace made choice of me to be actor in so great a cause.

Queen. And what shall we give to you, Sir Walter, and to all our brave and loving subjects who have sent ships or imperilled their lives in our service to-day?

Raleigh (kneels). I dare not say. Whatever you give, little or great, I thank your Majesty. (*Rises.*) I would fain see a medal struck which should bear the words: "It was done by a woman" —for it is to her Grace that our eyes turn in this the hour of victory.

All. God save Queen Elizabeth!

Raleigh. And verily this day's work shall be spoken of and the fruits thereof enjoyed in times

which are far off. For now is the might of Spain broken ; now is the New World open before us, and the ocean remains as the inheritance of the people of our land.

[*All sing.*

Song.

TUNE—*Handel's "Scipio March."*

Hail ! mighty Queen !

Before whose throne we bow
And twine the victor's laurel
To set upon thy brow.

Around thy throne attendant

Thy servants here are found ;
Their names like blast of trumpet
To far-off times shall sound.

Hail ! mighty Queen !

Hail ! great in war and peace !
Move down to distant ages
With praise that shall not cease.

[*Exeunt in procession.*

Historical Plays for Children

By AMICE MACDONELL

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

PRODUCED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
LEAGUE OF THE EMPIRE

Crown 8vo, paper Covers, **6d.** each net
The First Series in one Vol., Cloth, **2s. 6d.** net

Alfred the Great.
The Armada.
Robin Hood.
The Enterprise of the
“Magflower.” } FIRST SERIES.

Saxon and Norman.
Caedmon.
The Burghers of Calais.
The Good Queen. } *In One Book.* } SECOND SERIES.

The Crusaders.
Magna Carta. }
Edward III. } *In One Book.*

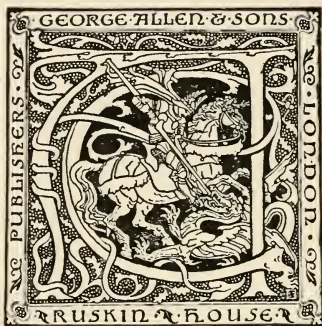
St. George. } *In One Book.* } THIRD SERIES.
Beowulf. }

The Way of the Heart.

Others to follow.

LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & CO., LTD.

THE ENTERPRISE OF THE
“MAYFLOWER”



STAGE DIRECTIONS

FOR this play it is an advantage to have two openings on to the stage, right and left.

No footlights or proscenium curtain are necessary; two of the children, in their acting clothes, can come on the stage after the Prologue and between the scenes and arrange chairs, tables, &c., in the view of the audience.

No scenery is required. Localities may be indicated by placards, as, "William Brewster's House in England," "On Board the *Mayflower*," &c.

Curtains of some plain colour—green serge or brown holland, for instance—make a good, conventional background for all the scenes. A garland of evergreen, caught up at regular intervals, can be hung across the background curtains.

For the outdoor scenes in New England there should be two large bushes of greenery. If nothing large enough can be had in a pot, two wooden chairs completely covered with boughs and ivy will make good bushes.

PROPERTIES

ACT I

SCENE I.—"WILLIAM BREWSTER'S HOUSE IN ENGLAND."
A chest, two chairs, table, jug, cup.

ACT II

SCENE I.—"THE WHARF, SOUTHAMPTON." Pilgrims' bundles, baskets of bread, fruit, &c. Sack of meal, pen and papers, barrels.

SCENE II.—“ON BOARD THE ‘MAYFLOWER’ AT POINT OF DEPARTURE.” Pilgrims’ bundles, letter.

SCENE III.—“ON BOARD THE ‘MAYFLOWER’ AT SEA.” Table, paper, ink and pens.

SCENE IV.—“THE COAST OF AMERICA.” Bushes, sticks, and boughs on the ground.

ACT III

SCENE I.—The same; inside a hut. Two chairs, table, jug, cup, bricks to represent a fireplace, pot, knife, bread.

SCENE II.—“NEW PLYMOUTH.” Maize seed.

ACT IV

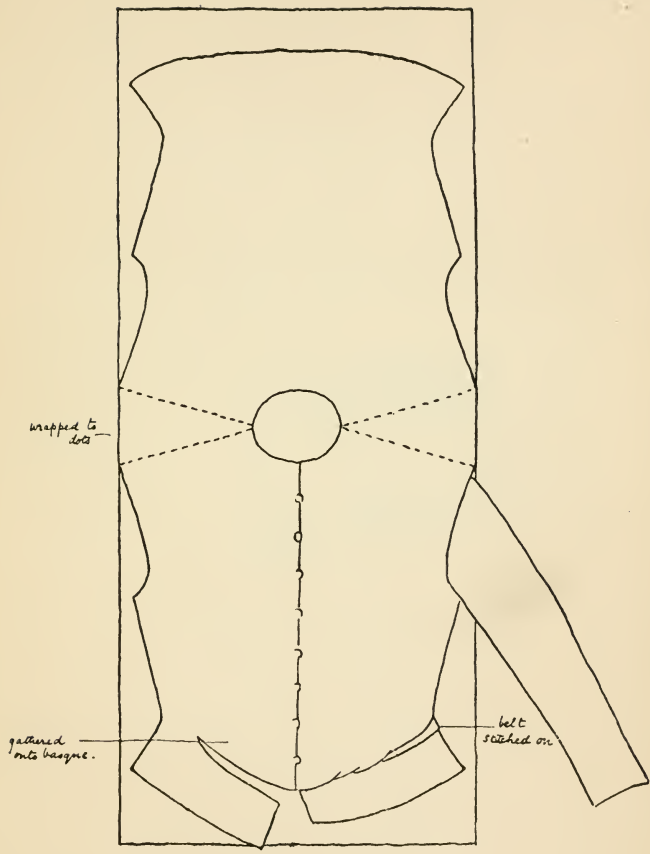
SCENE I.—The same; out of doors. Table, bread, fruit, jugs, cups, dishes, &c., for a feast. Branches and flowers, sheaf of corn, basket of fruit.

The number of pilgrims, boys or girls can be increased, or one actor could take two parts.

The pilgrims’ dress is a simple form of the costume of the early seventeenth century. It is very effective, and should not be difficult or expensive to make. Each actor could be dressed, on a rough average, for about 3s., exclusive of shoes and stockings.

With regard to the whole effect, the proportion of colours should be kept even, full colours and not “art” shades chosen; plenty of black used; white can be reserved for collars, cuffs, ruffs, and for a few of the costumes.

For dress materials, sateen, in various colours, at 4½d. or 6½d. a yard is good. “Horticultural Sheeting,” 50 inches wide, 1s. a yard (Messrs. Cookson, Wellington



wrapped to dots

gathered onto basque.

belt stitched on

Mills, Manchester), is very useful for the full skirts and thick coats of the pilgrims, and can be easily dyed with Maypole soap. House flannel at $4\frac{3}{4}$ d. a yard is also a good material for coats, &c.

The boys' "Steeple" hats can be made of carpet-felt.

For the boys, the principal measurements are: chest, waist, neck to waist, waist to knee, arm, head.

For the girls: bust, waist, neck to waist, waist to ankle, arm, head.

The boys wear a short coat with long tight sleeves. There is either a round puff, or else the shoulder projecting over the top of the sleeve. Probably the whole coat, with the exception of the sleeves, was made in one piece; the fold on either side of the neck opening being turned in, and so giving the long, overhanging appearance of the shoulder seen in portraits of the time. There is a "basque" round the coat, which is longer in front than behind, often slightly pouched in front. The knickerbockers are plain and rather full. To minimize undressing, and to give the bulky appearance of the period, the boys can wear these over their own knickerbockers. The hats are tall and tapering, of the "Guy Fawkes" type.

The girls wear a wide, plain skirt to the ankle. It should be very full round the waist, and can be, in some cases, slightly stuffed out behind and on the hips with a small semi-circular cushion or farthingale tied round the waist under the dress. The tight bodice fastens down the front, and sometimes has a "basque" like that of the boys' coats. The caps are close-fitting. Both caps and aprons can be coloured. In the outdoor scenes, a kerchief or hood is often worn over the cap. Butterick's patterns of coats and bodices for boys and girls can be used, with modifications of sleeves, &c.

The children can wear their ordinary shoes, with large

rosettes, to match the clothes, fastened with safety-pins on to the shoelaces. But very cheap white canvas shoes can be had and painted with Maypole soap or Dolly dyes. White stockings at 4½d. a pair can be dyed likewise.

A few of the pilgrims can have ruffs, which are made of strips of coarse muslin or lino, about 4½ yards long and 6 inches wide, pleated and fastened on to a band round the neck, every fold being stitched in front. They must all have cuffs, and most of them, wide Puritan collars.

The Indians should wear close brown tunics and stockings, moccasins if possible, and fur rugs over the shoulders. Feathers for their headgear can be got at a poulterer's.

A red preparation, which does not hurt the skin, can be had at theatrical shops. Stick on long strands of black thread or crape hair (6d. a yard at Clarkson's, 41 & 43 Wardour Street, W.) to represent their straight black hair.

For the last scene, the corn chandler will make an effective sheaf of straw for about 1s. Indian corn heads can be imitated by rolls of thick paper covered with orange sateen.

Pictures of costumes are to be found in J. R. Green's "Short History of the English People," vol. iii., in S. R. Gardiner's "Outline of English History. A contemporary Dutch picture, giving some idea of the pilgrims' dress, was reproduced in an article called "The Pilgrim Fathers" in the *Sunday Strand*, July 1902.

Songs 1, 2, 4, are to well-known tunes in "Pan Pipes" (Routledge, 3s. 6d.). Song 3 is No. 197 in "Hymns Ancient and Modern." Song 5 is in "Songs of the British Islands" (W. H. Hadow, Curwen, 2s. 6d.) and many collections.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

MASTER WILLIAM BREWSTER.

„ WILLIAM BRADFORD.

„ JOHN CARVER.

„ JOHN ALDEN.

„ JOHN ROBINSON.

„ ROBERT CUSHMAN.

„ JOHN BILLINGTON.

CAPTAIN MILES STANDISH.

AN OFFICER.

SAMOSET, an Indian.

KING MASSASOIT, an Indian.

MISTRESS MARY BREWSTER, wife to William Brewster.

„ PRISCILLA MULLINS.

„ ELLEN BILLINGTON, wife to John Billington.

ACT I

SCENE I.—1608. William Brewster's house at Scrooby.

ACT II

SCENE I.—August 1620. The wharf, Southampton.

SCENE II.—September. On board the *Mayflower* at Plymouth.

SCENE III.—November. On board the *Mayflower* near the coast of America.

SCENE IV.—The coast of America.

ACT III

SCENE I.—Spring, 1621. The coast of America. Inside a hut.

SCENE II.—Spring. New Plymouth.

ACT IV

SCENE I.—Autumn, 1621. New Plymouth.

The voyage of the *Mayflower* from Plymouth to Cape Cod was 6/16 September—11/21 November 1620.

THE ENTERPRISE OF THE “MAYFLOWER”

PROLOGUE

Spoken by WILLIAM BRADFORD

WELCOME to all! We show the story of how, nearly three hundred years ago, when this country was not so happy as it is now, some people driven by persecution out of England went on a long and dangerous voyage in a ship called the *Mayflower*, and made for themselves a home across the Atlantic Ocean.

After they had come near to drowning and starvation, and had encountered savages on a desolate coast, these adventurers finally found much happiness; and our play ends well and with a wedding.

The enterprise which we enact for you was in measure the beginning of America. We have a marvellous history to set forth, so you must pardon our poor acting and simple stage, on the which we cannot hope to show the ocean or the desert, nor yet the doings of our pilgrims as they should be.

We will do our best; and pray you will all be contented.

ACT I

SCENE I

Beginning of 1608.

WILLIAM BREWSTER'S house at Scrooby in Nottinghamshire. An entrance on left, table opposite with jug and cup. Two chairs. Chest at back of stage.

Enter WILLIAM BREWSTER and MARY BREWSTER.

William Brewster. The sum of our sorrows grows. We, who will not do the King's bidding, and go to what we reckon an unrighteous church, have our houses watched day and night or are straightway clapped into prison.

Mary Brewster. We foresaw that we must suffer much for conscience' sake, but we looked not for afflictions as sharp as these which daily increase upon us.

[Noise heard outside.

William Brewster. Hark! Beware! Some one comes.

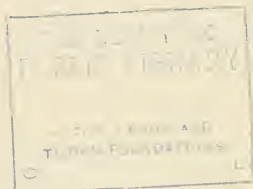
Enter, left, an OFFICER.

Officer. How now, Master Brewster. You are a Puritan, and I must needs search here.

William Brewster. Tell me first by what right you break thus rudely into my house?

Officer. By no right. That is, by all right, for the King himself hath said he will harry all the





Puritans out of the land. Have you any hidden here?

William Brewster. You can search.

[OFFICER *looks round room, under table, knocks over chair.*

Officer. I want John Carver, he's a man of some substance and can pay fines; Robinson, your canting preacher, I must catch him too, and William Bradford, the youth from Austerfield. His kindred did well to mock at his folly; they say he used to walk ten miles across the wolds to hear this new-fangled ranting. I must get them all. Answer me, have you any of these pestilential people hidden here?

[*Laughs and flings open chest.*

William Brewster. I'll tell you naught.

Mary Brewster. Nor I.

Officer. No matter. I'll get them, and make them pay more fines for failing to obey the King's ordinances. A taste of the jail marvellously cures the love of conventicles. Once under lock and key, your friends, Master Brewster, will fare merrily; better, maybe, than their corn and cattle which meanwhile lack tendance. Ha! ha!

[*Laughs.*

William Brewster. Will you so persecute these simple folk who only ask leave to serve God after their conscience in all peace and innocence?

Officer. Peace and innocence! A seditious rabble! Puritan, Recusant, Separatist, Brownist, Barrowist, Greenwoodist—they are all the same

treasonable abomination. But more fines of £20, Master Brewster, from sundry of these same pious "professors" may weed them of their folly. But here—I have searched through every chest and hole in this manor-house. I must be off and hunt the rats elsewhere. *[Bangs down chest.*

William Brewster. Forbear!

Officer. Nay, an' you force me, I can seize you, Master Brewster, for disobedience in religion. You have a fair house and can pay further fines.

William Brewster. I am ready so to do.

Officer. Too long has Scrooby Manor been the hiding-place of these pests. Your office under the King has helped you, Master Brewster.

William Brewster. I have already suffered imprisonment.

Officer. That was when you all endeavoured to escape from the country by stealth.

Mary Brewster. Truly, when, alas, our fleeing hence was betrayed by the mariners. Our people were taken, and lay a month in the foul air of Boston jail until the Council ordered their release, and even then my husband was detained.

Officer. There'll be more of that anon for all of you. But now to get the rest, Carver, Robinson, Bradford. We'll have them all, and I'll not answer for how the people will treat these vile and mischievous persons. *[Exit.*

Mary Brewster (clasps her hands). What shall we do?

William Brewster. To what misery are we coming!

[*Knocking heard outside and voices*

"Let us in! Let us in."

WILLIAM BREWSTER *listens*
and then opens door.

Enter, left, in haste, JOHN ROBINSON and PRISCILLA MULLINS.

Priscilla. For pity's sake let us in! Shelter us from the angry brawlers.

William Brewster. Come in, you are safe here.

Mary Brewster. Bar the door. (*To PRISCILLA.*)
Alas, my poor child.

Priscilla. I am unhurt, but they threw a stone at Master Robinson.

Mary Brewster. Bring him hither.

[*Fetches water, leads ROBINSON to a chair,*
bathes his brow.

William Brewster. Shame that they have wounded you, our faithful guide and preacher.

Robinson. I am much restored. Though weak, I can fend for myself. Thanks, gentle Mistress Brewster. Take heed, friends, lest they break into this house which has so often sheltered us all. Alas, the times of our meeting here, Sabbath by Sabbath, are come to an end.

[*Knocking again heard outside.*

Priscilla. They come, they come!

[*Voices outside: "Open, we are friends."*

WILLIAM BREWSTER *opens door.*

*Enter, left, JOHN CARVER and WILLIAM BRADFORD,
with household goods.*

Bradford. Whither shall we go? Our inheritance will soon be consumed.

Carver. We have brought these household goods here for safety. Continually we are beset and threatened.

Priscilla. Will all be some day ta'en from us?

Bradford. Verily. The officers and searchers daily molest us. Soon we shall have no refuge. (To BREWSTER.) You have been our chiefest succour, Master Brewster.

Carver. They feared you somewhat while you held the post under the King.

William Brewster. And now, alas, I have no longer the means to help you all which once were mine. I have resigned the office I held and another has it.

Carver. Eighteen years have you had the management of the posts at Scrooby, and on all the great North Road, between London and the Scottish Borders the King hath no more careful servant to furnish horses and despatch his letters.

William Brewster. Now all that is over.

Mary Brewster. Can no one intercede for us with the King?

William Brewster. Alas, I fear not.

Mary Brewster. We are like helpless sheep. If we stay, we shall be thrown in prison, robbed or slain.

William Brewster. We cannot remain in England.

Bradford. We cannot stay, and yet we are not allowed to go. The ports and havens are shut against us.

William Brewster. In our first attempt to flee we were betrayed. Fines and imprisonment resulted to us. We may fail again, but another, and yet another effort must be made. On the coast, between Grimsby and Hull, are lonely places from which we may secretly escape over to Holland. (*Turns to them all.*) Friends, this house of mine can shelter us no longer. I shall sell my possessions and go hence with you.

Carver. And I shall sell my farm, though to leave our native land, and to get our living we know not how, in a strange country, does seem to be a most desperate venture and a misery worse than death.

Priscilla. Truly. How can we leave our homes!

Mary Brewster. To remain in England is impossible. We must hence perforce. We have put our hand to the plough and cannot turn back. We must go on. (*To PRISCILLA, who weeps.*) Weep not, nor count the cost.

[ROBINSON rises and takes WILLIAM and MARY BREWSTER by the hand; the rest stand on either side.

Robinson. Truly, let us go forward with no fear, for here we have no sure abiding-place.

We are pilgrims whose desire is to a distant and a better country.

[ALL *go out, left, ROBINSON leading, followed by WILLIAM and MARY BREWSTER, JOHN CARVER, WILLIAM BRADFORD and PRISCILLA MULLINS.*

ACT II

SCENE I

August 1620, Southampton.

There are two entrances right and left. The "Mayflower" is supposed to be lying at the wharf at the back of the stage.

Enter left, WILLIAM BRADFORD, with a sack, quills, and paper.

Bradford. Here, after twelve years, we stand once more in England. Yet not to stay, alas, not to stay here. Twelve years we spent in Holland among the friendly Dutch. But we were, for the most part, simple farmers and unused to cities. We feared our children would forget they were English and speak a strange tongue, nor could we eat the strangers' bread without earning it, and poverty came against us like an armed man.

So, now behold us here at Southampton, but not to rest. We dare not abide here; for us it is ever away and westward ho. Our possessions in England are sold. We have put all our money and lives in a venture to cross the great sea and make a plantation in the north of those wide lands of the Virginia Company. We have besought the King that he would grant us freedom of religion there. Here come our good friends, Carver and Cushman,

Enter, left, JOHN CARVER and ROBERT CUSHMAN, with baskets.

Cushman. If we make a plantation 'twill be a miracle! Since we resolved to leave Holland, and sent our messengers to London, we have been through seas of trouble to get the King's permission and our patent from the Company.

Carver. His Majesty said we might go to America, leastways we should not be prevented.

Bradford. Had we the King's seal as broad as the house floor, it could be reversed if afterwards there was a purpose or desire to harm us. I have continually urged that we make haste and be gone before we be prevented. Here come good Master Brewster and others of our company.

Enter, left, WILLIAM and MARY BREWSTER, PRISCILLA MULLINS, carrying bundles. They move to right of stage.

Mary Brewster. Here we are at Southampton.

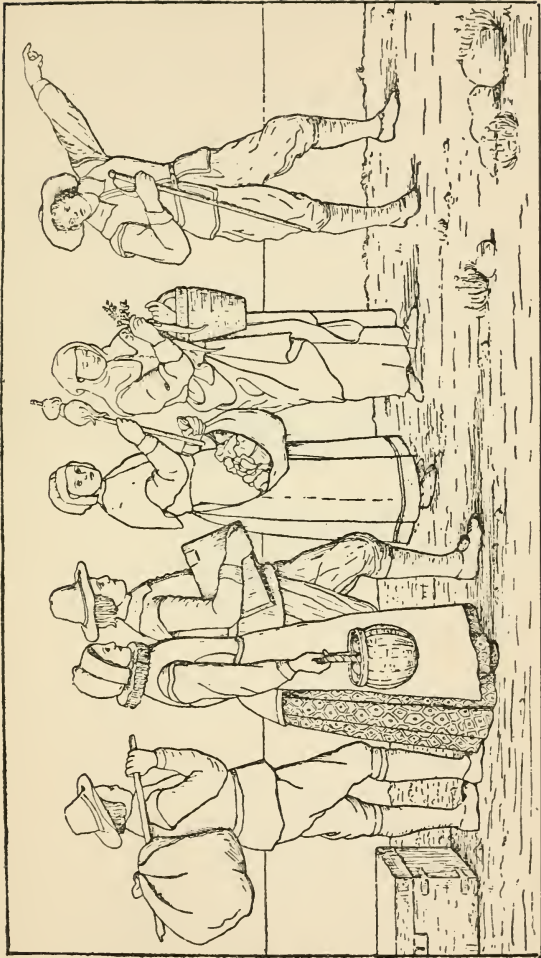
William Brewster. And yonder is (*points to back of stage*) the wharf where the *Mayflower* lies which is to carry us to the new country.

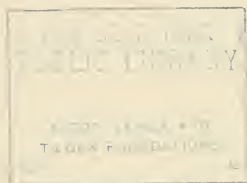
Who is this stranger who approaches?

Enter, left, CAPTAIN MILES STANDISH, who walks up to WILLIAM BREWSTER.

William Brewster. Who are you, good gentleman?

Standish. Captain Miles Standish.





William Brewster. We heard of your warlike deeds when we were in Holland.

Bradford. Aye, indeed.

Standish. And I have heard that you are a brave people who are going to make a plantation across the seas. I will go with you if you will have me.

William Brewster. Go with us, Captain?

Standish. Yes. You are a peaceful folk and know little of warfare. You will be in peril from savages out there. I am a fighter and I can defend you.

Bradford. How will you join our society?

Standish. I'll put my money in your venture. In civil matters I obey you; in war, I command. Here is my sword at your service! (*Draws sword.*) Will you have me or not?

William Brewster. 'Tis an excellent offer. (*To others.*) What think ye?

Carver. Let the Captain go with us.

All. Let him come.

William Brewster. You shall be one of us, (*takes his hand*) Captain Standish.

Standish. Good. I will go and get powder and shot and muskets. We may need them. (*To PRISCILLA.*) Are you going too, Mistress?

Priscilla. We all go, Captain.

Standish. 'Tis well; adieu. [*Goes out left.*]

Mary Brewster. That is a brave man.

Priscilla. But fiery withal, as report has it,

He is small of stature, and they say little chimneys are fired the quickest.

Mary Brewster. Nay, Priscilla, speak not so of our protector. (*To BREWSTER.*) But, look you, we must see that all our provisions are put on the ship.

William Brewster. I must go to give directions and place in safety on the ship, the books we brought so carefully from Scrooby and then from Leyden.

[WILLIAM and MARY BREWSTER go out right.

Carver (*takes up basket*). Here are loaves for the voyage. [*Goes out right.*

Cushman (*takes up basket*). Ah me, there are plums from the old garden. Alas, the hand of the ungodly and the stranger will gather the fruits which we have painfully nourished. They are fair plums. Say not that I have been negligent.

[*Goes out right.*

Bradford. I have brought a sack of meal, and moreover these quills and paper, for I purpose to write down some day the history of our enterprise. Perchance these, my scribbled writings, which I will piece together in times of future leisure, may be a word of comfort to those who come after. But we tarry. Are you coming, Priscilla?

[*Goes out left.*

Enter, JOHN ALDEN, right, whistling, starts back and bows.

Alden. Good-morrow, fair Mistress. Can you tell me where the *Mayflower* bound for America lies?

Priscilla. Yonder by the wharf, sir. Are you one of our company?

Alden. I am John Alden, a cooper, and hired to go with you. I make the trimmest barrels that ever you saw. Stay! I will show you.

[Runs out right and fetches barrel, re-enters just as STANDISH comes in from left with his powder cask; they collide in centre of stage; PRISCILLA stands laughing, ALDEN jumps aside with a bow.]

Enter, left, JOHN BILLINGTON.

Standish (to ALDEN). Gently, young man! In this barrel is that which would blow us all up to the skies.

John Billington. Blow us up! Murder! (*Points and trembles.*) In that cask? I cry your worship's pardon. I'll get behind your worship (*jumps behind STANDISH*), or rather I will go boldly in front.

[Tries to run away, right. ALDEN springs in front of him.]

Alden. Who are you?

John Billington (waving his arms). As good as you. I go to this New England with my wife and these firebrands. I fear we shall be left behind. (*Ducks under ALDEN'S arm.*) Ellen, Ellen! come!

[Rushes out, right.]

Enter, left, in haste, ELLEN BILLINGTON.

Ellen Billington. Where's my husband?

Standish. A most foolish, blustering man was here a moment since.

Ellen Billington (wildly). 'Tis he! 'Tis he! I want him to carry our goods to the ship. (*To ALDEN.*) Run and fetch him, young man. Nay, do not smile, but run.

Alden. I will run. I will not smile.

[*Runs out, right.*]

Ellen Billington (sinks down on PRISCILLA'S bundle). I'll wait here. (*Fans herself with her apron.*) I am near dead with chasing since we resolved to leave London where we dwelt, and come with you into the wilderness. We shall starve there. (*To STANDISH.*) Have you butter in that cask, good sir?

Standish. No, madam, not butter—gunpowder.

Ellen Billington (waves her hand scornfully). What is gunpowder to me? I can't eat it!

Standish. The savages may eat you, madam, if we haven't the gunpowder. (*To PRISCILLA.*) I have to protect you all, have I not?

Priscilla. Yes, Captain. But see, here comes poor John Alden, running.

Re-enter, right, ALDEN, panting.

Alden (to ELLEN). Your husband is out of sight.

Ellen Billington (springs up and turns on ALDEN). You've let him go! You bat! You snail! I'll find him!

[*Runs out, right.*]

Alden. That pair will be a plague.

Priscilla. They joined themselves to us unbidden. Well, we must go to the ship now, and I must take this. [Stoops to pick up bundle.

Alden. Let me take it, mistress.

Standish. Nay, I will carry your bundle.

Priscilla (*looks from one to another*). Thanks to you both, but only one of you can carry it.

Alden. The Captain is a great man. I am nothing, so he has the better right.

Priscilla. John Alden did ask me first.

Standish. Aye, he did, first. Well, you have her word, so take the bundle, Alden, and I will follow with the powder. We must all on board.

[PRISCILLA and ALDEN *move off right*,
followed by STANDISH.

SCENE II

September 1620.

On board the "Mayflower" at Plymouth.

Enter, on left, WILLIAM BREWSTER, CAPTAIN STANDISH, JOHN CARVER, WILLIAM BRADFORD, JOHN BILLINGTON, JOHN ALDEN, ROBERT CUSHMAN, MARY BREWSTER, PRISCILLA MULLINS, ELLEN BILLINGTON.

BREWSTER and STANDISH stand in centre; others grouped on either side, CUSHMAN being at extreme right of stage.

William Brewster. Now are we all met together, a fair wind blows and we are ready to

depart. Much time was consumed after we left Southampton, for we had to put into Dartmouth to repair our second ship, the *Speedwell*, which is now abandoned; the *Mayflower* alone carries us over the ocean.

The hour of departure has come. We must say farewell to the friends we leave behind.

Mary Brewster. Ah, it is hard to say good-bye when each look and word doth pierce the heart.

Cushman. Truly, dear friends, I need courage now. Ye know that I did my best, and laboured diligently to covenant with the London merchants for the setting forth of our venture. When matters go wrongly, blame me not. It is the seamen's fault, and not mine, that the *Speedwell* leaketh and that you will be packed in one ship. Alas, the waspish fury of contentious men hath undone me; and now, at the last, I am seized with such a weakness that I fear I could but serve as meat for fishes if I came along with you.

William Brewster. Then you will tarry behind?

Cushman. Alas, I should but die if I did otherwise.

Mary Brewster. Poor Master Cushman, you will join us one day yonder.

Cushman. Maybe, Mistress Brewster, maybe I shall. Pardon my weak manner. I must on shore. Farewell. [*Shakes hands with each in turn; they all say "farewell" to him; he hobbles off, left.*]

William Brewster. Only the strongest may abide this venture. (*Takes out a letter.*) We have a letter here from Master Robinson, our preacher. He remains in Leyden, to succour the old and feeble who stay behind there.

John Billington. Then I wish I were old and feeble! I begin to like not this business.

Standish (scornfully). You can stay!

Ellen Billington (decidedly). "Can stay," say you? Never! We are going to America. Leastway I am; (*to BILLINGTON*) you can stay and starve in England, but I am minded to do so across the ocean, chicken-hearted!

William Brewster. Come, come, Master Robinson warns us in his letter against quarrels.

John Billington. Aye, quarrels. Listen, Ellen.

Ellen Billington. I listen—listen to me.

Standish (shouts). Silence!

[*BILLINGTON trembles.*]

William Brewster. He says that, as men are careful not to have a new house shaken with any violence before it is well settled and the parts firmly knit, so we must be careful in our new colony not to be shaken by disputes.

Carver. That is wisdom.

William Brewster. Finally, Master Robinson gives us much comfort, and says he is a well-wisher for our hopeful voyage.

Mary Brewster. May we prosper!

William Brewster. I trust so, indeed. (*Whistle*

heard.) But now the mariners call. It is time we moved with the tide. They weigh the anchor, and the moment for departing is come. Draw hither, that we may look for the last time on this land.

Priscilla. Alas, never again shall our eyes behold these meadows and cornfields, these homes and the places where our fathers lie buried !

[*Weeps.*

Mary Brewster. Weep not. We go to make a new England beyond the sea.

They all sing.

TUNE—"Now, oh now, we needs must part"
(*Pan Pipes Collection*).

Lo, the sands have run out quickly,
 And the anchor from the deep
 Rises, and the sails are filling,
 We go forth, and going weep.
 Fare ye well, ye groves and meadows,
 Now across the ocean wide
 Bring the ship of Thy poor pilgrims,
 Safely to the other side.
 Here have we had strife and sorrow,
 There we freedom hope to gain,
 But the hour of our departing
 Has in it full much of pain.
 Fare you well, ye hills, ye cornfields
 Now unto the harvest white ;
 For the reapers of Thy harvest
 Make the sickle sharp and bright.

Cease sad tears! The sea hath water
 Salt enough without our share.
 We who sigh, one day rejoicing
 Shall our sheaves of corn prepare.
 Fare you well, who bide behind us
 Witness of the vow we've made.
 If Thou lead us through the waters,
 We pass over undismayed!

*[All pass off slowly, right, as if to the
 end of ship to see the last sight of
 the coast.]*

SCENE III

On board the "Mayflower." At sea, November 1620.

Table, with paper, ink, quills at back of stage.

Enter JOHN ALDEN and PRISCILLA, left.

Alden. They say the mariners have brought us out of our course. Nine long weeks are gone, and still no sight of land. You are pale and weary, Priscilla.

Priscilla. Oh, what a night of tempest we have had! We nearly sank in that storm. See how the waves still roll to and fro!

Alden. Aye, and here, alas! is another tempest. Here comes John Billington railing at all things.

Enter, left, JOHN BILLINGTON.

Priscilla. How now, Master Billington?

John Billington (*angrily*). How now? Speak

not so sharply, Mistress Priscilla Mullins. I am half dead with the tossing of this most intolerable ship.

Alden. We have all been sorely tossed.

John Billington. Tossed—tossed by mad bulls, if you like, I care not! I tell you there is naught to eat!

Priscilla. Aren't we all hungry?

John Billington. That comforts me not. This is a foolish voyage, and we should not listen to that hot-headed knave, Miles Standish!

Alden. No more of that!

Priscilla. Truly; soft! here comes the Captain.

Enter, left, CAPTAIN STANDISH.

Standish. Good morrow, Mistress Priscilla, and fairer weather.

Priscilla. During the storm the mariners were oft seen muttering together, and 'twas said they doubted the ship's strength sufficient for the voyage. Shall we ever come to shore in safety?

Standish. The *Mayflower* will weather the tempest; 'tis strong under water, though the upper works are leaky; 'twas a main beam which had sprung.

Priscilla. We had all drowned last night, Captain, had you not devised a way to keep out the water.

Standish. Then you have a good piece of iron

and not me to thank. By means of a strong iron bar we forced the beam back into place. We have come too far north; we shall not land where we intended, but these shoals and breakers would show that we are now not far from shore.

John Billington (groans). Ugh, ugh. Oh, folly! Jonah was lodged better than this!

Standish (turns and sees BILLINGTON behind him). Who's that? Ho, John! Art dying?

John Billington. To be drowned at sea! To be killed! When we get to shore, to be cooked and eaten by savages! Would I might return!

Alden. It is over far for you to swim back to old England. You are nearer the New World now.

John Billington. Swim home! That is a foolish jest. Cold wind, cold water, cold sky; I am freezing!

Standish. Here then, stir yourself! We must have muskets in the wilderness. Come with me and see that our arms are not wet with salt water.

[*Takes BILLINGTON by the shoulder.*

John Billington. I am weary. Let that vain coxcomb help you! [Points at ALDEN.

Alden. Come, Billington!

John Billington. I am weary, I tell you.

Standish (impatiently). Come! Come! So am I! (*Seizes BILLINGTON.*) Come along!

[BILLINGTON'S hat comes off; STANDISH and ALDEN carry him off struggling.]

John Billington (*shouts*). Hold! Men of violence, hold!

[STANDISH and ALDEN go out with BILLINGTON, *right*.

Priscilla (*laughs and throws the hat after them*). Take thy hat, old mar-joy! (*Sighs*.) Yet I would we were all safely there! It seems we must use much patience ere we come to the end of our pilgrimage. [Goes out, *right*.

Enter WILLIAM BREWSTER and MARY BREWSTER, *left*.

Mary Brewster. Another night has gone.

William Brewster. Time creeps on. Think you our food will last? It will be winter weather when we arrive.

Mary Brewster. We have somewhat, but much is damaged by the sea. The water-casks are low, and the bread we bought in Devonshire waxes stale.

William Brewster. We must keep all we can for going ashore.

Mary Brewster. Let us look forth. The daylight is behind us; in front all is dim. Yet can you see nothing? [Looks out *intently*.

William Brewster. Only the sea through the mist.

Mary Brewster. I thought I saw something dark—low down, there, there, look. (*Points*.) Can it—can it be land?

William Brewster. We have looked so often in vain—yet wait—perhaps you are right. (*Listens.*) Yes. Hark! (*Voices outside cry, "Land! Land!"*) What's that?

Mary Brewster. They've sighted land!

[WILLIAM and MARY BREWSTER *turn round.*

Re-enter CAPTAIN STANDISH, *right.*

Standish. Good cheer! The mist has lifted and we are near land!

Re-enter JOHN BILLINGTON and ELLEN BILLINGTON.

John Billington. Near land? Now we shall run on the rocks!

Enter JOHN CARVER, *left,* and WILLIAM BRADFORD.

Carver. I can see a good harbour!

Priscilla. The trees grow to the very edge of the sea.

Re-enter JOHN ALDEN, *right.*

Alden. What a glad sight to see the shore!

John Billington. Now our real troubles begin. To be cooked and eaten! Oh! Oh!

Standish. I'll throw you——

William Brewster. Peace, peace, friends. We have departed somewhat from our course, and with these adverse seas we shall not be able to go southward now and make the shores of Hudson's River. We are in sight of the new country

and of a good harbour, and soon shall step on land. For matters of religion, Master Robinson hath left me as your guide; in war, we look to Captain Miles Standish; in civil affairs, we make John Carver Governor.

Alden. Long live Governor Carver!

John Billington. I hope we shall *all* live long, but I doubt it!

William Brewster. Now, draw hither a table and set quills and paper. (ALDEN *and* BRADFORD *set table, &c.*) Here is our compact. (*Shows a paper.*) We, the loyal subjects of King James, have undertaken for the advancement of religion and the honour of our King and country, to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, and we all promise to obey the laws which we find it good to make. Let each sign his name.

[*Each in turn signs paper solemnly.*]

Bradford. 'Tis dated, Cape Cod, this 11th day of November 1620.

Carver. And now let us go on shore.

[*All move off, right.*]

SCENE IV

The coast of America. Winter weather. The sea is supposed to be on left. Sticks and branches lie on the ground.

WILLIAM BREWSTER, JOHN CARVER, CAPTAIN STANDISH, WILLIAM BRADFORD, JOHN ALDEN, JOHN

BILLINGTON, MARY BREWSTER, PRISCILLA MULLINS, ELLEN BILLINGTON *standing in a group*—with BREWSTER, MARY BREWSTER, STANDISH and CARVER *in the centre*.

They all sing.

TUNE—"Harvest Home" (*Pan Pipes Collection*).

The rock beneath us, and behind
 The awful sea ; with cheerful voice,
 O'er the waves, o'er the wind,
 We, brought to safety, now rejoice ;
 Now rejoice, now rejoice,
 We, brought to safety, now rejoice.

The fiery Pillar still by night
 Shall guide Thy people on their way ;
 Moving on, in our sight,
 The Cloud to lead us through the day ;
 Through the day, through the day,
 The Cloud to lead us through the day.

Upon this rock Thy Ark shall rest ;
 And here Thy Banner be unfurled ;
 Here shine forth, candle blest,
 That shall give light unto the world ;
 To the world, to the world,
 That shall give light unto the world.

Mary Brewster. How good it is to stand on firm ground! (*Looks round.*) Though this is a

desolate country ; the snow is our carpet, and the sky and the bare boughs our only roof. Come under my cloak, Priscilla. The wind blows. You are very cold.

[Takes PRISCILLA under her cloak.

Standish. We will kindle a fire under this rock. Here are some fagots. (*Fetches sticks.*) Come, bestir yourself, Billington, or you will freeze.

John Billington (*shivers*). This is an abominable land ! It were better to be cooked by the heathen than abide this cold !

Ellen Billington. You should rejoice to be on land, and escaped from the rolling sea.

[Points left.

John Billington (*waves his hand*). The sea—talk not of that !

Carver. Come, we must all help.

[They pile up sticks.

Standish. We must see what country lies around us, and if Indians are near.

Carver. And we must also find a place where we can build our houses.

Standish. Some one must stay to protect the women.

John Billington. I am ready to stay and shield them ! (*Flourishes a stick.*) At least, I will guard the fire ! [Puts himself in a defiant attitude.

Ellen Billington (*scornfully*). I would not stay if I were a man.

John Billington. You are not, Ellen !

Ellen Billington. No, indeed! If I were, I would go with the Captain.

Standish. I will take Billington whether he will or no, and Bradford and Alden with me. Master Brewster, will you stay?

William Brewster. Verily, if thereby I can best serve you.

Standish. Then we are ready.

John Billington (aside). Speak not for others!

Priscilla. Have a care to yourselves!

John Billington. Aye, we go forth like lambs to be eaten by savages!

Priscilla. The Indians may be hidden. Be not rash, John Alden!

[CAPTAIN STANDISH goes out on right with CARVER, BRADFORD, ALDEN, and BILLINGTON. BREWSTER and the women go out, left.]

ACT III

SCENE I

The coast of America, Spring 1621. Inside a hut ; door on left ; two chairs, a table on which is a cup and a jug. At the back some bricks to represent a fireplace with a pot on it.

Enter, left, MARY BREWSTER and PRISCILLA.

Mary Brewster. The winter months have worn away. It grows milder now ; but our people are ill, and I fear many will die.

Priscilla. Yes, and I trust this last expedition has met with no mishap. There are savage Indians and wolves in the forest ; they might lose their way ; they might be drowned ; they might die of hunger.

Mary Brewster. I think the Captain will bring them safely back, Priscilla.

Priscilla. We must be patient. Nay, but hark ! (*Jumps up.*) There's a step ; verily 'tis John Alden himself ! My heart is rejoiced.

Enter, left, JOHN ALDEN.

Alden. We are returned. There is a great lake, Priscilla, near the place where our town will be built.

Mary Brewster. Our dwelling-place is well chosen.

Alden. Yes, for we have a good harbour, and a sweet brook runs under the hill. It was Billington who espied the lake from a tall tree. But what with the woods and the thickets, we were long enough in finding it. We are footsore and our clothes are near torn to ribbons by the thorns and the briars.

Priscilla. We had thought of worse dangers. Our hearts were more troubled for you than for your doublet, John Alden!

Mary Brewster. Are you all well?

Alden. All, save Governor Carver, who near perished of pain and weariness. He was fainting, and the good Captain is bringing him hither.

Enter, left, CAPTAIN STANDISH with GOVERNOR CARVER, who is ill.

Mary Brewster (rises). Captain Standish is ever ready to help the sick.

Standish. Let Master Carver sit by the fire. He is faint to death.

Mary Brewster (leads CARVER to fire). Come, good Master Carver, sit here.

Priscilla (to ALDEN). How pale he looks.

Mary Brewster (feels his forehead.) His head

burns. (*Takes his hand.*) His hand is like ice. Get me that cup.

[PRISCILLA gets cup, MARY fills it and places it to CARVER'S lips.

Standish. I will stir the soup for you, Priscilla.

[*Stirs the pot.*

Priscilla. You are skilful, Captain.

Standish. I learned that when I was a soldier in Holland.

Priscilla. You can do many things, Captain.

Standish. Alas! Priscilla, I can do naught with words as Alden doth.

Priscilla. Maybe 'tis so.

Standish. Well, Priscilla, look to Master Carver. He is very feeble. And now to business. (*To ALDEN.*) I have called all our company together. Before we can go on building our town, we must have a council of war, and consult how to protect ourselves.

Enter, left, WILLIAM BREWSTER, WILLIAM BRADFORD, JOHN BILLINGTON, ELLEN BILLINGTON. The women form themselves into a group on left by CARVER. The men are on the right, with STANDISH in the centre.

Standish. We must consider how to prepare ourselves in case we be attacked by savages. It seems they are near us.

William Brewster. While they were gathering

thatch, our people heard cries of the Indians in the woods.

Alden. I saw one, tall and red, that glided into the thicket when I was getting sticks.

Standish. They are near us, and we know not if their intentions are friendly. We must be ready to defend ourselves.

William Brewster. This is your business: you must counsel us, good Captain.

Standish. Here are my plans! On the hill we will have a fort from which we can see the country round. Hark. (*A cry is heard outside. STANDISH turns left, draws his sword.*) They are on us!

[*Men all rise, turn left towards door.*

BILLINGTON jumps behind STANDISH.

John Billington. Ho! murder! murder! we are dead men.

Enter, left, SAMOSET, an Indian. He stands quite still; all gaze in wonder, and there is a pause till SAMOSET speaks.

Samoset. Welcome, Englishmen!

Bradford. Wonder of wonders! he speaketh in English!

John Billington. Then maybe he is not so evilly inclined!

Standish (*facing SAMOSET*). Who are you? Is your errand peace?

Samoset. I am called Samoset and I am lord among our people. I come to you with peace in my heart. See, I lay my spear at your feet.

[Lays spear at STANDISH'S feet.]

Standish. Then welcome, Samoset. How come you to speak English ?

Samoset. English sailors were here before you, and taught me your language.

Standish. How did you know we were here ?

Samoset. I saw your footprints, and I knew they were the footprints of white men.

Bradford. And you came to see us ?

Samoset. I dwell northward in the land of King Massasoit, and he sent me to say that he will be friendly with the Englishmen. For me, (*tosses his head*) I like them well.

John Billington. That is well for us ! (*Aside.*) 'Tis a noble savage !

Standish. Will you be our interpreter, Samoset, with the other Indians, so that we may talk and trade with them ?

Samoset. Yea, and King Massasoit will come and he will make a feast.

Standish. We shall receive him gladly if he come as a friend. Stay, Samoset ; we English call this place Plymouth ; and Plymouth was the last port at which we called in England. How do you name it in Indian ?

Samoset. It is Patuxet.

William Brewster. Unto whom does it belong ?

Samoset. Four years ago a plague did slay all the people, and now the country is no man's.

William Brewster. Then there is naught to hinder our possession. Would you like this knife as a present, Samoset?

Samoset (takes knife). Yes, yes. (*Feels blade.*) Oh! sharp, very sharp!

Standish. You can use it on this.

[*Gives SAMOSET some bread.*]

John Billington. Aye, use thy knife on the bread, but not us!

[*SAMOSET eats heartily.*]

William Brewster. You like our English victuals?

Samoset. Yea, good, good. I tell King Massasoit of the good food.

John Billington (aside). Would we could give you and ourselves rather more of it, sweet savage!

Samoset. Men from over the great sea, hearken! I will teach you to make furrows and sow maize corn. In the forest are deer; the fish in bright pools; eels in the mud. I will catch eels for you. Follow me there and you shall eat the food of the forest!

[*They all go out together, SAMOSET leading.*]

SCENE II

New Plymouth. Spring, 1621.

Enter, left, PRISCILLA with maize in her apron.

Priscilla. Farewell to the *Mayflower!* we have had the last sight of her masts against the sky as she sails back to old England. Yet not one of our company hath turned from the enterprise, though we have been in sore straits since our coming here, and near half our number are dead. The winter is past and gone. Spring has come; the birds sing, and here are the furrows where we must plant the Indian corn which in this country makes our bread. When the oak leaves are the size of a mouse's ear, so say the Indians—then must the corn be set. I will scatter the seed as Samoset taught us, and sing as I scatter. [Sings.

TUNE—"Hymns Ancient and Modern" (No. 197).

The winter time is past! Now flows
 The stream; the grass is springing,
 The desert blossoms like the rose;
 The hills break forth in singing!

[Scatters seed.

The wind blows healing from the south,
 Our pain and grief it killeth;
 The hand of God the hungry mouth
 With food and drink now filleth.

The winter's past! And now with mirth
 Arise! With joy abounding
 Lift up your heads! For through the earth
 The voice of God is sounding!

Enter, left, JOHN ALDEN.

Alden. That is a sweet song, Priscilla. Where did you learn it?

Priscilla. The tune ran in my head through the long winter days, and when spring came I found the words for the tune. Yet I could weep for those who will not see the ripening of the corn.

Alden. We shall never forget Master Carver and those we buried on the hill in the rain and the wind. I would they could have seen the summer here! There will be a fair field of corn, (*points to furrows*) Priscilla. See, here comes the Captain with Samoset.

Enter, left, CAPTAIN STANDISH and SAMOSET.

Good morrow, Captain.

Priscilla. Whither do you go?

Standish. Into the forest with Samoset as my guide to bring King Massasoit here, that we may make a treaty of peace with him. Shall I leave John Alden to protect you?

Priscilla. That is as you will, good Captain.

Standish. Nay, it is not, Priscilla. But we linger, who should be gone. So, come, Samoset!

Samoset. By night we must be at the deep river which is the beginning of Massasoit's country.

[STANDISH *and* SAMOSET *go out, right.*

Priscilla. Fare you well!

[PRISCILLA *and* ALDEN *go out left together.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

Autumn, 1621. New Plymouth

On right, a feast spread on benches, or a rough table, decorated with branches and flowers.

Enter, left, JOHN BILLINGTON with a basket of berries.

John Billington (looks round). 'Tis a fine autumn day, and we've been in this place near a year. The house is decked for our guests, and a good feast is spread out here. (*Peeps at food on the table; pokes and sniffs at it.*) Venison from the woods; wild fowl from the lake, which men call Billington Sea, for I espied the lake from a tall tree—better birds than any I did ever buy in London in the East Cheap. Well, here is my gift to the feast, those blackberries in a basket of leaves! made with mine own hands! (*Sets it on the table and admires it, rubbing his hands.*) I'm a clever fellow! To-day we have a thanksgiving for our first harvest in New England, and to-day we celebrate the wedding of John Alden and Priscilla. After all, we have not fared so ill. I am almost persuaded to be merry. [*Sings.*

TUNE—"Jog on, Jog on" (*Pan Pipes Collection*).

Now if you would plantations make
 And cities in the wild, O,
 You must much joy and ease forsake
 And find much toil and care, O,
 And find much toil and care, O.

For here you'll find no stall or shop,
 Nor do the streams run wine, O,
 If you are idle, prithee, stop,
 Stay where you are I beg, O,
 Stay where you are I beg, O.

Then cross the seas and join us here
 And leave your care behind, O,
 If you will work there's naught to fear
 And very much to gain, O,
 And very much to gain, O.

*Enter, ELLEN BILLINGTON, right; he takes
 her hand.*

Come, Ellen, there is no one to say us nay. I have a
 mind to dance. [*They dance towards right of stage.*]

*Enter, left, WILLIAM and MARY BREWSTER,
 with flowers in her hand.*

Ellen Billington (*looking over her shoulder*).
 Peace! peace! a truce with these profanities!
 Here comes Master Brewster!

[*The BILLINGTONS rush out right.*]

Mary Brewster. Our harvest is gathered, the first frost hath touched the air and in the forest the maples show like flames; here are flowers purple and gold. There is not a cloud, and all things join to make glad Priscilla's wedding day. Standish brings King Massasoit to our feast.

William Brewster. Little did I think all would end so well. Mary, you were hopeful even in our darkest days.

Mary Brewster. Aye, but I never looked for so swift a reward. Lo, here come our guests!

Enter, left, a procession, GOVERNOR BRADFORD with SAMOSET, CAPTAIN STANDISH with KING MASSASOIT, JOHN BILLINGTON with ELLEN BILLINGTON, and JOHN ALDEN with his bride, PRISCILLA.

[They carry fruits and boughs and heads of Indian corn. The BILLINGTONS bring in a sheaf which is placed in the centre of the stage. All form into a semi-circle, with ALDEN and PRISCILLA in the middle. STANDISH, MASSASOIT, SAMOSET, and the BILLINGTONS on the right; the BREWSTERS and BRADFORD on the left.

Mary Brewster (steps forward and throws flowers at PRISCILLA'S feet). Evermore may joy attend you, John Alden and Priscilla!

William Brewster. Welcome to you all!

[SAMOSET and MASSASOIT exchange signs.

Samoset. King Massasoit greets you!

William Brewster. Let the King be placed here next to Governor Bradford.

[STANDISH *brings* MASSASOIT *over to left and puts him next to* BRADFORD, *and then returns to his place on right.*

William Brewster (points). There is our feast! life in the woods makes us hungry.

Mary Brewster. Each guest hath brought something.

Ellen Billington. I made the bread.

Samoset. I caught the fish!

John Billington (points). These are the fruits of my toil. A noble basket of blackberries. 'Tis a brave wilderness!

William Brewster. It is a fair land which we have added to the realms of King James.

Bradford. We never had done this without Miles Standish.

William Brewster (takes STANDISH by the hand). Good Captain Standish!

All. Long live the Captain.

[BILLINGTON *throws his hat in the air.*

Standish. Thanks, friends, I only did for you as I promised. Now we have friends among the Indians. (*Looks at SAMOSET. SAMOSET signs to KING MASSASOIT, who bends his head.*) I look for peace, and I shall stay and plough my land along with you all.

Bradford. And beat your sword into a plough-share ?

Standish. Nay, I will keep my sword.

William Brewster. Yet sheathe it now, for this is a day of peace. Let us wish health to John Alden and his bride, and rejoice over our first harvest here.

Bradford. Long life to Priscilla and John Alden, in the new country !

All. Long life to Priscilla and John Alden !

Bradford. This exile and journeying here hath not severed our hearts from the land of our birth, and now, forgetting the afflictions there endured, we turn, with exceeding love, to the country we have left behind us.

William Brewster. We look sometime soon to the coming of a ship which brings news of our friends in England. 'Twill tell us of our faithful preacher, Master Robinson. Poor Robert Cushman may come to us in this ship. We will send back a letter to tell of the happy ending of our pilgrimage.

Mary Brewster. We were not those whom discouragements could turn back or make to wish themselves at home, and we have come to prosperity through much peril and sorrow. As out of little things great wonders may come, and one small candle kindle a thousand, so we have made a light for many, and laid the foundations of a new England !

They all sing

TUNE—"From Oberon in Fairy Land" (*Songs of the British Islands*).

Bring in your sheaves and lay them down,
This is the crowning of the year!
See, in the forest glades around,
Our golden harvest doth appear.

When in the ground we sowed the seed,
And o'er the furrows bare did weep,
We never thought that we by now
So fair an autumn field should reap;
Never thought that we by now
So fair an autumn field should reap.

We came in hunger and in tears,
Who now for very joy do sing,
And see throughout our new-made land
The promise of each coming spring.

Oh, friends that we have left behind,
Hear what we say whoe'er you be,
We only left the land we love
To make new England o'er the sea;
Only left the land we love
To make new England o'er the sea.

Here they shall ever speak our tongue
 And walk in ways which make men free,
 And one day mighty in the earth
 The people dwelling here shall be !

And they, like us, shall year by year
 Lift up in praise a thankful voice,
 Shall gather up their sheaves with joy,
 And o'er the harvest fields rejoice !
 Gather up their sheaves with joy,
 And o'er the harvest fields rejoice !

[During song all move round stage in procession, and go off left, singing last verse. BRADFORD leads with KING MASSASOIT, STANDISH with SAMOSET, WILLIAM and MARY BREWSTER, PRISCILLA and ALDEN, JOHN and ELLEN BILLINGTON.]

Historical Plays for Children

BY

AMICE MACDONELL

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

PRODUCED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
LEAGUE OF THE EMPIRE

Crown 8vo, paper Covers, **6d.** each net
The First Series also in Cloth, **2s. 6d.** net

Alfred the Great.

Robin Hood.

The Armada.

The Enterprise of the

“Mayflower.”

} FIRST SERIES

Saxon and Norman.

Magna Charta. } ONE-ACT PLAYS

Edward III. } IN ONE BOOK.

Others to follow.

LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & SONS

44 & 45 RATHBONE PLACE, OXFORD ST.

11.

