THE CAMP

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

Table of Contents

THE CAMP

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Road near the Camp.

Enter ***Old Man****, L. S. E.*

Old. M.

Come along, neighbours, come along, we shall be too late for the suttlers market.

Enter ***Countryman****, L.*

Put on, put on, neighbours. Here, Robin, where are you, boy?

Robin. [Without, L.]

I'm coming, feather, as soon as I can get the colt up, for the plaguy beast is down again, and mother and chickens are all in the slough.

Old M.

Why, is the colt down again? You graceless dog, help your mother up. Oh, neighbour Farrow has helped her up, I see.

*Enter **Old Woman**, L., with a basket.*

Old W.

Husband, as sure as you are alive, that rogue of a boy drove the colt in the dirt for the purpose, and down we came with such a wang.

Old M.

What a mercy it is the chickens escaped! Come, put on, neighbours.

*Enter **Robin**, L.*

Rob.

Why, feather, how could I help it? The colt has not had an eye in his head these eight years.

Old W.

Oh, here comes Nell, and she'll scold us all, for cheating the soldiers.

Old M.

That wench, she won't cheat herself, nor let other honest people do it, if she can help it; and she says she likes a soldier so well she would sell them goods for nothing.

*Enter **Nell**, L., with a basket.*

Nell.

Why, how now? what, are you consulting how you shall cheat the poor soldiers? for shame! for shame! how can you use the poor fellows so, that risk their lives to defend your property, and yet you make it your study to

defraud them?

Old W.

It's very hard, Nell, you won't let us have a little picking among them. What is it to you what we do?

Nell.

Yes, it is to me. I never will bear to see a soldier cheated, with my eyes open. I love a soldier, and will always stand by them.

Old M.

Why, Nell, if you go on at this rate, we'll tell his worship, Mr. Gage, of you. He's an exciseman, and a great friend to us poor folks.

Nell.

What's that you say, Master Grinder? I think your tricks are pretty well known. Wasn't you caught soaking eggs in lime and water, to make.

Yes, it is to me. I never will bear to see a soldier cheated, with my eyes open. I love a soldier, and will always stand by them.

Old M.

Why, Nell, if you go on at this rate, we'll tell his worship, Mr. Gage, of you. He's an exciseman, and a great friend to us poor folks.

Nell.

What's that you say, Master Grinder? I think your tricks are pretty well known. Wasn't you caught soaking eggs in lime and water, to make them pass for new ones; and did not you sit in the stocks for robbing the 'squire's rookery, to make your pigeon pies.

Old W.

Well, well, we'll tell Mr. Gage, and then what will he say to you?

Nell.

Tell Mr. Gage, will you? He's a pretty protector indeed—he's a disgrace to his majesty's inkhorn. While he seizes with one hand, he smuggles with the other. Why, no longer ago than last summer, he was a broken attorney at Rochester, and came down here, and bought this place with his vote, and now he is both a smuggler and contractor. Oh, my conscience! if I had the management of affairs, I would severely punish all such fellows who would be so base as to cheat a poor soldier.

Old W.
Here he comes, here he comes. Now you'll change your note.

Nell.
Will I? you shall see if I do. No, no, I'll tell him my mind; that's always my way.

Enter ***Gage****, R.*

All.
Ah! Mr. Gage.

Gage.
Hey dey! what's the matter? What the plague is there a civil war broke out among you?

Old W.
Why, Mr. Gage, Nell here has been scolding us for cheating the soldiers, and says you encourage us in it.

Gage.
Encourage you? to be sure I do, in the way of trade.

All.
Ay, in the way of trade.

Nell.
I can hold no longer: are you not ashamed, you who are a contractor, and has the honour to carry his majesty's inkhorn at your button−hole, to teach these poor wretches all your court tricks? I'll tell you what, if I was to set on a court−martial against such a fellow as you, you should have had your deserts; from the pilfering suttler to the head contractor, you should have the cat−o'−nine−tails, and be forced to run the gauntlet from Coxheath to Warley Common, that you should.

Gage. [Aside.]
Come, Nell, hold your tongue, and I'll give you a pound of smuggled hyson, and throw you a silk handkerchief into the bargain.

Nell.
Here's a rogue! Bear witness, neighbours, he has offered me a bribe—a pound of tea. No, sir, take your pitiful present, and know that I am not to be bribed to screen your villanies by influence and corruption.
[Throws it at him.

Gage.
Don't mind her, she's mad, she talks treason. Away with you! I'll put everybody under an arrest that stays to listen to her.

All.
Ay, ay, she's mad. Come along, we shall be too late for market.
[Gage drives them all off, R.

Gage.
Here, Nell, will you take the tea?
[Offers it to her.

Nell.
No, sir, I won't.

Gage.
Well, then, I will.
[Puts it in his pocket.

AIR.—**Nell.**

Now coaxing, caressing,
Now wheedling, distressing,
As fortune delights to exalt or confound;
Her smile or her frown
Sets them up, knocks them down,
Turning, turning, turning, as the wheel goes round.

O fie, Mr. Gage!
Quit the tricks of the age;
Scorn the slaves that to fortune, false fortune are bound,
Their cringes and bows,
Protections and vows,
Turning, turning, &c.
[Exit, R.

Gage.
Foolish girl, not to accept a bribe, and follow the example of her betters. But who have we here?

*Enter **O'Daub**, L., with a painter's box, palette, &c.*

O'Daub.
Ah, my little Gage! to be sure, I'm not in luck. I will not want an interpreter to show me the views about here; and, by my shoul, I'll force you to accept my offer.

Gage.
Why, what's your errand?

O'Daub.
Why, upon my conscience, a very dangerous one. Jack, the painter's job was a fool to it. I am come to take the camp.

Gage.
The devil you are!

O'Daub.
Ay, and must bring it away with me in my pocket, too.

Gage.
Indeed!

O'Daub.
Ay, here's my military chest. These are my colours, you know.

Gage.
Oh, I guess your errand.

O'Daub.
Then, faith, it's a very foolish one. You must know, I got so much credit at the Fête Champêtre there, that little Roscius recommended me to the managers of Drury Lane, and so now I am a sort of deputy superintendent, under Mr. Lanturnburg, the great painter; that, as soon as he executes a thing, I always design it after him, my jewel; so I'm going to take a side front view of it.

Gage.
What, then, they are going to introduce the camp on the stage, I suppose.

O'Daub.
To be sure, you have hit it. Coxheath by candle−light, my jewel.

Gage.
And will that answer?

O'Daub.
Oh, to be sure it will answer, when a jontleman can have a warm seat, and see the whole tote of it for two thirteens, and be comfortable into the bargain. Why, it has cost me above three guineas already, and I came the cheapest way, too; for three of us went halves in the Maidstone dilly, my dear.

Gage.
Well, and how did you like the prospect?

O'Daub.
Upon my shoul, my jewel, I don't know what to make on't, so I am come to be a little further off, that I may have a nearer view of it. I think it looks like my cousin O'Doiley's great bleach−yard, in the county of Antrim. *[Boulard sings without.]* Tunder and wounds! what outlandish creature is this coming here?

Gage.
Oh, that is Monsieur Boulard, the suttler.

O'Daub.
Then, perhaps, he can help me to a bit of something to eat, for I feel a sort of craving in my stomach after my journey.

Gage.
Why, he's a very honest fellow, and will be happy in obliging you. Oh, here he comes.

Enter ***Boulard****, R.*

Bou.
Ah! begar, Monsieur Gage, I am glad I have found you; begar, I have been through Berkshire, Suffolk, and Yorkshire, and could not find you.

O'Daub.
Through Berkshire, Suffolk, and Yorkshire. What the devil does he mean?

Gage. (C.)
Oh, he means through the regiments.

Bou.
By gar, Monsieur Gage, I must depend on you for supply. I have got one, two, three brigade dinners bespoke, besides the fat alderman and his lady from London.

Gage.
Then you must send out a party of cooks to forage at Maidstone.

Bou.
Parblue, Monsieur Gage, I must look to you, for, by gar, I have got nothing in de house to eat.

O'Daub.
Then the devil burn me if I come to dine with you, honey.

Bou.
O, sire, I have got every ting for you and Monsieur Gage. You shall have any ting you like in von moment!
[Crosses to L.

O'Daub.
Ah, ha, I tank you, honey. But pray, now, Mr. Blaud, if your own countrymen were to come over here, would not you be a little puzzled to know which side to be on?

Bou.
Puzzled! parblue, Monsieur, I do assure you I love de English ver well, and vill never leave dem vile dey are victorious; and I do love mine own countrymen very well; but depend on it, Monsieur Gage, I vill always stay with de strongest.

Gage.
You see, Mr. O'Daub, my friend, Monsieur Boulard, is divested of all national prejudice, I assure you.

Bou.
Prejudice? By gar, I have too much honour ever to leave de English while dey do vin de battle. But, Monsieur Gage, vill you bring your friend, and taste my vine; I have got every ting for you and your friend, I assure you. Monsieur Gage, I will never forsake de English so long as dey are victorious; but if mine own countrymen were to

come, and make de English run, I would run a little way with dem; and if mine own countrymen were likely to overtake dem, I would stop short, bow to dem, and say, how you do, my ver good countrymen. By gar, I shall be ver glad to see you both, so come along—but depend on mine honour, Monsieur Gage, I vill never leave de English vile dey do win de battle. No, never! never!

[Exit, singing, L.

Gage.

Well said, Monsieur Boulard.

O'Daub.

Your servant, Mr. Blaud; though, faith, to do him justice, he has forgot the fashion of his country, for when he is determined to be a rogue, he is honest enough to own it. But, pray, what connection have you with the suttlers? You are no victualler here, are you?

Gage.

Not absolutely a victualler, but I deal in various articles.

O'Daub.

Indeed!

Gage.

Yes; but no business is done here only by contract.

O'Daub.

A contractor! Why, what the devil, you are not risen to such preferment as that, sure? I never knew you were able to furnish any contract.

Gage.

Nothing more easy; the circumstance depends upon the quantity, not the quality. I got on very well lately; but, at first, it brought me in several confounded scrapes.

O'Daub.

As how?

Gage.

Why, I undertook to serve a regiment with hair−powder.

O'Daub.

Hair−powder? What, you sent them flower, I suppose?

Gage.

Flower! no, no—I should have saved nothing by that. I went to the fountain−head—the pit, and gave 'em a plentiful stock of lime.

O'Daub.

Lime? brick and mortar lime?

Gage.

Yes, brick and mortar lime.

O'Daub.

And, what the plague, was not the cheat found out?

Gage.

Why, at first it answered the purpose very well. While the weather was fine, it did charmingly; but one field−day they were all caught in a fine soaking shower—the smoke ran along the lines—ecod, their heads were all slacked in an instant, and by the time they returned to the camp, damme if all their heads were not as smooth as an old half−crown.

O'Daub.

A very cross accident, indeed.

Gage.

Yes, I stood a near chance of being tied up to the halberts; but I excused myself, by saying they looked only like raw recruits before; but now they appeared like old veterans of service.

O'Daub.

But you lost your contract, I suppose?

Gage.

Yes, but I soon got another—a shaving contract to a company of grenadiers.

O'Daub.

Faith, I never knew you practised that business.

Gage.

Never handled a razor in all my life. I shave by deputy—hired Sam Sickle, down from London, an excellent hand!—handles a razor like a scythe—he'll mow you down a regiment of beards in the beating of a revally.

O'Daub.

Upon my conscience, a pretty way this of working at second hand. I wish myself could do a little by proxy.

Gage.

But, come, what say you to something to eat, and a glass of my friend Boulard's wine, and drink his majesty's health?

O'Daub.

With all my heart, my dear; and to the two camps, if you will.

Gage.

Two?—what two do you mean?

O'Daub.

Why the one at Coxheath, and the other at Drury Lane.

[Exeunt, L.

SCENE II.

—A Grove near the Camp.

Enter Two ***Countrymen****, L. U. E.*

First C.
I tell you I will certainly list; I ha' made up my mind on't.

Second C.
Well, well, I'll say no more.

First C.
Besides, the camp lies so convenient, I mayn't have such another opportunity.

Second C.
Why it's main jolly, to be sure, and all that so fair. Now, if I were to list, I should like hugely to belong to a regiment of horse, and here is one of the grandest troop com'd lately. I seed two of the officers, mighty delicate−looking gentlemen—they were dressed quite different from the others—their jackets, indeed, are pretty much the same, but they wear a sort of petticoat, as 'twere, with a large hat and feather, and a mortal sight of hair. I suppose, now, they are some of your outlandish troops—your foreign Hessians, or such like?

First C.
Ay, like enough. Here comes the serjeant. Ecod, he can sing louder than his own drum. Zooks! see how brave they march. Well, walking is a mighty dull way of going, after all.

Enter ***Serjeant, Drummer, Recruits, &c.****, R. U. E.*

SONG.—**Serjeant.**

Great Cæsar, once renown'd in fame,
For a mighty arm, and a laurel brow,
With his Ve−ni, Vi−di, Vi−ci came,
And he conquered the world with his row, dow, dow. *Chorus.*
Row, dow, dow; row, dow, dow,
And he conquer'd the world, &c.

Then should our vaunting enemies come,
And winds and waves their cause allow,
By freedom's flag we'll beat our drum,
And they'll fly from the sound of our row, dow, dow.
Row, dow, dow, &c.

Then come, my lads, our bounty share,

Whose honest hearts British valour avow;
In freedom's cause to camp repair,
And follow the beat of my row, dow, dow
Row, dow, dow, &c.

Ser.
Come, my lads, now is your time to serve the king, and make men of yourselves. Well, my lad, what do you say?

Second C.
I canno' leave my farm.

Ser. (R. C.)
Your farm? What, would you plow and sow for the hungry Frenchmen to come and reap? Come, my lads, let your fields lie fallow this year, and I'll insure you a double crop ever after. Why, now, here's a fellow made for a soldier; there's a leg for a spatter−dash, with an eye like the King of Prussia.

First C.
Ay, but, serjeant, I hanna' the air.

Ser.
The air? Oh, we'll soon learn you that. Why, now, here's little Ralph—there's a fellow for you. He has not been listed a fortnight, and see what a presence —there's dignity! Oh, there's nothing like the drill for grace.

First C.
Serjeant, I'm your man.

Second C.
And so am I.

Ser.
That's right, my lads. This is much better than to be dragged away like a slave, or be scratch'd off the church door for the militia. Now you have present pay, and the bounty−money into the bargain. But come, my lads, let me ask you a few questions, and then the business is done.

*TRIO.—**Serjeant** and **Countymen**.*

Ser.
Yet, ere you're permitted to list with me,
Answer me straight twice questions three,

First C.
No lies, master Serjeart, we'll tell unto you,
For, though we be poor lads, we're honest and true.

Ser.
First, can you drink well?

First C.
Cheerly, cheerly.

Ser.
Each man a gallon?

Second C.
Nearly, nearly.

Ser.
Love a sweet wench, too?

Both.
Dearly, dearly.

Ser.
The answer is honest, bold, and fair,
So drink to the king, for his soldiers you are.

Chorus.
The answer is honest, &c.

Ser.
When bullets are whizzing around your head,
You'll boldly march on, wherever you're led?

Second C.
To death we'll rush forward without delay,
If, good master Serjeant, you'll show us the way.

Ser.
Next, can you swear well?

Second C.
Bluffly, bluffly.

Ser.
Handle a Frenchman—

First C.
Roughly, roughly.

Ser.
Frown at a cannon?

Both.
Gruffly, gruffly.

Ser.
The answers are honest, bold, and fair,
So drink to the king, for his soldiers you are.

Chorus.
The answers are honest, &c.
Huzza! Huzza! Huzza!

*Enter **Nell**, L.*

Nell.
Well said, my lads. I am glad to see so many good hearts in the country. Oh, but was not you saying one of your recruits knows me?

Ser.
Oh, yes, Nell, a lad from Suffolk. Hark'ye, where's the Suffolk boy, as we call him? Oh, here he comes.

*Enter **Nancy**, R. U. E., in a private's uniform.*

Nan.
Ah, serjeant, did you not begin to think you had lost me? But, come, will you leave me a few minutes with Nelly?

Ser.
With all my heart. Come, my lads, let's to the Heart of Oak, where we'll drink his majesty's health.
[Exit, singing The answer, &c. and two huzzas, R. U. E.

Nan.
Why, Nelly, don't you know me?

Nell.
Know you? Egad, I don't know whether I do or not. Sure, it can't be—and yet sure, it is Nancy Granger!

Nan.
It is her, my dear Nelly, who kisses you now with the truest sense of gratitude for your former kindness and friendship.

Nell.
My dear girl.—Odso! I must take care of my reputation. But what in the name of fancy brings you here, and in this dress, child?

Nan.
How can you ask me that question, Nelly? You are no stranger to the love William and I have for each other. A few days would have united us for ever, had not cruel fate separated us. The regiment being ordered to march immediately, no resource was then left, but my flying from my father's house. I procured a dress from one of our neighbour's sons; and that love, which induced me to forsake my sex, still supports me under every affliction. Fortunately, on my way, I met the serjeant, and, after some entreaty, was enlisted and equipped as you see. What think you, Nell? does not my dress become me?

Nell.

Yes, indeed, I think you are a smart little soldier.

Nan.

Why, indeed, I am rather under size, but I fancy in action I could do more real execution than those who look bigger, and talk louder. But tell me, my dear Nelly, where is William? I long to see him. Does he ever speak of his poor Nancy? Sure, he cannot be faithless?

Nell.

Why, really, Nancy, I have some doubts.

Nan.

Heavens! is it possible?

Nell.

Ah, my poor little soldier, I only did it to try your affection. Your William is true and worthy of your love.

Nan.

You have made a greater shock on my spirits than even an army of Frenchmen could have done.

AIR.—**Nancy**.

When war's alarms enticed my Willy from me,
My fond heart with grief did sigh,
Each fresh remembrance brought fresh sorrow on me;
I wak'd ere yet the morn was nigh.
No other could delight him,
Ah! why did I ere slight him,
Coolly answering his fond tale?
Which drove him far,
Amid the rage of war,
And left silly me thus to bewail.

But I no longer thus, a maid forsaken,
Nor will I mourn like yonder dove;
For ere the dawn to−morrow shall awaken,
I'll go seek my absent love.
The distant hills all over,
I'll fly to seek my lover,
Scorning every threat'ning fear;
Nor distant shore,
Nor cannon's loud roar,
Shall longer keep me from my dear.

Nell.

But, my dear girl, consider; do you think you can cheerfully go through the toil and fatigue, and not repine after your own happy situation you left behind you?

Nan.

Oh, no! I still must love, though I should regret the occasion of our difficulties.

Nell.

Difficulty? why then marry him at the drumhead, and that will end all your difficulties.

AIR.—**Nell**.

What can our wisest heads provide
For the child we doat on dearly;
But a merry soul and an honest heart
In a lad who loves her dearly;
Who with kisses and chat,
And all, all that,
Will sooth him late and early;
If the truth she tell,
When she knows him well,
She'll swear she loves him dearly.

Let the prude at the name or sight of man
Pretend to rail severely;
But, alack a day! unseen she'll play
With the lad who loves her dearly.
Say old men what e'er they will,
'Tis a lover still
Makes day and night roll cheerly.
What makes our May
All holiday,
But the lad we doat on dearly?

Nell.

Well, my dear Nancy! you must endeavour to throw off that dress as soon as possible. I'll tell you what, here are some ladies in the camp who condescend to notice me; I'll endeavour to introduce you to them, and they may be of great service to you: in the meantime, should you, by chance, meet with William, be sure you don't discover yourself—hush! here is the serjeant.

*Enter **Serjeant**, R. U. E.*

Ser. (C.)

Why, Nelly, how's this? You have had a long conversation together; I began to think you had run away with my new recruit.

Nell. (L.)

Oh, there's no great danger, serjeant—he's no soldier for me. Pray, is he perfect in his exercise?

Ser.

Oh, as handy a lad as ever was. Come, youngster, convince her.

[Nancy goes through the exercise.

Nell.
Very well, indeed! But, serjeant, I must beg of you to befriend him as much as you can for my sake.

Ser.
Any service in my power you may command; but a soldier's life is not the easiest in the world, so they ought to befriend each other.

TRIO.—***Serjeant, Nell****, and* ***Nancy*** .

O the joy! when the trumpets sound,
And the march beats around—
When the steed tears the ground,
And shouts to the skies resound;
On glittering arms the sunbeams playing,
Heighten the soldier's charms.
The fife, and the roll of the distant drum,
Cry hark! the enemy come!
To arms!—The attack's begun!
[Exeunt, R. U. E.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

—A Grove near the Camp, as before.

Nell. [Without, R.]
William! come, speak to him another time.

Enter ***Nell****, R.*

Sure, nothing could be more lucky! However, I must obey their ladyship's instructions, and keep him in ignorance, that they may be present at the discovery. Poor fellow! it's almost a pity, too, when one has it in one's power to make him so happy.

Enter ***Corporal William****, L.*

Wil.
I am sorry, Nell, to make you wait, but it was an old friend.

Nell.
Ay, ay, some one from Suffolk, I suppose, who has brought you news of your dear Nancy!

Wil.
I wish it had! It's unaccountable that I don't hear from her.

Nell.
Unaccountable! not at all; I suppose she has changed her mind.

Wil.
No, Nelly, that's impossible; and you would think so, had you heard how she plighted her faith to me, and vowed, notwithstanding her parents were my enemies, nothing but death should prevent our union.

Nell.
O, I beg your pardon! if her father and mother, indeed, are against you, you need not doubt her constancy. But come—don't be melancholy! I tell you, I want to have you stay somewhere near the inn, and, perhaps, I may bring you some intelligence of her.

Wil.
How!—Dear Nell?

Nell.
Tho', indeed, I think you are very foolish to plague yourself so; for even had Nancy loved you well enough to have carried your knapsack, you would have been very imprudent to have suffered her.

Wil.
Ay, but prudence, you know, is not a soldier's virtue; it's our business to hold life itself cheap, much more the comforts of it. Show me a young fellow in our regiment who, if he gains the heart of a worthy girl, and afraid to

marry her for want of a little wealth, I would have him drummed out of the regiment for discretion.

Nell.

Very fine! But must not the poor girl share in all your fatigues and mishaps?

Wil.

There, Nell, I own, is the objection; but tenderness and affection may soften even these; yet, if my Nancy ever makes the trial, though I may not be able to prevent her from undergoing hardships, I am sure my affection will make her wonder at their being called so: I wish I could once boast that the experiment was made.

AIR.—**Corporal William**.

My Nancy quits the rural train
A camp's distress to prove,
All other ills she can sustain,
But living from her love.
Yet, dearest! tho' your soldier's there,
Would not your spirits fail,
To mark the hardships you must share?
Dear Nancy of the dale!

Or should you, love, each danger share,
Ah! how shall I secure
Your health, 'mid toils which you are born
To soothe, but not endure?
A thousand perils I must view,
A thousand ills assail,
Nor must I tremble e'en for you,
Dear Nancy of the dale!

[Exeunt, R.

SCENE II.

—An open View near the Camp.

Enter ***O'Daub****, L.*

O'Daub.

Well, to be sure, this same camp is a pretty place, with their drums, and their fifes, and their gigs, and their marches, and their ladies in their regimentals! Upon my conscience I believe they'd form a troop of side−saddle cavalry if there was any hopes of an invasion! But now I am alone by myself, 'tis time I should be after taking my plan; and here, I see, are some of my directions for it. *[Pulls out a pocket−book and pencil.]* I can't think what it is makes my hand shake so, unless it is Mr. Blaud's wine that is got into my head: so, so! Let me study my orders a little, for I am not used to this business, O. P. and P. S. Who the devil is to understand that? Oh! here is the explanation:—P. S. the prompter's side, and O. P. opposite the prompter. So, I'm to mark down the view as it is to be taken on one side and the other. Very well, P. S. and O. P. Let me see; somewhere here about is certainly the best point to take it from.

[Retires.

Enter ***Serjeant*** *and the* ***Two Countrymen*** *, R.*

First C.

There, you rogues!—There he is!

Second C.

Ay, ay! that's him, sure enough, I have seen him skulking about these two days; if he ben't a spy, I'll suffer hanging.

Ser.

He certainly must be a spy, by his drawing figures.

Second C.

Do seize on him, or the whole camp may be blown up before we are aware!

O'Daub.

Prompter's side.

Ser. (R.)

Hush! we shall convict him out of his own mouth.

O'Daub.

O yes! the star and garter must certainly be P. S.

Ser.

P. S.! What the devil does he say?

Second C.

Treason, you may be sure, by your not understanding him.

O'Daub.
And then O. P. will have the advantage.

Ser.
O. P.! That's the Old Pretender! A spy—my life on't!

First C.
And P. S. is Prince Charles, I suppose.

Ser.
No, you fool! P. S. is the Pretender's Son.

Second C.
Ay, ay! like enough.

O'Daub.
Memorandum—the officer's tents are in the rear of the line.

Second C.
Mark that.

O'Daub.
N. B., the general's tents are all houses.

First C.
Remember that.

O'Daub.
Then, the park of artillery—I shall never make any thing of that. Oh! the devil burn the park of artillery!

Ser.
There's a villain! He'll burn the park of artillery, will he?

O'Daub.
Well, faith! this camp is easier taken than I thought it was.

Ser.
Is it so, you rogue? but you shall find the difference on't. O what a providential discovery!

O'Daub.
To be sure, the people will like it much, and, in the course of the winter, it may surprise his majesty.

Ser.
O, the villain! Seize him directly. Fellow! you are a dead man if you stir! We seize you, sir, as a spy.
[Countrymen seize him.

O'Daub.
A spy! Pho, pho! get about your business.

Ser.
Bind him, and blindfold him if he resists.

Second C.
Ay, blindfold him for certain, and search him, too; I dare say his pockets are crowded with powder, matches, and tinder−boxes, at every corner.

O'Daub.
Tunder and ouns!—What do you mean?

First C.
Hold him fast!

O'Daub.
Why, here's some ladies coming who know me. Here's Lady Sarah Sash and Lady Plume, who were at the fête−champêtre, and will give me a good character.

Ser.
Why, villain! your papers have proved you a spy, and sent by the Old Pretender.

O'Daub.
O Lord! O Lord! I never saw the old gentleman in all my life.

Ser.
Why, you dog! didn't you say the camp was easier taken than you thought it was.

Second C.
Ay, deny that.

Ser.
And that you would burn the artillery and surprise his majesty! So, come, you had better confess before you are hanged!

O'Daub.
Hanged for a spy? Oh, to be sure, myself is got into a pretty scrape.

Ser.
Bring him away, but blindfold him; the dog shall see no more!

O'Daub.
I'll tell you what, Mr. Soldier, or Mr. Serjeant, or what the devil's your name, upon my conscience and soul, I'm nothing at all but an Irish painter, employed by Monsieur Lanternburg.

Ser.
There! he has confessed himself a foreigner, and employed by Marshal Leatherbag.

Second C.
Oh! he'll be convicted by his tongue. You may swear he's a foreigner by his lingo.

First C.

Bring him away—I long to see him hanging!

O'Daub.

Tunder and wounds! if I am hanged, what will become of the theatre and the managers? And the devil fly away with you all together for a parcel of red blackguards!

[They hurry him off, R.

SCENE III.

—Part of the Camp.

Enter ***Lady Sash, Lady Plume****, and* ***Lady Gorget****, L. U. E.*

Lady P. (C.)
Oh, my dear Lady Sash! indeed, you are too severe; and I'm sure, if Lady Gorget had been there, she would have been of my opinion.

Lady S.
Not in the least.

Lady P.
You must know, she has been rallying my poor brother, Sir Harry Bouquet, for not being in the militia, and so ill−naturedly.

Lady S.
So he should, indeed! But all I said was, he looked so finical, that I thought he ran a risk of being mistaken for a female chevalier.

Lady G. (L. C.)
Oh, the malicious creature!

Lady P.
But pray, Lady Sash, don't renew it; for see here comes Sir Harry to join us.

Enter ***Sir Harry Bouquet****, L.*

Sir H.
Now, Lady Sash, I beg a truce; Lady Gorget, I am rejoiced to see you at this delectable spot, where, Lady Plume, you may be amused with such a dismal variety.

Lady G
You see, Lady Plume, he perseveres.

Lady S.
I assure you, Sir Harry, I should have been against you in your raillery.

Sir H.
Now, as Gad's my judge, I admire the place; here's all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war! Mars in a viz−a−viz, and Bellona giving a fête−champêtre.

Lady P.
But now, seriously, brother, what can make you judge so indifferently of the camp from any body else?

Sir H.

Why, seriously, then, I think it the worst−planned thing I ever beheld;—for instance, now, the tents are all ranged in a straight line. Now, Lady Gorget, can anything be worse than a straight line? and is there not a horrid uniformity in their infinite vista of canvass? No curve, no break—and the avenue of marquees, abominable.

Lady S.

Oh, to be sure, a circus or a crescent would have been vastly better.

Lady G.

What a pity Sir Harry was not consulted!

Sir H.

As Gad's my judge, I think so; for there is great capability in the ground.

Lady S.

A camp cognoscenti, positively. Sir Harry, we will have you publish a treatise on military virtue.

Sir H.

Very well; but how will you excuse this— the officers' tents are close to the common soldiers'? What an arrangement is that, now? If I might have advised, there certainly should have been one part for the canaille, and the west−end of the camp for the noblesse, and persons of a certain rank.

Lady G.

Very right; I dare say you would have thought of proper marquees for hazard and quinze.

Lady P.

To be sure; with festino tents and opera pavilions.

Sir H.

Gad, the only plan that could make it supportable for a week. Well, certainly, the greatest defect in a general is want of taste.

Lady S.

Undoubtedly; and conduct, discipline, and want of humanity, are no atonements for it.

Sir H.

None, in nature.

Lady P.

But, Sir Harry, it is rather unlucky that the military spirit is so universal, for you will hardly find one to side with you.

Sir H.

Universal, indeed; and the ridicule of it is, to see how this madness has infected the whole road from Maidstone to London. The camp jargon is as current all the way as bad silver; the very postilions that drive you talk of their cavalry, and refuse to charge on a trot up the hill; the turnpikes seem converted into redoubts, and the dogs demanded the countersign of my servants instead of the tickets; then, when I got to Maidstone, I found the very waiters had got a smattering of tactics—for, inquiring what I could have for dinner, a cursed drilled waiter, after reviewing his bill of fare with the air of a field marshal, proposed an advanced party of soup and bouille, to be followed by the main body of ham and chickens, flanked by a fricasee, with sallads in the intervals, and corps de reserve of sweetmeats, and whip'd syllabubs to form a hollow square in the centre.

Lady P. [Laughing.]
Ah, ha, ha! Sir Harry, I am very sorry you have so strong a dislike to every thing military; for, unless you would contribute to the fortune of our little recruit—

Sir H.
Oh, madam, most willingly; and, very apropos, here comes your ladyship's protegee—and has brought, I see, the little recruit, as you desired.

Enter ***Nell*** *and* ***Nancy****, R.*

Nell.
Here, Nancy, make your curtsey, or your bow to the ladies, who have so kindly promised you protection.

Nan.
Simple gratitude is the only return I can make; but I am sure the ladies, who have hearts to do so good−natured a deed, will excuse my not being able to answer them as I ought.

Nell.
She means, an' please your ladyships, that she will always acknowledge your ladyship's goodness to the last hour of her life, and, as in duty bound, will ever pray for your ladyship's happiness and prosperity. *[Aside, to Nancy.]* That's what you mean, you know.

Lady P.
Very well. But, Nancy, are you satisfied your soldier shall continue in his duty.

Nell.
O yes, your ladyship, she's quite satisfied.

Lady P.
Well, child, we're all your friends; and be assured, your William shall be no sufferer by his constancy.

Nell.
There, Nancy, say something.

Lady S.
But are you sure you will be able to bear the hardships of your situation.
[Retires up with Nancy.

Lady P. [To Nell.]
You have seen him, then?

Nell.
Oh, yes, your ladyship.

Lady P.
Go and bring him here. *[Exit Nell, R.]* Sir Harry, we have a little plot, which you must assist us in.

Nan. [Coming forward with Lady Sash.]
Oh, madam, most willingly.

SONG.—**Nancy**.

The fife and drum sounds merrily,
A soldier, a soldier's the lad for me;
With my true love I soon shall be;
For who so kind, so true as he;
With him in every toil I'll share,
To please him shall be all my care;—
Each peril I'll dare, all hardship I'll bear,
For a soldier, a soldier's the lad for me.

Then, if kind heaven preserve my love,
What rapturous joys shall Nancy prove!
Swift through the camp shall my footsteps bound,
To meet my William with conquest crown'd.
Close to my faithful bosom press'd,
Soon shall he hush his cares to rest;
Clasp'd in these arms, forget war's alarms—
For a soldier, a soldier's the lad for me.

Lady P.
Now, Nancy, you must be ruled by us.

Nan.
As I live, there's my dear William!

Lady P.
Turn from him—you must.

Nan.
Oh, I shall discover myself—I tremble so unlike a soldier!

*Enter **Nell** with **William**, R.*

Nell.
Why, I tell you, William, the ladies want to ask you some questions.

Sir H.
Honest corporal, here's a little recruit, son to a tenant of mine; and, as I am told you are an intelligent young fellow, I mean to put him under your care.

Wil.
What, that boy, your honour! Lord bless you, sir, I shall never be able to make anything of him.

Lady S.
Nay, corporal, he's very young.

Wil.
He is under size, my lady; such a strippling is fitter for a drummer than a rank and file.

Sir H.
But he's straight and well made.

Nan. [Aside.]
I wish I was ordered to right about.

Wil.
Well, I'll do all in my power to oblige your ladyship. Come, youngster, turn about—Ah! Nelly! —Tell me, is't not she?

Sir H.
Why don't you march him off?

Nell.
Is he under size, corporal? Oh, you blockhead!

Nan.
Oh, ladies, pray excuse me!—My dear William!
[Runs into his arms.

Nell.
They'll never be able to come to an explanation before your ladyships.—Go, go and talk by yourselves.
[They retire up, R.

Enter ***Serjeant****, two* ***Countrymen, Drummer*** *, &c., R.*

Ser.
Please your ladyships, we have taken a sort of a spy this morning, who has the assurance to deny it, though he confesses himself an Irish painter. I have undertaken, however, to bring this letter from him to Lady Sarah Sash.

Sir H.
What appears against him?

Ser.
A great many suspicious circumstances, please your honour—he has an O before his name; and we took him with a draught of the camp in his hand.

Lady S. [Laughing.]
Ha, ha, ha! this is ridiculous enough. 'Tis O'Daub, the Irish painter, who diverted us some time ago at the féte−champêtre. Honest serjeant, we'll see your prisoner—and I fancy you may release him.

Sir H.

Pray, serjeant, what's to be done this evening?

Ser.

The line, your honour, turns out; and, as there are pleasure−tents pitched, perhaps the ladies will condescend to hear a march and chorus, which some recruits are practising against his majesty comes to the camp.

Lady S.

Come, Sir Harry, you'll grow fond of a camp life, yet.

Sir H.

Your ladyships will grow tired of it first, I'll answer for it.

Lady S.

No, no.

Sir H.

Yes—on the first bad weather, you'll give orders to strike your tents and your toilets, and secure a retreat at Tunbridge.

[A march, while the scene changes.

SCENE IV.

—A View of the Camp.

Officers and Soldiers discovered drawn out in line.

FINALE.

Ser.
While the loud voice of war resounds from afar,
  Songs of duty and triumph we'll pay;
When our monarch appears, we'll give him three cheers,
  With huzza! huzza! huzza!

Nan.
Ye sons of the field, whose bright valour's your shield,
  Love and beauty your toils shall repay;
Inspir'd by the charms of war's fierce alarms,
  Huzza! huzza! huzza!

Wil.
Inspir'd by my love, all dangers I'll prove,
  No perils shall William dismay;
In war's fierce alarms, inspir'd by those charms,
  Huzza! huzza! huzza!

Cho.
May true glory still wave her bright banners around!
Still with fame, power, and freedom Old England be crown'd.