

OLD NEW YORK.

OR,

DEMOCRACY IN 1689.

A Tragedy, in Five Acts.

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"ROMAN TRIBUTE," "SHADOW LAND," ETC., ETC.

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DEDICATION.

TO THOMAS AMORY DEBLOIS, Esq.,
THE ACCOMPLISHED GENTLEMAN AND FIRM FRIEND,
THIS WORK IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED.
BY THE AUTHOR,

E. OAKES SMITH.

BROOKLYN, L. I.,
May 16, 1853.

Preface.

MUCH discrepancy of opinion prevails amongst historians, in regard to the character of Jacob Leisler—some representing him as a mere demagogue, others as an intriguing interloper, too feeble to sustain the ground he had assumed. It has been the policy of his enemies to blacken his memory, but a careful perusal of cotemporary records and collateral history must lead every candid mind to a belief that he was a man of pure and enlarged views, who, partaking of the popular dread of Popery, which prevailed not only in Great Britain, but the Colonies also, on the accession of James II. to the English crown, had placed himself at the head of the New York Province, in order to protect it from the schemes of "disorganizers" and "Papists."

I need not say I have followed the character of Leisler, as so ably presented in the "Life of Jacob Leisler, by Charles F. Hoffman, in Sparks' American Biography." After William and Mary were firmly established upon the throne, an investigation into the transactions of the period was fully instituted, and the attain of treason removed from the memory of Leisler and Milburne. Their bodies were exhumed, and laid in state, and a public funeral, with becoming honors, awarded to the unconscious dust of those so greatly wronged in life. They were executed in what is now the Park of the City Hall, in 1689, and this beautiful public fountain now throws its pure waters, sparkling to the light, upon the very spot once consecrated by the blood of patriotism.

It is said that Sloughter signed the death warrant in the midst of a drunken debauch, and they were led at once to execution in the midst of a terrible storm. The last words of Leisler—"I do implead thee at the bar of God for this day's work"—are historic, and indicate a man of great force and intrepidity.

BROOKLYN, 16th May, 1853.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

JACOB LEISLER, *Elected Governor by the People.*
 WILLIAM SLOUGHTER, *Governor by the Crown.*
 MILBURN, *Son-in-law to Leisler.*
 SCHUYLER, *A Friend.*
 LIVINGSTON, } *Foes to Leisler.*
 BAYARD, }
 INGOLDSBY, *A Creature of Sloughter's.*
 NICHOLAS, *A Dutchman.*
 JOHN, *Servant to Leisler.*
 Citizens, Soldiers, Officers, &c.

ELIZABETH, *Wife to Leisler.*
 MARGARET, *Wife to Milburn, and Daughter of Leisler.*
 HANNAH, *Waiting maid of Elizabeth.*

OLD NEW YORK.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

New York. Battery, trees, an old, round Dutch tower, called the Citadel. 1689. Citizens, sailors.

First Citizen. Yonder ship bears the new governor.
Second Cit. And all these rascals, who lately threw up their greasy caps for Leisler, are just as ready to shout for this interloper.

First Cit. Have a care, man, have a care. What think you, Master Nicholas?

Nicholas. (doggedly) Dunder-and-blixen! I've done a-thinking. I leave it, as I do praying to *te Domine*. 'Tis his trade.

John. That's my way of thinking, as nigh as a shell sticks to an 'yster.

Nicholas. Come you away, John. We won't talk mit these men who eat up de gunpowder, and like bullets more as wholesome food. Since the days of old Petrus Stuyvesant, New Nederlands has gone to *te teivel*, faster tan *te dog* for water. I've been off my pipe all *te time* since, like one horse off his fodder.

John. I tell you, old Nick, to shut up that mouth of your'n, big enough, and ugly enough, to bring out a brood of young treasons. I serve Jacob Leisler.

Nick. Sarve away, man, and go to *te teivel* mit you.

Will it help to colony of Manhattan, because John Dodge serves Jacob Leisler?

John. Say a word, Nick, inferiorising John Dodge or Jacob Leisler, and you'll take a taste of this mallet o' mine. (*doubting his fist*) Hurra, for Jacob Leisler, hurra. Hurra, you, Nick, hurra, I say.

Nick. When I hurra for Jacob Leisler, you'll make the helm of the Flying Dutchman.

John. Here comes Mister Milburn, as tight as a clipper, and as glib of tongue as a mounseer. Now, hurra, my hearties, hurra for Leisler, and show your colors.

[*Shouts of the people, A Leisler, A Leisler.*]

Enter MILBURN.

Mr. That's the cry. We'll none of this base hiring. Leisler was born and bred upon the soil, And serves his country, as he serves his God, Out of an honest heart. Now mark me, friends—We were forgotten of the throne; too poor, Remote, and weak, and worthless were we held, For any vampire of the Crown to come And ease us of our blood. We'll keep it, then, Up with the standard, good men and true, A Leisler, A Leisler, to the house of Leisler! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The house of Leisler.

Enter HANNAH with a letter in her hand.

Han. 'Tis his writing. I should know it if I found it hanging on the North Pole. I remember when he used to write out his speeches, the house was littered with parliamentary eloquence. I used to catch myself repeating sentences to electrify the people. My conscience! I see it all now! He would walk up and down the room, his eyes sternly fixed on the stopper of a decanter, which figured for an honorable member, till it did seem as if it

SCENE II.]

must leap from the bottle, and the very chairs stamp with applause. (*Peeps into the letter.*) Here he has writ a letter to my master, Mr. Jacob Leisler. Mister, indeed!—I reckon he'll need learn how to say, Your Excellency! But what can he be writing about! Life there, you spider! (*Throws down the letter, and puts her foot upon it.*) My conscience! what a world this is!—something or other always turning up at the wrong time. Now, if this load of a letter should bring it all out! Alack, alack! it will kill the sweetest mistress that ever the Lord made. I could find it in my heart to kill the man myself, only they'd string me up to dance upon nothing, which would be uncomfortable, and indecent besides. Oh! I knew trouble was a-coming—I dreamed of snakes last night; I've had a bell in my ear this three days; I saw the new moon over my left shoulder; the cat has died—a sure sign; the dog howls—another. Yesterday, an owl sat at midday upon the roof; and to-day is Friday! Mercy me! I'll not deliver the letter. (*Hides it in her bosom.*) Here they come! We'll start upon misery on Saturday, after breakfast.

Enter LEISLER and ELIZABETH.

[*Exit*

Leisler. Sweet wife, thou hast been weeping; tell me why.

Eliz. I wept from depth of my exceeding bliss. Like Desdemona's noble lord, I felt, "My soul hath her content so absolute That not another comfort like to this Succeeds in unknown fate."

Leisler. And yet our house is old and dull, meseems, To one so fresh and buoyant as thyself, And thy old spouse is cold and business-pressed.

Eliz. Nay—when was home dull to loving wife? Thou dost lure me to the tale so often told, Which Love delights to tell with folded wing,

And eyes reflecting Psyche's own.

Leisler. My child I thou art in truth a very syren.
Thy voice is just between a laugh and tear—
So low, yet clear, heard by the soul, not sense.
How hast thou 'witched me thus? I sometimes fear thee.

Eliz. Nay, be thine own great self, or I shall fear.
Love is a winged god, not made for flight,
But as exultant, and from earth intact—
Not weighed by sense, nor yet by thought abstract.

Leisler. Thou prettiest wisdom! But, Betse, good
Betse!

Eliz. Nay, there is that old frown of thine, *Leisler.*
I cannot talk and that upon thy brow.

(A judge most plying, and yet stern he looks.) (*Aside.*)
Am I not all?—thy friend, thy wife, thy slave?

Leisler. Thou art all but the last, good Betse! Now
list—

Thou dost often weep—art troubled in thy sleep;
Thine eyes are like wells of unfathomed light,
And thought and love, in the which I gaze—gaze,
Yet find a depth beyond sealed from my reach.

I love thee not as boy nor youth; and thou—
Thou art mature in womanhood. Now mark:
The full, passionate fondness of our youth
Endows us with a power beyond our wout;
But 'tis a fearful thing, in our stern years,
To find the Samson locks are fleeced away
By some fair, false Delilah in our path.

Eliz. No more, art thou lovest me. I dread these
moods!

Alas! I am annihilate in thee—
Thou should'st be Antony, all unsubdued
By Egypt. Thou know'st my every nerve but thrills
In concert with thine own; there's not a thought

But circles under thine; nor whim, nor will,
That does not own thee master. I am thine
So all, that I have lost my single self.

Leisler. I fear thee less than my own manhood, Bess.
Thou hast so 'witched, so moulded me to thee.

Eliz. Nay, then I'll play a thousand elfish tricks—
I will be moody, spleeny, fret thee so,
That thou wilt love me like a man of sense.

Leisler. I would I might. In sooth, I do.

*Enter HANNAH leading in a child. LEISLER plays with the
hair of the child.*

Leisler. Our child has thy eyes, good Bess.

Eliz. His mouth is thine.

Leisler.

And it will prove a curse;
It is the lip that will not be controlled.

The eye may hide its tale beneath the lid,
Nor show the wealth entrusted to the tongue.

The lip is the heart's pendulum, and moves
As its deep pulsings move—it shapes itself,
It trembles, breathes, and vibrates to the truth.

[*Tumult in the street. Cries for Leisler.*
I forget to tell thee, Bess, the new governor
Is here, and we shall have but noisy times, I fear.

(*Caresses the child.*)
Thou tender imp, fashioned from mine own blood,
Would I could know the path appointed thee!
Shall I lead up thy steps to manly strength?
See the light down upon this girlish chin?—
These boneless fingers match the sturdy glaive?—

My boy, my boy, I leave thee unto God!
A father's love might crave too much, perchance,
Too little ask, and thus thy fate be marred.

[*Noise. Calls for Leisler. He presents the
child to ELIZABETH.*
I love to see thee thus, sweet wife and child,

To fold ye both, as ye were sacred things
Which I would hide and shield from the rude world ;
Fibres of mine own heart concealed from view,
Like prayers which we in silence breathe to God,
Yet feel a human ear would desecrate.
Now to thy needle, love, and household songs ;
I must not twine the distaff e'en for thee.

Eliz. (looking after him) Oh ! if I do worship him, if I
do yearn

With a wild, passionate fondness for him,
He's god-like, and 'tis no sin. I am refreshed
By breathing but the air he breathes. My child,
Art worthy of his blood—of Leisler's blood ?
If blotch or stain should fall upon thy life,
I should believe thou must have been begot
By some misshapen, ugly, midnight dream,
And no commingled blood of Leisler's there.
There, take him hence (to HANNAH). I grow too fond.

Eliz. (solus. *Asses him. Exit HANNAH and child.*
in Thine enthroned light—
As Leisler walks, shaming my perjured soul,
That shrinks and faints in his majestic truth !
I am cut off from woman's dearest fight,
To worship God through him she loves. For me,
I rush half-madly to Thy throne, nor dare
To trust to human ears the story of my guilt.
Thrice blessed she who hath no spot to hide !—
Who in the darkness of the night may sleep,
Head pillowed on a trusting heart, nor fear
The babbling of a tongue let loose in slumber ;
Nor at the morn awake to search the eye,
All loving and beloved, lest change had grown
With midnight, and the morning ray shall bring
The blackness of despair (*Walks up and down.*)

Oh, my God !—is this not heavy judgment ?
For every drop of bliss, have I not drunk
Oceans of gall and wormwood ? Have I not,
When loving most, most feared ?—when trusted most,
Most writhed with pangs, such as the damned know ?
Shall not these atonement work ?—or dost Thou still
Demand full penalty ? * * *
On my head let it fall, but not on these—
Oh ! not on these, the guiltless, the beloved !
I must cheer my looks once more. [*Shouts.*
I hear the shouts of people, and the voice of Leisler.

Enter HANNAH.

Han. I wish I knew what on earth to do with this
bothersome letter ! I ought to have been a Solomon in
petticoats. I wish I was as old as the hills, in order to ex-
tract wisdom from grey locks !

Enter JOHN.

John. But you ain't nothing nigh so old, Mistress Han-
nah ; and as for the wisdom line, 'tisn't to be expected in
a woman. It takes a man for that.

Han. It takes a good many men to gather a small
quantity from, John.

John. You've been onlucky in your experience, Mistress
Hannah, if you've come to such a conclusion.

Han. I can't trifle now, John, for I've something on my
mind that distresses me too much. I've a terrible secret
I don't laugh—it isn't about you—and I need the advice
of a clear, discreet head.

John. Then I'm the very man for you, Mistress Han-
nah. I've heard Mistress Vonderbick say to my mother,
many's the time, " That John of your'n has a long head,
he has."

Han. Meet me at the end of the pantry an hour hence,
John. (*John approaches close to her side.*)

John. Give me a sign, a signet-ring to show, Mistress

Hannah, or mayhap you'll change your mind before the half hour comes round. A half hour is a long time for a woman to hold on to the same way of thinking, and I won't stand bein' made a fool on.

Han. That's part your prayin' for, John.

John. Then here's a fool's doins. (*Snatches a kiss, and runs out.*)

Han. (solus.) John is n't so much fool, after all, as he is called—I wish it could. I feel as if it struck out upon my cheek like a blister. I wonder if it doesn't! My conscience, what a muss there is in the streets to-day! I'll go out on the stoop, and see what 'tis about. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

In front of Leisler's house.

Soldiers, citizens. Calls for Leisler. Enter LEISLER, standing in front of an open door, clad in armor.

Leisler. What seek ye, good friends?

Schuyler. A man.

Leisler. Ye jest; there is a crowd of such before me.

Schuy. A man is hard to find; but being found, we know how to honor and uphold him. That man is Jacob Leisler.

Leisler. I am a rude soldier, and a plain man, Good friends; I have no glosing of the tongue To mould you to my will. I serve my God By serving you, and ye have honored me, By trusting in my hands our country's weal. Since then, I have not held myself mine own. But pledged to you and yours.

Schuy. Our noble Leisler. We have made thee our governor, and we come now to bid thee maintain thy office—to yield it unto none. This foreign menial, this paid minion of a power that deigns to remember us when

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we are worth fleeing, we will send whence he came. We bid thee keep the keys of the citadel.

Leisler. I am your servant, subject to your law. Ye know how traitors lurked within; ye know

How danger threatened from without; ye know

How ye by hirelings had been robbed, by men

Who drew their life-blood from a foreign soil,

And knew not how to love this brave, new land—

Men, whose faithfulness to those who sent them here,

Was treachery to us; whose truth to them

Was falsehood unto you and me—to all!

The leader in the van of nations yet to be.

I behold her spreading forth her eagle wings,

Her cyrie stirring up, and with strong beaks,

Heaving amid the stars her upward way

Along the blazing noon and rolling clouds,

Until her flight shall shadow all the world.

The bowed-down child of labor, nursed in wrong,

Shall seek him here a refuge; here shall rise

A people, such as Israel's God designed,

Whose only law shall be, His own inscribed law

Upon the human heart: where neither Priest,

Nor King—

[*Voices from the crowd, with a cry of Treason.*

If such there be, will dare infringe the right

Of any man, however meanly held—

But I weary you, good friends; what is your will?

Schuy. That you keep the keys of the citadel, and remain our governor, despite the arrival of this crown

menial. (*Cries of treason.*)

Leisler. If he should bring credentials from the Crown, The seal of his appointment show, good friends?

Schuy. We have chosen thee to office; we will uphold thee; we know no other right.

Bayard. Treason, treason

Leister. Whose is the craven tongue that shames his blood,

*The land that gave him birth, by croaking words
That have no meaning in a plume like this?*

*[Shouts of the people, and noise in the distance
of cannon and music.]*

Good friends, our hearts are far beyond the times.

The hope of our great thought, the time to come,

Hath seized as it were at the threshold now.

I pray you lay aside your loving zeal

As most perilous, unfitting much the times.

Schuy. Doth Leister fear?

Leister. Ye have well spoken. I thank my God in this,

My heart is brave as any man's, in right;

I fear no living man, do what I will,

But Him, heart-searcher of us all, I fear,

And ye, my friends, with all your glowing zeal—

*[The Slougher party file over the stage, with
music and banners. (Cries of Leister,
Slougher, &c. ELIZABETH appears upon
a balcony above.)]*

*Eliz. That name! it is the knell of all my peace,
It is himself. Oh! I am lost, for ever lost. (Retires.)*

*Herald. Jacob Leister, thou art cited to yield thyself
and thy office into the hands of the rightful governor of
this province, appointed by their Majesties, William and
Mary, and to answer charges preferred against thee by the
loyal subjects of their Majesties, living in this their Majes-
ties' province of New York, otherwise known as New
Netherlands.*

*[Shouts of "Long live their Majesties," inter-
mingled with cries of Slougher, Leister,
groans and hisses.]*

Schuy. Long live our rightful governor, Jacob Leister!

To your tents, O Israel!

Leister. My friends, we will obey no power here.

Without good cause. This man must come to us,

And show to us the seals of his appointment,

Or Jacob Leister moves him not a jot.

*[Exit.
[The people retire with shouts, &c. Exit.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A room in the house of Leicester. Elizabeth solus.

Eliz. Would I were more or less of woman than I am,
So I might weep or rave. I might go mad.
Meseems 'twere easy now. (*She laughs wildly.*)
Was't I that laughed?—I that must hold my mind
As by an armed will? I must not weep—
Tears, the sweet ~~dashing~~ ^{dashing} of an angel-helm,
No more shall I ~~catch~~ ^{catch} up these eyes; no more
Shall bear away on their embittered tide,
The memory of griefs, baptised anew.
The sorrow, freighted thus adown the stream,
Is but a nursing of the busy heart
Which dandles soft, the counter to a smile.
My brain is clear, and calm, and icy cold—
My thoughts like stately giants onward stalk,
And I, transfigured to eternal stone,
One vital spot of liquid flame inclose.
Oh! for the hand of him who smote the rock—
To yield a death-blow now * * *

Ye bolted flames that down the sailor's mast,
Quench your red arrows in the yeasty wave,
Behold a fitter mark! Ye plague-spots, come;
Ye noisome monsters of the fenny brake,
Enfold a monster unto you akin.
Is there no deadly thing to pity take?
Am I too loathsome for thy arms, O death?
Oh! take me; hide me in your narrow house,

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That his clear eyes see not the thing I am.
* * * * *

Oh, bitter pangs! death and the grave; ye love
As others do, the beautiful and blest,
And ye do turn away from him whose cup
Is wormwood crowned—with misery o'ertopped,
To banquet with a fair and joyous crew.
I live and breathe with prescience all eterne,—
I am all eye, life, soul; no madness comes
To such. * * *

H! let me lift the weight,
And know the depth of this great woe,—it flits—

Enter HANNAH.

Hannah. Oh, my dear, my noble mistress. God will be
pitiful. Do not look so wretched. Let me unbraid your
hair, and bathe with rose distil your hands. Ah, dear
madam, that we should come to this! Here is a letter to
my master.

Eliz. My God! from him. Nay, be quiet, good
Hannah. I shall not faint. I must think—think. It is
all over. Look well to the child.

Hen. Dear madam, all may be well; years have gone
over since those days of terror. All may be forgotten.
Cheer up; be brave once more, and bear your secret with
your own strong heart.

Eliz. Give me to drink.—No, no, it must be told—
I shall be the theme of jest upon the mart;
Rude men will jeer, and boys scoff at me,
And haughty dames eye me askance. * * *

Slowly, as if thinking.
Leisler may learn the truth, by the way-side,
In the market, or on the battle-field.
And I, his wife, shall drag his honored head

Down to the earth,—his wife, who should keep his name
Unmouted by vulgar lips, unknown to shame,
[More rapidly.]

Will make that name a hissing and a bye-word ;
His wife, who at the portal of his heart

Should sit, a chaste-eyed angel, bringing peace,
And barring out all shapes of wrong and discord,
I shall plunge therein a deadly pang. * *

Han. Can we devise nothing, Madam, no way to avert
all this ?

Eliz. Nothing, good Hannah. Now leave me.

Han. Ah ! Madam, madam, I would die to serve you ;
pity your poor girl, and let her do something to save you ;

Eliz. Leave me,—I must think.

Han. It is time to meet John. Oh, but John is go-
thing in a time like this.

Eliz. (*sobs.*) How mournfully, how yearningly have I
Longed for thy presence, velvet-footed peace !
The drudging housewife singing at her toil

I have most envied,—and the market dame
Content with her small gains, and with the cheer,

Homely, but hearty, of the wayside boor,
Provokes me to a spleen * *

Enter LEISLER, hurriedly.

Leis. My sweet wife, thou art fit to wear a crown,
But I will give thee what is better worth,

The heart of him who is the people's king ;
Not king ; nay, God forbid, in this brave land.

But, what ails thee, sweet ?—these times oppress thee.

Ey, put it by, I'll none of it to-day.
(*Sees the letter.*)

I shall be much abroad, shall see thee less.
How beautiful thou art, although so pale,

So sad to-day—my mourning bride !

Eliz. Too true, too true. The vase of life is draped
With cypress, willow, herbs of grace, and blooms
Of blushing rose and golden amaranth—
And for my Leisler's brow the laurel crown.

Leis. Nay, thou dost think me ambitious, and tremblest,
Sweetheart, lest the household altar dim.

Eliz. Nay, fill thee with great thoughts ; fill up thy
heart

With what is worthy thee, beyond—beyond, (*falteringly.*)

Leis. My wife ! thou dost reproach me. Is it well ?

Eliz. Dost love me, Leisler ?

Leis. Love thee, Bess ? to doatiness, to madness.

Eliz. With a because : because I am fair and true ?

Leis. A very angel. Nay, better 'an all, all woman.

Eliz. Dost love me, Leisler ?

Leis. My own wife, thou knowest that I love thee.
Eliz. I will remember.

Leis. Thou art ill : thy hands are cold ; thy cheek pale.
These times are too much for thee, and yet, Bess—

Eliz. Dost love me, Leisler ?

Leis. Ah, Bess, thou art ill ; art sure thou lovest me ?
Eliz. Love thee ! words have no meaning to my deep
love.

It hath purged me from the weakness of my sex.
I forget that there is any world but this,

Within the circle of my husband's heart.
Love thee !

(*Weeps, and throws herself into his arms.*)
Leis. My child ! what has moved thee thus ?

Eliz. The letter, the letter, I must tell thee.
Leis. Elizabeth,—if there is any deadly thing

To blight this Eden of my autumn days,
Pity these bleaching locks, and let me sleep,

Although my head lie at the serpent's mouth.
Eliz. My husband ! my husband ! It is but a parable.

Leis. Well, I will hear it, child.

Eliz. I had a friend who was once exceeding fair,
Though wan, and changed now. She broke the heart
Of him she loved, loving as I do thee—

Leis. Well, child ?
(*Stops.*)

Eliz. There was a marriage day of pride and thrift;
And years of gloom blighting her summer days,
Until she loathed her life, and loathed the sun;
And then in darkness, and the midnight storm,
She went her forth, withouten aid or shield.

Leis. The tale should not be upon thy lips, Bess.

Eliz. She had no help but God. She had no hope.
Nothing but poverty and toil to dog
Her weary feet, till she should rest with Him.

Leis. Had she not felt the stirring of a life
Within her own? small, pleading, upward hands,
And piping tones, gladding a mother's heart?

Eliz. She had no child;
Not all the deadening miseries that wait
On constricted rows; not all the tortures known
To the recoiling nerve and shrinking sense,—
Not all the blight and famine of the soul
Had moved her to forget a mother's love.

Leis. 'Tis a sad tale, Bess; think no more of it.
Eliz. This is not all; years passed away, and she did
love.

Leis. No more,—we can but pity.

Eliz. Nor is this all,—she buried up the past.
(*She draws back.*)

Leis. She was infamously perjured.

Eliz. She married him she loved.

Leis. No more of the vile adulteress.

Eliz. Leisler—Leisler, I am that woman.

Leis. Thou! thou that painted hypocrite!

Eliz. I, Leisler, I!

Leis. Alas! my fond wife. She has gone mad!

Eliz. Would to God it were madness!
(*Tenderly.*)

[*Leisler staggers to one side. Elizabeth throws
herself at his feet.*]

Eliz. Oh! I have killed thee, killed thee. Speak to
me.

Curse me—slab me to the heart, but look not thus.

Look here,—to die by thy hand were joy indeed.
I'll kiss the dagger's point, and kiss thy hand,
And forfeit heaven itself if—
(*Opens her robe.*)
(*Faints.*)

SCENE II.

A Room. Enter John and HANNAH.

Han. Now, John, I have never babbled about my mis-
tress or her affairs. I have been no woman to talk of
those I serve.

John. You've kept your mouth as tight as a clam-shell,
I can testify, Mistress Hannah.

Han. And she is the sweetest lady woman ever served,
and good and pure as an angel.

John. Angels don't marry, Mistress Hannah.
Han. There's comfort in that.

John. Not accordin' to my way of thinkin'.

Han. Well, now I must reveal to you a secret, John,
that I had never thought to breathe to living soul, and
you must be close-mouthed, John, and help us.

John. I will, if you love me, Hannah.

Han. We will not talk of that now; but if I did not
think well of you, I should not place this confidence in
you, John.

John. That's true, and proves you've never liked any
other fellow, or you'd o' let out this secret o' your'n, which
has sat astride of your bosom, like a nightmare, so long.

Han. John, be still. I know not what to do or say.
John. Well, I don't pretend to guess what, seein' you
are a woman.

[*They talk apart in a low voice. John betrays great surprise.*]

John. Married before!—but I won't tell; no, never, so long as my name's John Dodge. But the cart's ahead o' the horse. Her first man died decently, and was comfortably buried!

Han. No, John, no; she was very wretched. She left him one dark, stormy night. She was well nigh mad. We hid ourselves in poor hovels, till we found a vessel coming to this country, and here we came and lived in private till she and our master met. Ah! John, she has suffered greatly.

John. And she married my master with another husband living?—an angel, truly!—a most virtuous lady, Mistress Hannah! I'll keep no such secret. To come here and impose upon our governor in this way! I'll proclaim her from the house tops, the good-for-nothing English hussy.

Han. John, John, I am English too. Stop, John, and hear me.

John. I'll not stop, Mistress Hannah; very likely you are married too, and want to come it over me in the same way; but you don't do it—no, you don't do it. I am no Samson, to be shaved by a she Delilah.

Han. I did not think this of you, John.

John. I dare say you didn't, Mistress Hannah.

You've yet to learn the mettle of John Dodge.

Han. John, I was never married, and have no desire to be so.

John. What's that now you say? I wouldn't swear to that, if I was in your shoes, Mistress Hannah. But come, tell us more about this sweet lady, eh!

Han. The worst is to come. The new governor—this weak, bad man, whom the people are unwilling to receive—was once her husband.

John. So the new governor gets a principality cumbered with a runaway wife, eh?

Han. Oh, John, you cannot know how miserable she is! Go help to incite the people to revolt; he may be sent back, die in battle—anything—and thus our house be saved. I must go to her.

John. Stop, Mistress Hannah. Are you sure you ain't married, too? Couldn't land nor sea turn up an old husband of your'n that you'd like to put in the fore front of a battle?

Han. Farewell, John! this is no time for talk. [*Exit.*]

John. (*solas*) Now that is always the way of it. Give a woman one dose of misery, and she's sure to turn right round and spit it out, and take another in her own way, while the man gulps down the bitter pill, and there it ends. Now, I shall take my pill in the shape of Mistress Hannah. Do it manfully, John Dodge, kickin's of no use. I'll go now and look after this Irish; and I'll stir up the people agin him. Hurra!

SCENE III.

A Library, with low windows and alcoves.

Leisler. (*solas*) Home, country, dearest idols of my soul!

Ye lean but on a broken staff. The hand

That should uphold you, is weak and palsied.

The eagle knows its mate upon the rock

Will breast the storm-cloud, face the midday sun,

With wing as bold, and eye as true as his—

And thence from his warm cyrie doth he rise

To brave the ocean and the cloud. But man,

Man hath none to help; he wins a coward,

Loves a lie, and walks with hampers at his feet,

And calls her wife. * * *

Men have stood upon the sea-shore—plain men
Who have no fancy dreams—and these have seen

Painted upon the sky, a gallant ship
 Float on with all her sails and banners out.
 Squadrons have marshalled the pellucid dome,
 With rifted sail and shattered hulk, and sides
 Which belched the smoke and flame of bloody war;
 And then the blue sky spread her summer robe,
 Without a speck or cloud. Men grew pale with fear.
 At length 'twas told, that miles away, the sea
 Was red with blood, and ghastly made by ships
 Hurled to the ruin of a deadly fight—
 And simple men had seen it in the clouds.
 Oh, youth, thou art the mirage of our life,
 And all thy dreamy and heroic shapes
 Foreshadows of our self in coming years!
 Thy pantings and thy longings for the strife,
 Forebode the field, and girth and harness thee
 For manhood. When it comes, fight thou but well,
 And thou shalt come bleeding, and torn, and gashed—

Enter MILBURN, hurriedly.

Mil. My father! what is this? The people wait—
 They crowd in masses to the citadel.

Come, let me brace thine armor on; thy sword,
 Thy casque, thus—

[*Arms him.*]

Leisler. Didst thou marry my daughter, Milburn?

Mil. Surely, my father. What means this?

Leisler. Thou dost think her true—pure as the unweaned
 child?

Mil. My God! Surely she is all this.

Leisler. Believe it not, Milburn. Nay, take her heart,
 And wash thou it in the eternal sea,
 Yet there would lurk one black and secret stain,
 Which water could not reach.

Mil. I will not believe it. Shame on thee, shame!
 Her father, too!

Leisler. Poor fool! I have been as weak as thou!

Enter ELIZABETH.

Leisler. Out of my sight; I will not look upon thee.

Eliz. One word, Leisler, one word.

Mil. Something has changed him. Leave him, good
 mother.

Eliz. Oh, Milburn! it is I—I—

Mil. Poor lady! thou hast done nothing.

Leisler. Look at her, Milburn—the painted lie!

Eliz. Will nothing move him? My child!—

Mil. To the citadel—all will be well—meet the people.

Leisler. I will go anon. Is she not fair?

Has she not that which steals into the soul,
 As if a newer, fresher life were there?

The fondness of a child with woman's pride—
 A gracious woman matched with playful girl!

'Tis such, when they prove false, who tear our hearts,

As to the Titan's came the vulture's beak.

Mil. Pardon me, good father, thou dost wrong her.

Enter ELIZABETH, dragging forward her child.

Leisler. Take the bastard hence—away!

Eliz. Unsay it, Leisler, in mercy take it back!

[*She staggers, and is borne out by MILBURN.*]

Leisler. I will to the citadel. Good people!

What shall I say to them? * * * *

Oh, she was to me like a tender child,

Daughter, wife, friend!—I must away.

[*Exit.*]

*A chamber. ELIZABETH reclines upon a couch, caressing the
 child. HANNAH.*

Eliz. Reach me the cup, good Hannah.

Han. Oh, dearest Madam, bethink you!

Eliz. Do not fear me, good Hannah, I will live
 So long as I can hold my breath, in hope

That some day he will forgive me.

Han. The black day will be followed by sunshine ; no cup can be all bitter.

Eliz. If sin be in the cup, the sweetest draught will have a bitter close. Now leave me.

Han. I will seek my master.

[*Exit HANNAH.*]

Eliz. (*solas.*) When Thou didst frame me in the eternal mind,

Didst Thou ordain me unto this ? Was I,

So covetous of virtue, made to be

The mockery of what my spirit craves ?

Were these affections burning in my heart,

But meant for scorpion-stings, deathful to all,

And most to me ? (*Holds up the glass.*)

Ye drops, potent in death, why are ye here ?

Dare ye in God's own laboratory work,

Changing the fresh and ruddy hue of health

Into a pestilential, stagnant mass ?

Ah ! dare ye creep within the busy heart,

And stay the workings of its awful spring ?

[*Caresses the child.*]

My beautiful, mine own ! do I not love thee ?

The spring-time daisies will above thee grow,

The honeysuckle and the violet, too ;

And these will tempt the bee and singing bird

To loiter round thy bed, my pretty one.

[*Gives to the child.*]

Is't bitter, love, dear ? So is our life

Bitter—far less than words of human scorn,

To be called that which crimson all the cheek !

He will say I have done well. There, love, sleep,

And I will sing to thee some nursery song.

(*Sings.*) Lullaby, lullaby, hush thee, my dear !

Thy father is coming, and soon will be here.

Oh, oh, oh ! he will come no more.

Enter MARGARET MILBURN.

Marg. My sweet mother, I thought I heard a cry—

My poor, dear friend !

Eliz. Put your ear down, *Mag*, does he sleep well—

Well, think you ?

Marg. Most lovely ! We'll drape the robe about him.

Eliz. Ah, yes ! and thou wilt scare away the bat,

And see that never an evil thing comes near.

Marg. Milburn told me you were ill, dear friend !

My noble father, too. I fear these movements.

Eliz. Hark ! was there not a cry ? Look to the child !

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The citadel. Soldiers and citizens; sailors, Indians, Dutch, and English.

Enter MILBURN.

Milburn. Three cheers for the noble Leisler.

Enter LEISLER.

Leisler. Hear me, my friends, and ponder well.
When men do journey to a distant bourne,
They lingering look to what they leave behind,
Recall the past—live o'er its joy,—its grief
Claims yet another pang, and thus they go.
When rulers lay their robes of office down,
How should they search amid the ermined folds
For any stain,—how turn the open palm
To see that no injustice lurks beneath!
How bend the ear to catch the slightest wail
Of unrequited wrong; and having done,
As best they may, still should they kneel to God,
And pray that chance mishap may drift aside.

[Murmurs of applause.]

The father, who around the board shall meet
No more the children of his love, bethinks
Of all the good that he would do, and crowds
A life into an hour's space, then dies,—
But not till maxims wise, and hoary saws,
And prophecies of good that follows good,
And evil dogged by evil evermore,
Have made his dying lips more eloquent

SCENE I.]

Than all the teachings of his life.
'Tis thus that Leisler speaks.

Mil. (*aside to Leis.*) This is most pitiful.

Leisler. Milburn, Milburn, I can no more,
The wound is deadly. I pray you.

Mil. The people wait,—let me speak for thee.
The city, one and all, upholds thy bent.
This new man may return the way he came;
Return and take his pay from venal hands.

The citadel is ours—the people ours;
Let us but seize upon the coward slave,
And hurl him from our shores.

Leisler. Hear me; you do mistake me.

Schy. Nay; we have gone too far, we cannot now retreat.

Leisler. Hear me, friends, as comes at midnight on the
host,

The plague-spot down, so hath a blight, a deadly blight
On Leisler come; and now I challenge all—
Come forth and say if I in aught have injured

Any man, and I will do him justice
Seven fold— * * *

If I have borne me sharply in mine office—
Mil. (*aside.*) 'Tis a funeral oration.

Schy. What means he?

Leisler. We have fought and bled together,—here have
shed

The blood of freemen, in the cause of freedom.
Bethink that every drop of noble blood

Spilled in a noble cause, lives on the palms

Of all the mighty martyrs of the past,
Is mingled with the elements, and spread

Broad-cast, o'er land and sea, where winds may go,
Or waters sweep, and resteth never more.

And he who lays his head upon the block

To shield his country from the touch of wrong,
Does more in a great cause than all his life could do.

Mil. Do not croak of evil omens—now
Is the time to raise the standard of revolt.

Leisler. A change has come upon your friend.
Your gallant flag may be uprooted now,

But ye have learned to know a people's worth,
Have learned how good a thing it is to stand
In your own strength, unchecked by priest or king.
Ye are the prophets of the time—the thought
Of but a handful now, shall be the faith
Of every common man in time to come.

From this new soil shall rise that nobler race,
Where every man shall stand a priest, a king
In his own right—lord of himself, unbought,
Unsold; armed in the manhood of a man.

[*Enter Leaders of the Slaughter party, with
banners, &c., Herald, Soldiers.*]

Herald. Jacob Leisler, thou hast been cited by the Governor of this province, duly authorised by their majesties William and Mary, to appear before him, and give an account of thy administration; and now, in the presence of these witnesses thou art commanded to yield the citadel of the colony into the hands of the rightful governor.

(*Leisler stepping forward.*)

Leisler. We have examined well the credentials
Of our successor, and herewith yield our rights
To him, as duly bound,—and also pray
That all content and good stewardship go with him.

Mil. My father, this is death,—thou art mad.

Leisler. Milburn, I might bury all in one great blow,
And fall like him of Naples bathed in blood—
But now it matters not.

Schuy. To yield without a single blow,—Leisler, your blood be upon your own head. I wash my hands of it.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.]

OLD NEW YORK.

Bevard. Ha, ha! he has deserted them; so much for patriotism. I'll to Slaughter.

Leisler. My friends, thus have I purchased peace for you;
Ye will at midnight listen to the rain,
With its low music, falling on your roof,
And then ye'll think of Leisler, a man much wronged,
Who laid his honors by to save your blood.
Milburn, I must home—here—

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Street. Enter Citizens.

Schuy. A great change has come over the gallant Leisler.
Have you heard the news? Our heads are hardly safe
Upon our shoulders.

First Cit. What has befallen Leisler?
Schuy. Some private grief. I know not what. He has
thrown up all command;—his looks are not his own. God
wound! all may be well. Dame Leisler is a fair gentle-

Second Cit. The frossest tongue does not wag itself
against her.

Third Cit. (*enters hurriedly.*) 'Tis said Leisler has surrendered the citadel. I'll to horse, for none are safe.

[*Enter Leisler and Milburn.*]
[*Exit.*]

Mil. Behold, my father, the people are aggrieved.
Dost thou foresee the end?

Leisler. Yes, Milburn, it matters not. I shall lay down
A most weary head to a long rest.

Mil. Aye, father! but for me in all my youth—
Leisler. Thou, Milburn; it must not, shall not be.
Boy, they cannot harm thee.

Mil. Well, well! we shall see—hark!—
[*Tumult. Enter officers, guards, &c.*]

Officer. Jacob Leisler and Henry Milburn! I arrest ye in the name of the Governor. Soldiers, to your duty.

Leisler. Milburn, I have sacrificed thee (*embraces him*) (*To the people.*) My acts are open to my country, friends—My soul to God. I fear no scrutiny. For myself, I will abide the worst; But freedom I demand for this brave youth, Whose only fault was loving me.

Officer. Do your duty on these men.

Leisler. (*waving his hand.*) Back! I am a man—a husband—father. I will to mine own house,—there follow me. Milburn, come on.

[*Shouts, and an attempt at rescue. Officers attempt to seize Leisler, who draws his sword.*]

Leisler. Back, on your life; ye little know your man. Back, cowards, back; the man who dares lay hold Of but a baldrick's point, perils his life.

Milburn, my noble lad, come on.

Friends, what will ye? Go to your homes, they dare Not harm a hair of Leisler's head.

[*He stands in front of his house; the door opens, revealing a hall, with garden beyond. The people crowd about him.*]

Cit. Let me but touch thy hand, and bear the memory, like a new sense, to my grave.

Schuy. We will bulwark thee with our dead bodies, Leisler.

Leisler. Ye do convert your Leisler to a child. This is the proudest day of my whole life;

A plain man, a captive, and a traitor held;

Ye, friends, have made me, bearing thus the cross,

A prouder man than he who wears a crown.

Oh, thou great beating human heart! who shall say

Y our pulses are corrupt, or base, or mean,
When ye but need a touch, and forth ye gush,
As gushed the waters from the desert rock!
[*To the officer.*]
Wait me yonder.

[*Exit.*]

A room in Leisler's house. Enter MARGARET and MILBURN.

Margaret. I am slow to accept of evil.
All potent seems this brave, beautiful earth,
To work out schemes of good. I cannot bide
An evil omen.

Mil. To think thy father should desert us thus!
Madness and folly; all because a woman's false!

Marg. My noble father! but, Milburn, all will be well.

Mil. If Mag's great hope could make it so.
Marg. But it will, Milburn. Why see, we are young—
So happy, too—the evildest fate could not,
In sooth, it could not have the heart to harm us.

Mil. I tell thee, poor Mag, they'll take us to the block.

Marg. No, no, Milburn, they could not do it. I'll go,
Why yes, upon my knees, they could not say me nay.

Mil. Sweet Mag, thy voice would be an infant's breath

Against a north-wester. 'Tis of no use;
So kiss me Mag, while the chance is left us.

[*Enter HANNAH, hurriedly.*]

Han. Oh, Madam! the child is dead, and I dare not tell you what I fear. Here comes my lady, poor, dear lady! she has gone mad.

[*Enter ELIZABETH, singing.*]

Ah! gentles, where does the daisy bloom,
And where does the violet be?
Under their roots is there any room,
Room there for baby and me?

(Sees MARGARET.)

Ah, Margaret! I was looking for thee.
Wilt thou forgive me, and never curse me?
My heart is not bad, but my head is weak—
I fear me, 'tis very weak.

Marg. He will not see me. Oh, oh!
Thou has broke the bravest heart

That ever beat. Away! touch me not.

Eliz. Dost thou love Milburn?

Marg. I am my father's child, and love as he loves—
Thou canst best tell how well.

Eliz. When a full heart was all thine own, and thou
Alone and desolate, filled with a love
That earth, nor sea, nor heaven itself might bound,
Couldst thou have stepped thee from this glowing dome—
Incent and hymned with love's own thrilling spells—
To hug a vacant heart and black despair?

Marg. I could have done more, sooner than have borne
A perjured tongue.

Eliz. Ah, Margaret! the good God has shielded thee,
While I, like a shorn lamb, have been driv'n forth
Unhoused, unpitied, to bide the storm.

Ah, me! God is merciful!

Kind Milburn! will you not comfort him?—

Indeed, Milburn, a man's heart might ache for me.

Mil. Margaret, I hope this may continue unto madness
With her! 'twere best. Deal gently with her.

Enter Officers and soldiers.

Marg. What means this?

Mil. I am a prisoner, love, but only for a space.
We are called traitors, Mag.

Marg. Sure nothing will come of it?

Mil. That frown becomes thee, Maggie.

SCENE III.]

OLD NEW YORK.

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Marg. Ah, Milburn, when you trifle I most fear.
Treason, treason!—'tis death.

Eliz. (sings.) Smile no more, never more,
Sweet love! his days are o'er;
Underneath the willow tree,
Stiff and stark lieth he.

Mil. (pointing to her) I know your spirit, dearest Mag,
But pity her. I will return anon—
Do not fear—there—I'll soon be back. [Exit with officers.]

Marg. Husband and father traitors held—prisoners,
And thou the cause. If they die! Oh, my God!

Do you mark me, Madam?—they will die, die—

Dost thou hear?—and thou the cause. [Seizes her arm.]

Why art thou not black, grim, and distorted?

Thy auburn locks should float Medusa-like—

Thy shapely clasping arms should wear the look

Of scaly things, that kill what they enfold.

Oh, thou adulteress!—murderess, that thou art!

Eliz. Say on—I cannot well think—am I all that? [Casts her aside.]

Marg. (aside) Yet Milburn bade me pity her.
Oh, father, husband!—I cannot pity thee.

Art thou that?—yes, more, for falsehood covers every

crime.

Eliz. Your hard words comfort me. Should you speak
kind

I might weep. Will he forgive me?

Marg. Forgive thee? Thou hast dragged his noble
head

Down to the very dust, and wouldst thou now—
Now that he bleeds at every pore, and lies

Barred of manhood, bereft almost of life—

Wouldst thou draw the last proof of meanness forth,

And have him weakly say, I do forgive thee ?

No ; like me, he should curse and spurn thee. [Exit.

Han. Let us go once more, poor lady ! let us go and find some place where I can lay your poor head upon a low but faithful heart.

Eliz. Hush, Hannah, or I shall weep, and that would be sinful. Hannah, did I ever speak thee harsh ?

If but a dog looks up into my face,

Its mournful eyes give me a pang at heart.

I think I could forgive the vilest wretch

Who might have wronged me, at one remorseful look.

I remember an old tale which I once read :

Once upon a time, there lived a poor man—

I cannot tell how the story ran, but thus—

His father had offended once a Fate,

And she became avenged on his child ;

And thus the great curse ran, that from his soul—

The well-spring made of all the gods most love—

Of truth, of nobleness, love for his kind,

And every human good, there should evolve

One act, so deadly in its kind, that men

Should shrink from him aghast, and breathe his name

In whispers choked with awe, and he should die

The curse of all. It was in Greece, I think.

Do you remember that old tale ?

You should be Hannah. Do you think ?— (*whispers.*)

It does not matter. (*Sings.*)

It was a lady fair,

Under a cypress tree,

Combing her yellow hair,

Will he not come to me ?

And she wore gems and gold,

A kirtle green wore she ;

The song she sang was old—

Come, love, oh, come to me !

The Knight he passed him by,

With ban and cross and prayer,

He knew the cold, dead eye,

A fiend was singing there.

Come, Hannah, I will go sleep.

[Exit.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A balcony. Enter LEISLER.

Leisler. (solus.) The air is heated, and this armor burns
As it were molten from the flames. Off, casque—
Ah, thus I lay my lofty honors down !

Thus, all my dreams of greatness ending here.
In after years men will adjudge my life,

And some will say he loved the people well,

And would have raised them unto freedom.

Oh ! 'tis defeat that stamps it crime. Men should hold

The mastery of fate, and be as gods,

Or else content themselves to drudge and toil,

And be the stepping-stone of winners in the race.

[Men pass below in dumb show of sorrow. LEIS-

*LER lays his hand upon his heart, and
waives them away.]*

Good souls ! they would rescue me ;

I must hold back the secret of this woe.

Oh ! 'tis a bitter thing to be traduced,

To have our best and holiest actions made

The jibe of common tongues and petty spleen,

And so distorted from the truth, we cannot see

The semblance which they bear to our own deeds !—

But there is something which the manly sense

Rejects as deeper stain. * * *

As when men praise us for a good not ours,

And by imputed virtue shame the secret sin,

The poor will Jacob Leisler overpraise.

[He talks up and down.]

SCENE I.]

Oh, she was fair ! and like the rapturing dreams
That torture our young years—delicious fruit,
Once plucked, a madness to the brain. False ! false !
Had she but come to me in boyhood, youth,
When the hot blood rejects and spurns a grief,
I had forgiven all—my, pitied her. * *

But now, in these my manful, sobered years,
When judgment cools the sense and tempers blood,
To be so wrought upon, so made a show ! * *

Fool ! Jacob Leisler has to dolage grown,
And men have filled the brain with mocking jeers,
Which he mistook for praise and gulped down.

Miscens this leg is shrunk ; my face is pinched ;

This arm is nerveless, purposeless, and weak ;

And Time has powdered frost upon my brow—

Has torn the manly bearing from my shape—

Put out the eye's keen glance, and changed the smile,

Sedate and grave, unto a feeble leer—

Has bowed the sage-like head, and made it turn

From side to side upon its trembling base,

And she, the vile and sordid lie, has practised

On the old man's brain. * * *

Eternal gods and devils, no !

Death—death must wipe the stain !

[Rushes out.]

SCENE II.

A room. Child upon a couch covered with flowers, ELIZABETH leaning over it. LEISLER appears at one side.

Leis. I spoke of Death, and lo, he is here

In such a shape ! No, no, it is her love

That crowns the blossom with its own symbol.

Thus has she bount these frosty locks so oft,

And thus have I forgot my grayer years,

While she renewed my summer days.

Eliz. This little hand—cold, cold ! No pretty smile !

Oh, oh ! no one to love—to comfort me !
 When mothers lay their pretty ones to sleep,
 Never to wake again—wilt thou not wake ?—
 They cling their pale arms round its father's neck,
 And love him with a new love ; such as they felt
 When first the child, his child, linked them anew.
 But here I kneel by my dead love, and none
 To comfort me. (*Lays her head down.*)

Leis. (*aside*) Misery itself has kissed her cheek and
 grown

Most beautiful. Her very anguish wears
 A weird and thrilling loveliness, that takes
 Us to itself—* * * *

The fair and garnished earth

Put on a fairer livery for her :
 The moon and stars grew other than they were,
 And bird and flower fonder to the sense ;
 And words that were but words from other lips,
 Came from their ruby portal lingering forth
 With music-winged and never-firing sweets.
 And now in this my woe, she shapes herself
 Unto my mood as I would have her thus,
 And only thus. I came to curse, to hate,
 And here I find a ruin like myself,
 To bind me ivy-like unto her side.

Eliz. How cold and still the night wears on ! Oh, night !
 Thou wilt embrace me through eternal years,
 For thou hast swallowed up the day—my day.
Leisler must never forgive me. * * *

No, no, no, I will remember that.

Leisler. (*approaches*) Elizabeth, I do forgive thee.

Eliz. (*listening*) Elizabeth !—no more Bess.

Leis. Bess, Bess, my poor Bess !

[*She shrieks, and throws herself into his arms.*
Eliz. In thy arms once more—thy lips to mine ;

A whole eternity of woe henceforth
 I can endure in memory of this. [*She starts back.*
 Nay, I did forget me, *Leisler*, take it back—

Hate me, curse me, but oh, do not forgive !
 Let me kneel thus at thy feet, kiss thy hand,
 And, looking upward, see thy face a rock.

Oh, no, no, not pitying thus—oh, not thus !
 But proud, Jove with his thunders on, all black
 And terrible to scorch and wither me,
 And I will fear, but love thee none the less.

Leis. Is there, indeed, a watchful power above ?
 Oh ! if there be, why is this mighty wrong ?
 I challenge you, ye white-robed seraph band,
 To usher forth from out your radiant ranks

A soul more pure than this ; and yet her hands
 Are dyed with crimes that might cause ye to weep.

Eliz. Too black to be forgiven. I know it all.

Leis. (*raising her.*) I do forgive thee, Bess.

Eliz. Oh, no, 'tis base and cowardly to forgive !
 Thy daughter said it. *Leisler* is not that.

Ah ! see how proud he looks in his brave armor !

I have not killed thee—broken thy heart—oh ! no, no.

Leis. Thou wilt, poor Bess.

Eliz. No, *Leisler*, no. See here ! was it not well ?

I knew I should please thee. Thy child a bastard. [*Shows the child.*

Why, the very lightnings would have blasted me.

Leis. Woman ! is this thy work ? * * *

Why did ye not, ye everlasting Fates,

With one dread blow strike me at once to earth ?

Why blast me inch by inch, and leave each nerve

To quivering hang with its own separate pang ?

My child ! my pretty fool ! quite dead, dead !

Eliz. Surely, *Leisler*, thou think'st it well ?

Leis. Yes, Bess, yes; my pretty fool, that used to come
And pluck my beard, and pinch my face, and smile
And hiss out, Father! when my youth was past.
The spring-blossom that came in harvest time!

Eliz. Ah! but he was a bastard, Leisler. *
There's no such thing in heaven where he is gone,
But they become angels there. Do not weep.

[*Leisler smooths her hair back tenderly.*]

Leis. It is all well, Bess; now what wilt thou do?

Eliz. I, Leisler, I? why die—— [Bursts into tears.]

Leis. My poor girl! it were best.

Eliz. Yes, in God's time. I must bear His judgments,
And wait, wait, you know.

Leis. My brave, good girl!

Eliz. Well, Leisler, I can never be forgiven—
Never, never! God himself could not forgive;
So I will pass my whole life in prayer for thee.
I will gird thy armor on, brace on thy sword,
See that thy raiment, thy viands and thy drink
Are well, just in the time and place. *
And then, may I not sometimes kiss thy hand?
I'll never ask for more. * * *

Leis. (*embracing her.*) Oh, thou most perfect human
soul! all wrecked,

Still do I not love thee? Yet 'tis past,
And we must strangers be in time to come.
Not in thy palmiest days didst thou so much
Provoke my love, as now in all thy ruin.

[*She faints. Officers appear at the door. LEIS-
LER starts forward with her in his arms,
sword in hand.*]

Look here!—there!—dare ye enter such a place?

Alone amid the ruins of my home! * * *
Art dead, my own sweet wife? * * * [They retire.]

SCENE III.]

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I will lay thee on the bridal bed, my love,
And give thee kisses, thus—thus—the last.

My boy! Oh, that she may no more awake! [*Kisses the child.*]

Ye pitying powers, can ye not hush her sleep! [*Stops at the threshold.*]

Eliz. (*starting up.*) Where hath he gone? I tried but
could not speak. [*Exit.*]

Oh, he is lost! for ever lost to me. * *

He kissed my lips, my cheek, my brow, mine eyes,
And then he bent his own down into mine

So long and mournfully, I could have wept,
But would not rouse another pang in him.

He gazed, with folded hands, as I were dead,
Oh! 'tis the priest's homage to the offered lamb,

And I shall see him never more! * * *

I am abandoned, spurned, to madness left.

Oh, God! my God! I dare not name my crimes!
I am alone—I dare not pray—dare not!

Yes, there is one boon that I dare ask, and Thou—
Oh, Thou, wilt pitying grant! This lucid thought!
Take back the gift and madness send! [*Crashes out.*]

SCENE III.

A street in front of Leisler's house.

Schy. That was the saddest sight mine eyes have seen,
The noble Leisler and his gallant son
To prison borne.

First Citizen. It is thought the Governor will not dare
Proceed against them—but does this in spite—
The spleen and pettiness of a mean mind
Tenacious of all forms and shows of power.

Second Cid. I know not; but this I know,—he was one
Of the truest gentlemen. We read of such
In books, but rarely find them in the life.

I have compared him to Caesar, devoid
Of his ambition—to Antony, in all
But his unmanly luxury; but most

He minds me of those brave stout men who raised
Our ancient Belgium from the oozy deep,
To make the altar-house of freedom there.

First Cit. Thou hast well said. How did he bear him-
self?

Schyl. Bravely, as he were stepping to a throne.

I heard him saying as he went along,

"Nor bonds, nor bars, nor circumstance, nor fate,
Reach inward to the soul, where it doth sit

In freedom, like a god." * * *

Second Cit. Slaughter cannot harm him now, he must
wait orders from the crown.

Enter John.

First Cit. Here is Leicester's man; how did ye leave
your master?

John. Why they would not let me stay—and so I even
turned my back upon him, and came away.

Second Cit. Well, how was he disposed?

John. Quietly, quietly. I thought once he would have
run a man through, but he didn't.

First Cit. Is his prison comfortable, John?

John. Very, very. I saw a large spider and a toad in
very good condition.

Schyl. Which ward is he put into? Let's to the prison.

John. I don't know; but a look through the grate just

took in the great bear, which is northern, I opine.

Enter HANNAH.

Hannah. John, you hav'n't any sense;—come in—there
stand there and tell me what you think.

John. What I think, Hannah? why, a variety of things;
firstly, as the Domine says, if your nose was a leelle turned

SCENE III.]

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up, and your shape a leelle fatter, you would be quite a
handsome girl.

Han. My nose turned up, John?

John. Yes, mistress Hannah; it saves expense and
trouble when you snub a fellow what hasn't got sense.

Han. Oh! John, John, my mistress does take on so;

sometimes she sings, and sometimes she cries, and then
she stares stock still at the wall. How was our master?

John. She laughs at one husband, and cries for the
other—and then tries to settle which is which, I suppose,
Hannah.

Han. Oh! John, this is a dreadful day.

John. So it is, Hannah; and I tell you what—after you
are Mistress Dodge, and decent and respectable, as mar-
riage makes a woman, if another man comes out here,
philandering about, to find you for his wife, I'll, I'll spit
Hannah, if I don't. I've got no what d'ye call it, to
break, but a down right Rizzard to grind you into powder,
and scatter your ashes to the four winds, and sow salt
upon your threshold, and make you like the Hittites, and
Jebusites, and the Hittites, and all the other ices and
abominations.

Han. Don't, John, don't be a fool. What can I, shall
I do? I need a man of sense now, if ever, and John has
nothing but downright honesty; you hav'n't much sense,
you know, John—but that doesn't matter in house-
keeping.

John. Doesn't it, though? You'll come none of your
tantrums over John Dodge; Hannah, I'm a Blue Beard
—I am. I'll have a secret chamber, and a key, and blood
under the door—and if you peep in, Hannah—

Han. Don't be a fool, John, for you know I love you.
(*Takes her by the neck.*)

John. (*fixing her.*) Do you, now, chick; then I'll spare you, I will—

Han. I feel as if I never could be happy for thinking of my poor lady.

John. Nor I, for thinking of my poor—what is it?—Lord?—no—master.

Han. Oh! she will die,—and then to think,—her child!

John. That's it. Oh, Mistress Dodgel! Mistress Dodgel! let me ever catch you making away with the little Dodges!

Han. John, you haven't one grain of sense. I'm ashamed of you, I am.

John. I dare say, though, I know what's what, Hannah, let me tell you.

Han. Do you think we can ever be happy, John?

John. Not very. Hannah; you see I shall be like Reboham and the Israelites.

Han. Never you mind on that score, John. I was thinking of my poor mistress.

John. Well, seein' they've got brim full to the throat in misery, the next thing is, they must choke, but I don't see how 'twill help them to have us choke with them.

Han. No, surely, John.

John. You see you've brought your mistress cleverly through to the last stage, just as a hen brings out her ducks, which ought to have been chickens,—and now, like the ducklings, she takes to her element, which is misery, and I don't see why you need follow after. You'd better let her go, as the hen does, and take to scratching in your own way. Come here, Hannah, and I'll give you what the Domine calls a practical illustration of the subject.

[*Exeunt.*]

A Street. Enter SCHUYLER and BAYARD.

Schuyler. I tell thee, Bayard, 'tis most unworthy thee, To side with this base hiring of a crown,

And see a gallant man tacked to the death,—
Why! there's not a savage of the Mohawk

But would cry thee shame. Is thy memory out?
Bayard. (To Mr. Schuyler, thou hast marched and counter-marched

So often with these same Mohawks, that thou art
Akin to them.

Schuy. Thou hast well said. I take in greatness where-
so'er

Her shadowing wing is cast. I am no sponge
To suck up nurture from a dirty pool.

[*Bayard lays his hand upon his sword.*
Have a care, master Schuyler * * *

Schuy. A care? I tell thee, master Bayard, my sword
Is sheathed, except in honorable cause.

[*Enter LIVINGSTON.* (To *Livingston.*

Master Livingston, thy course is worthy thee.
Livingston. I trust good men, who love a quiet rule,
Will see and well approve.

Schuy. Good men approve! why man, 'tis such as thou
That do uphold the four corners of a throne
Whereon a beastly tyrant takes his ease,

And they cajole him with their oily tongues,
So that the wailing of the oppressed and wronged
Is dumb'd before it penetrates his ear.

Bay. In truth, master Schuyler, none will accuse thee
Of wearing the courtier's tongue, or courtier's mien.
Schuy. Thou hast hit the mark, good master Bayard.

I boast an honest tongue, and honest heart—
No more—I would I could say as much for thee.

Liv. Have a care, master Schuyler, lest thou too,
Be involved in this man's fall. * * *

Sch. If thou hadst any old spleen against me,
Robert Livingston, my death-sent would be stamped.
But it ill becometh a generous man
To turn his instincts to the blood-hounds. * * *

Bay. I thought 'twould end in this ; your patriot [Exit.

After all plays but a losing game.

Liv. I know not that : Master Bayard—but mark—
I hate that man, Leisler ; he's in the way.
But I know him well steeped in all honor.

A man before whom all baseness is abashed—
And yet I hate him. He called me rebel—
Drove me from the province forth.

Bay. With good cause, Master Livingston.

Liv. "It came to pass on that day, that Pilot
And Herod were made friends ;"—thy hand, Master
Bayard.

Bay. 'Tis well—and now—Pshaw ! this Slaughter makes
me sick.

Liv. A drivelling, licentious, and cruel hireling,
Whom, if we can but rule, a fitter tool—
This Leisler and this fiery Milburn, first
Must to the scaffold go, and then we'll see.

END OF ACT IV.

[Exit.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A room in the house of *Slaughter*. *Slaughter*, *INGOLDSBY*,
and *BAYARD*.

Bay. It is thought the people will not consent
To his death.

Slough. We shall see ; he's a dangerous man ;
'Tis such men who disturb the quiet rule
Of any people. They talk of freedom,
Prate about equality and human rights—
There's no such thing in the books, no such thing.

Ing. No such thing, your Excellency, and yet
Quiet, on any terms, is best just now.
I would rather engage with flights of game
Than a whole army of rebels at this time.

Slough. Pass the bottle round. The traitor was a judge
of wine.

Bay. Let's drink to a safe quittance.

Ing. The game is rare in these parts.

Slough. And the men, too, if Leisler be a sample.
It is such men that fill me with disgust,
Talking eternally about freedom !

What does it mean ? Why, when a man is sure
Of life and limb he has all that he needs.

Give him more, and he knows not how to use it.
Bay. Excellently well said. Here comes Master Liv-
ingston.

Enter *LIVINGSTON*.

Slough. Right welcome, Master Livingston. 'Tis plain,
A plain case of treason, I see by thy looks.

Liz. The sooner 'tis off our hands the better. Here is the instrument with the seal of state.

Slough. Wait awhile. Revenge is so sweet a dish I like to give it a dainty lodgment.

The cat who plays with her victim has a taste Most rare.

Bayard. (aside) A cool ruffian!—such men always find office.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. A poor woman wishes to speak with your Excellency.

Slough. Sirrah, thou knowest a feast is sacred with me, I will not be disturbed.

Servant. She will not be put off.

Slough. Will not!—this to me? 'Tis past endurance, This wine grows sour now from this disturbance. Why, a man is not as well cared for as a beast, If he is to be crowded upon at meals—

Enter ELIZABETH veiled.

Eliiz. Thou art the servant of the people, and must hear me.

Slough. A good height and air *(aside)*. Mistress, put up that veil,

I can better tell if I shall hear thee.

Ing. Good, excellent! let's see her face.

Eliiz. Bid these popinjays cease, that the name and cause

For which I would plead be not desecrated.

Liz. It can be none other than Mistress Leisler.

Slough. So much the better; they say she's a brave girl.

Bay. As proud as Lucifer—can't be looked at.

Eliiz. Nor talked at by such things as these.

Slough. (aside) The voice is strangely like—but it cannot be,

She was not so tall, nor bold. * * *

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Ing. We shall have rare sport.

Slough. What is thy will, Madam?

Eliiz. That Jacob Leisler be restored to freedom,

Which is his right, he having done no wrong.

Slough. Thou art overbold. Jacob Leisler stands

Convicted of high treason, and must die.

Eliiz. The power of death belongs unto the Crown,

Thou dar'st not touch him.

Slough. Dare not?—those who know me best do know,

I dare do anything my will shall prompt.

Eliiz. (aside) Oh, my God! I do remember me that

look;

My lips grow mute, my tongue is palsy-touched.

(to Slough) Surely thou wouldst not injure a brave man

Who kept all power intact to yield it up

Unto the rightful claimant when he came?

Slough. He raised the question of my right; withstood

And braved me, and with the people tampered,

So that when I came, men's tongues were all mute;

While they thronged into the citadel with shouts,

And with unsavory plaudits hailed him forth.

Eliiz. Leisler drew his life and blood from this brave

land: *[Walks up and down.]*

His breadth of manhood is the vigorous growth

Of nature's fresh and uncorrupted soil,

Which never has and never will uphold

A tyrant on its breast. Thou must have a care

If thou wouldst Jacob Leisler harm.

Slough. I shall have a care, Madam, that he do

No further mischief.

Eliiz. The people love him like to a father;

A wrong to him would touch the poorest heart.

Thou mayst be a tyrant at home—mayst be

A petty tyrant on thine own hearth-stone.

Slough. (to Bayard) I shall think your soft rebellion breathes alone,

Even the women have the air of queens.

Eliz. (aside) I shall blight mine own cause—down, down, my pride.

Oh! my rebellious blood, that fails at sight
Of him so loathed, canst thou not stay thy beat,
And suppliant plead for him so wronged?

I will forget that Leisler is beloved
[*Throws herself at his feet.*]

By any heart but mine—forget all else—

How even the rudest boor would weep for him:
Forget how the poor Indian in his hut
Would black his face and raise the loud lament

For him who called him brother—

Slough. That voice! Woman, who art thou?

Eliz. Leisler's wife—a simple gentlewoman
Who only begs for her husband, loves him,

Will vouch for him that thou shalt nothing fear.

Slough. Elizabeth Howard!

Eliz. Elizabeth Leisler, his poor wife, Sir.

Let me see him—serve him—die with him!

[*Slougher tears her veil aside and staggers back. Elizabeth rises to her feet.*]

Yes; I am that most miserable of her kind.

Slough. He shall die, though God's own angels came to plead;

Though every Imp in hell were here with torment.
Yes, minion, thou art mine, mine—

Eliz. Touch me not! I have confronted thee before.

Slough. Time enough for that, beauty, time enough;
Here, give me the warrant. * * * [*Sigs it.*]

See that the law have its full force.

Eliz. (to officer) Man, thou durst not do it; 'tis murder.

Slough. Out of my sight! He shall die before noon.

SCENE I.]

Liv. Nay, it is too soon.

Slough. To-morrow, then, no longer.

Eliz. I charge ye, as ye hope for peace, or hope
For God's mercy in your hour of utmost need,
That ye obey him not: 'tis murderous.

Slough. 'Tis all the same to thee, my pretty one.
I did not think thou hadst half this mettle.
Faith, but thou art a dainty one!

Eliz. (aside) Oh, the loathing that I feel!

[*to Slough.*] Thou dost well know I can be nothing to thee,
That human words have never one to tell

The stretch, the depth, the vastness of my hate;
I pray thee, then, be merciful unto me.

Spare the noble Leisler, and I, even I,
Will learn to bless thee.

Slough. Thou shalt learn it, dear, I will spare him thus,
In reward of thy fondness to myself,
Thy liege lord, thy doating husband!

Eliz. Thou wilt spare him! God's blessing on thee!
Let me go to him now, let me tell him
How merciful thou art—full of human love. [*Turns away.*]

Slough. Nay, thou dost not leave me.

Eliz. We will go to some lone desolate place—
To some wild cabin by the rude sea-shore,
And there weep and pray that God will bless thee.

[*Aside*] No, no, he loathes me; but I will plead and die.

Liv. Was there ever such truth, such devotedness?
'Tis a strange scene.

Slough. (aside to Bayard) Here, see that the law be
well done.

Eliz. Nay, do not go. I know him well—he is cold
And cruel. What did he tell thee? Stay, stay!

Leisler has served thee once—pity us now.

Bay. (aside) I have no heart for this business, Living-
ston,

The blood be upon thee.

[*ELIZABETH throws herself at the feet of SLOUGH.*]

Eliz. Learn once the blessedness of a good deed
I am a wreck, the slightest breath would kill me,
Nothing is left but this wild, atoning love
For him whom I have wronged more than thee;
And thou—oh! thou didst rob me of my girlhood,
Bereave me of the bloom of my young days!—
Constrained vows, flight, terror, every shape
Of ill has followed in my path, and now
I look on happiness with dread—a thing
Suspicious and of doubtful good; I learn
To doat on misery, hug her to my breast,
And fondle her weird shape with lover zeal;
We're so alike that I'm baptized anew,
And Leisler is the same—two piteous wrecks
Which the merciful winds and tides will drift
Into some lone bay, forgotten side by side.
Slough. I do remember me thou hadst a dulcet tongue
Eliz. Forget that I have spurned thee—be pitiful!
Slough. I remember thou art mine.
Eliz. I am God's—a poor wretch, all flame within,
And only so much freshness at the heart
As begs for Leisler's life. * * *

Slough. It is in vain.

Eliz. I have no human pride, no worldliness—
The hours left me, I will pass in prayer—
I will pray that every sin of thine be laid
Upon my head; I the penalty may bear,
And thou be robed in white, be made all blest,
Hymning to golden harps eternal hymns,
And never, through infinitude of time,
Know what it is to feel a single pang,
So thou wilt have mercy.

Slough. Thy pleading doth enhance the doom.
Eliz. Remember, 'tis a fearful thing to cast

God's attribute most needful unto man,
His attribute of mercy, from the heart.

Slough. Thy lips are powerless to my will.
Eliz (*rising*) It shames me I have so degraded Leis-
ler's name.

I will not curse thee; there is no deeper hell
Than finds its place in such a breast. [*Turns to go.*]

Slough. Nay, my pretty bird, thou art caged.

Bag. Let her go, 'tis barbarous.

Slough. Not a step, I am her liege lord.

[*ELIZABETH attempts to escape with cries, but is overpowered.*]

SCENE II.

A Dungeon.

Leisler. (*solus.*) Could I have other been than what I
am?

When men approach a doom they feel themselves
Impelled thereto by an insidious force,
So with their own volition blent, that they
Are powerless to tell which is their own,
And which is that vast surging of a fate.
Thus I have moved me onward step by step,
Nor known of higher aims nor better ways
Than such as I have chosen—and here all ends;—
Broken my household gods—my friends all fled,
Chains and a Dungeon—the scaffold and the axe.
These things are nothing to the mind at ease,
Which looking backward finds no cause for blame,
But breathing dungeon damps, the sacred air
Of earth's most god-like and enduring few,
Inhales it with a calm heroic soul,
Akin to theirs. * * *
Ye dungeon walls, could ye give up the groans,
The tears, the pangs, which have no echo found

Within your tomb-like jaws, how would men start
From the ignoble thrift, and hear aghast
The rising of a vast and melancholy wail
Wrung out by human wrong, the wide earth though !
How would the silken couch, and velvet floor
Reproach and mock them for their shameful ease,
That they could trifle in God's blessed light,
While man, their brother, is so wronged. * *

Enter SLOUGH.

[aside to Turnkey]

Slough. Keep within call—do not fail me.
[*To Leister.*] I have come to look upon thee.

Leister. The light is somewhat dim—but thou canst see.

Nocturnal birds and beasts do covet shade.

Slough. *(aside)* I will keep beyond his reach. What an eye !

I have a spell to curb that mocking tongue.
Faith ! but his shape is cast in goodly mould.
Such men are coaxed and wheedled into virtue
By being always praised—while such as I
Are kicked and snubbed from childhood up, and made
To feel, that nature shaped us in a spite,
Forgetting to endow our pleasing souls
With outward lines to please the dainty sense !

Leister. For visitant thy mood is an unsocial one.

Slough. They tell me thou hast always been beloved.

I came to ponder how a man may look
Who hath so cajoled and stultified men's hearts.

Leister. A compliment no man will ever pay thee.

Slough. I shall be careful to keep me from a dungeon.

Leister. There are some things defrauded in this world,
A certain tree fails often of its due.

Pshaw ! I will no more of this unmanly spleen.

Slough. *(aside)* Men will bear a rough encounter with
their kind,

And win or lose, as chance or fate directs,
Who, when a woman's in the case will chafe
And be transformed from their very selves.
He hath touched me there. Let's see.

(To Leister) I am in power—thou here—and yet I envy thee.

Leister. Even here it were not well to mock me.
Slough. I will unfold a life, and then judge thou.

Leister. I have no heart nor ear to hear of one

Whose life is made all up of petty acts,
Such as might grace a country churchyard stone,

Save that the living fear to jeer the dead.

Slough. Thou shalt hear me. *(aside)*—I love to watch his mien,

And sport amid the fires of his heart,
And thus in playfulness prolong the pang !

The palmy days of youth have all been thine—

A shape and air on which fair women dote.

As boy, and youth, and man thou wast beloved,

And lovely children clustered round thy board,

And thou didst move well nigh a god.

Leister. Man ! what dost thou mean ? passing through
thy lips,

My blessings grow blasted and corrupt.

Slough. Change came to thee, as comes to all—a
gloom,

A gentle form borne forth to come no more.
But thou, stately in strength—revered abroad,

And nothing to repel that confidence

In thine own self, which best prolongeth life,

Didst blossom once again in harvest time

Leister. No more. Why rack me with the past, thou

fiend !

Too full—all, all too full hath been my cup,
Glowing, and bounding, it o'ertopped the brim,

And I did quaff it with an eager zest,
Forgetful of the bitter close.

Slough. Thou hadst no cause to think—the lavish
powers

Were emulous to shower good upon thee.

(*aside*)—Now doth his fancy gloat upon the past—
Inviting touch upon the very quick.

(*to Leisler*)—Thou hast known all this—and none forsake
thee now.

I am besieged with tears and prayers to save thee,
Envyng thee the gift of so much love,
Which I have never known.

Leisler. It may be thou hast never loved.

Slough. Thou shalt, sec. I have never loved mankind.

But there was one—a girl, to win whose smile
I would have borne the torture of the flame;

Or the keen flaying knife, could I have come
Forth from the torment beautiful in form;

She hated me, and yet I called her mine.
I lavished wealth upon her—filled her ear

With music—song—that ravish most the sense;
Brought flowers from "farthest Ind," and from the Peak,

Where only heaven's eye had looked upon them.
She, pale as the marble Psyche of our home,

Remained with sealed-up eye, and ear, and sense,

Yet under each was hid a latent flame
To lure, to mock, to madden me with love.

Leisler. I pity thee—from my heart I do.

Slough. Thou dost give me some cause in that.

I am told thy wife is most fair.

Leisler. Such love as thou hast known, hath a rare
power

To clear the life of what is base or mean.
Ambition takes its place—or better still,

Those thoughts that centre not in this poor world.

I have mistaken thee—go—peace be with thee

Slough. Hast thou no desire to live? [*turns away.*]

Leisler. None. But I would beg the boon of Milburn's
life.

He is young and brave, and fit to serve the state.
His only fault was loving me.

Slough. Aye, yes; he too, loved thee well; and thy

wife—

Leisler. Man, I do distrust thee. What is this?

Slough. Hast thou no desire to know the name of her
I loved?

Leisler. It matters not; my time wears to its verge.
Slough. The words of dying men betoken fate.

Leisler. If thou dost covet such unmanly thrift,

Seek thou for prophecy elsewhere. I am dumb.

Slough. I can call a name to harrow all thy soul.

Leisler. I know nothing of thee—nothing care.

Slough. Elizabeth Howard is my wife, and underneath
my roof.

Leisler. Man, fiend! unsay it. Speak, before I tear

thee limb from limb!

Slough. Help—help!

Leisler. Nay, I will choke thy cry—beneath thy roof—

Leisler. (*solus*) Fool! dotard that I was—why did I
yield. [*Men drag Slough out.*]

Rock, rock on every side—chains—chains. I here,

Caged like a reptile, to be teased and mocked;
Cannot my strength of will disrupt the base

Of these huge walls, and send me forth to light,
To freedom, and to power? A thousand swords

Would leap from scabbard forth at Leisler's name,

And we would hurl this imp of darkness down.

Powerless ! Oh ! he who is weak deserves to die.
To be spit upon—trampled—caged as I am.
God shield thee, my poor, poor Bess !

SCENE III.

A street ; rain and tempest. Slaughter upon a balcony.

Slaughter. Here will I stand and see him pass : a man
Whom all do praise, with deepened breath and brow
Upraised, as when the cooling winds refresh
The jaded sense. I never knew till now,
An unmixed joy ; hatred, contempt, revenge
Have felt but each so shallow in their kind,
That feeling them I did despise myself.
But here is one so filled unto the brim
With what men prate about in learned books,
So fresh and open, that he tempts to dupe,
So trusting to his fellows one would think
He held a villain but a bug-bear word :
One whose open eye and stately front rebuke
The craven soul, and pent-up malice more
Than scorching word or flashing sword could do.
I bless the world that such a man has lived
To give me one, long, burning sense of joy.
My hatred so exults and thrills me through,
That all the spurnings—jibes of my past life,
Seem dulcet ministrings now, that came
In ugly shapes to sharpen my dull sense
To this delicious hour of unmixed bliss.
Ha ! ha ! he ruled here, where I rule now.
He loved and was beloved where I was spurned,
And now she trembles underneath my roof.
And hark ! there is the sound of armed men—
Of trampling feet—and of a deadly march ;—
What lack I more ?

SCENE III.]

Enter SCHUYLER.

Schuyler. Alas ! will he not speak to us who so loved
him ?

First Cit. The orders are to drown his voice. He
comes. [A rush of men.]

Who would have thought it would have come to this !
Schuy. To see the pitiless rain beat on his noble head !
And the rude wind scatter his locks abroad.
How changed he is !—we cannot pity such,

And yet mine eyes ache to the bulls with tears.

Second Cit. And mine ; I feel as if a shadow grew
Upon my life, which sun, nor moon, nor any light
Could chase away.

[Enter a group of men, women, &c.]

John. Oh ! my master, my poor master ! I feel now as
I might have hindered things coming to such a pass.
Hannah, tell me again I haven't any sense, before my heart
breaks into halves. Could I help it ? could I ?

Han. No, John, no ; for Heaven knows your sense is
small, indeed.

John. Thank you, Hannah, for that comfort. Oh, here
he comes—mercy !—mercy !—what a sight. Oh, Han-
nah, I wish I was a woman, to cry as you do.

[Enter *Teisler* guarded. He stops in front
of *Slaughter's* house, and waves his hand.]

Teisler. I will wait here until this man comes forth ;
I have a reckoning yet ;—my boy, thou shalt not die.

Al. It matters not, the bitterness of death
is passed.

[To the people.]

I take you all to witness— [Voice drowned by drums, &c.]

Leis. Stop that unseemly noise ! I will be heard—
When God speaks let the earth be silent.

Mescens these kettle-drums and squeaking fifes
Have but a sorry sound, when *His* great voice
Swell through the chambers of old earth, and He

Doth shake her caverns with a mighty tread.
Ye dare not drag me to the place of death;
And here I plant my foot, and rooted stand—
Here, at the threshold of the grave—to speak
A challenge hence unto this man of blood.

[Sees Slaughter and party.
Hide not thyself, thou coward slave, come forth.
I do implead thee at the eternal bar
For this day's work. There, answer thou;
But now, as man to man, I call on thee
To yield a broken-hearted—

[A shriek, and ELIZABETH rushes in and throws
herself into his arms.

Eliz. Save me, save me! Where have I been?
In the dark with fiends who mocked and jeered me?
But God helped me. See here! [Shows her hands.
I am dying, Leisler—say you forgive me.
Ah, me! and thou art broken-hearted too—
Dying like poor Bess! We are both alike now.
Come, let us go away. Kiss me, dearest!

Leis. My poor, poor girl!

Eliz. Yes, love, pity me, I am very weak.
How hard it rains!—thy dear locks are all wet—
And we have no home, only the grave!
But we shall rest—rest—come, 'tis light!

Leis. Dead, dead, poor girl! She past but a brief
space.

Hannah. My poor, dear lady!

Leis. See that she be buried at my side. I'll kiss thee
Once again, thou fondest, truest, saddest one!

My work is done. Here do I pass, well pleased,
To that long bourne whence none return. [Looks around.
(to Slaughter) Again I do implead thee with new cause,
At the eternal bar for this day's work;

There wash thee, if thou canst, from innocent blood.
Behold! wrecked, murdered was she by thy hand.

While he is speaking, the back of the stage

slowly opens and reveals a scaffold and a
masked executioner with his axe in his hand.

A bell tolls heavily, and a dead march.

Ye elements! well are ye marshalled forth;

Ye come, when the great soul is launched away;

To hear its aspirations far and wide.
When greater times shall come, and greater men,

Ye will bring back a name, blotched and dishonored now,

To be revered and loved as is a household word:
And thus shall Leisler live to other times.

[Turns to the scaffold.

Around the portals of the silent grave,

In your mysterious calm I veil my head!

The scaffold and the axe, a moment's pang,

And this perturbed dream is o'er!

[Curtain falls, as the procession moves towards
the scaffold.

THE END.