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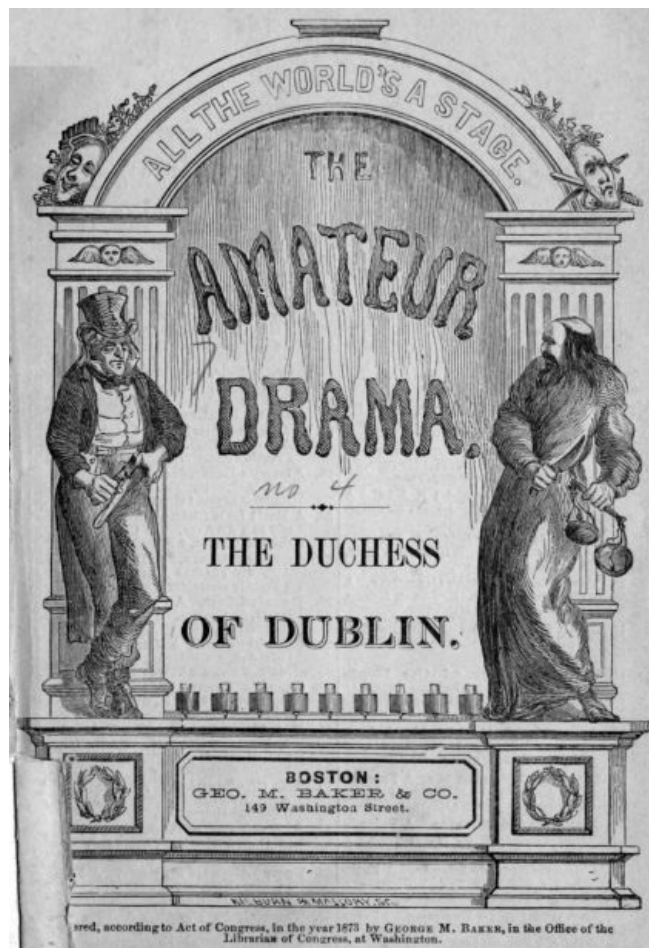
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE DUCHESS OF DUBLIN: A FARCE ***



ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE.

THE
AMATEUR
DRAMA.

**THE DUCHESS
OF DUBLIN.**

BOSTON:
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THE DUCHESS OF DUBLIN.

A Farce.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Sylvia's Soldier,"
"Once on a Time," "Down by the Sea," "The Last Loaf,"
"Bread on the Waters," "Stand by the Flag," "The Tempter," "A Drop too
Much," "We're all Teetotalers," "A Little more Cider," "Thirty Minutes
for Refreshments," "Wanted, a Male Cook," "A Sea of Troubles,"
"Freedom of the Press," "A Close Shave," "The Great
Elixir," "The Man with the Demijohn," "Humors of
the Strike," "New Brooms sweep Clean," "My
Uncle the Captain," "The Greatest Plague
in Life," "No Cure, no Pay," "The
Grecian Bend," "War of the
Roses," "Lightheart's
Pilgrimage,"
"The
Sculptor's
Triumph," "Too
Late for the Train,"
"Snow-Bound," "The Peddler
of Very Nice," "Bonbons,"
"Capuletta," "An Original Idea," "My
Brother's Keeper," "Among the Breakers,"
"The Boston Dip," "The Duchess of Dublin," "A
Tender Attachment," "Gentlemen of the Jury," "A Public
Benefactor," "The Thief of Time," "The Hypochondriac," "The
Runaways," "Coals of Fire," "The Red Chignon," "Using the Weed,"
"A Love of a Bonnet," "A Precious Pickle," "The Revolt
of the Bees," "The Seven Ages,"
&c., &c., &c.

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Rand, Avery, & Frye, Printers, Boston.

CHARACTERS.

[Pg 241]

DR. ADAM ACONITE, a Young Physician.
FRANK FRISKEY.

OLIVER OLDBUCK, rich and gouty.
SILAS SHARPSET, a Speculator.
DENNIS DOOLAN, a Widower.
PETER PLUMPFACE, with a bad cough.
ANNIE ACONITE, the Doctor's Sister.
LUCY LINDEN, a Milliner.
MISS ABIGAIL ALLLOVE, an Autograph Hunter.
MAGGIE MULLEN, "The Duchess of Dublin."

COSTUMES.

DR. ACONITE. Black suit, white necktie, light side whiskers, and light wig.

FRANK. Dark coat and vest, light pants, roundabout hat.

OLDBUCK. Gray wig, blue coat with brass buttons, double-breasted vest, white neckerchief, foot swathed in bandages, cane.

SHARPSET. Gray suit, red cop wig, full red beard, Kossuth hat.

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DENNIS. Red wig, blue overall suit, rusty white hat.

PLUMPFACE. Made up fat, very red face, dark, old-fashioned suit. Eye-glasses attached to a string, which drop from his nose when he coughs.

ANNIE. Neat morning dress.

LUCY. Tasty street dress and hat.

ABIGAIL. Close-fitting black dress, hair "a la Grecian," black lace cape, broad straw hat, red nose.

MAGGIE. Neat dress of a kitchen girl, sleeves rolled up.

THE DUCHESS OF DUBLIN.

A Farce.

SCENE.—*DR. ACONITE's office. Table, c., with a display of vials, one or two books, writing materials, &c. Chair, l. of table. Two chairs back. Small table, r., with chair beside it.*

MAGGIE discovered dusting. Her left hand is wrapped in a thick covering.

Maggie. 'Pon my sowl, it's the docthor's a jewel, that he is! Didn't I burn me wid the hot fat, that made me howl wid the pain uv it? And didn't the blissid docthor tind me loike his own sither—wid the cooling and haling salve for me fisht, and the wee sugar pills for the faver that was burnin' me up intirely? And didn't the blissid crayther, wid the bountiful heart in 'im, charge niver a cint for it, or sthop it out uv the wages uv a poor girl, as many a hathen would do, bad luck to 'em. To be sure he did; and, by that same token, it's Maggie Mullen would run the wide worrld over for the sakes uv him. Och, but it's little docthorin' he has onyhow, and perhaps I did him a sarvice giving him the practice loike. Will, if the sick folks only knew how handy he is, there'd be little rist for the sole uv my fut answering the bill.

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Enter FRISKEY, l.

Friskey. Hallo, Maggie! Where's the doctor?

Maggie. Sure it's at his briakfast he is. Can't you lit him have a little pace for his sowl? What wid bein' up all night, and runnin' to sick folks all day, it's little rist he finds onyhow.

Friskey. That's right, Maggie. Keep up a show of business if there is none. But I'm in the secret.

Maggie. Sacret, is it? Sure there's none.

Friskey. Ah, we know, Maggie, that our friend the doctor has yet to get his first patient.

Maggie. Indade you're wrong there, Masther Frank. Haven't I been under his charge, and don't I know the skilful arts uv him? Indade I do, and can give him the highest characther.

Friskey. O, I forgot that, Maggie. He's made a commencement. How's your hand, Maggie?

Maggie. As comfortable as it can be wid the finest midical attention.

Friskey. That's good. Well, I'll wait for him. (*Sits at table; takes up newspaper.*)

Maggie. That's right, sir. He'll be glad to say ye's. But mind, don't interfere wid his business. Don't tak his mind off the purshuit uv patients, for it's much they're wanted, ye's can belave.

[*Exit, R.*

Friskey. I do *belave* it. Now here's a man who has passed a splendid examination, received his diploma, and settled down in his native village to practise medicine, but so set are the good people that they will never patronize him until age and experience have fitted him to be their medical adviser. Stuff and nonsense! While he is growing he must starve, unless some way is found to move their stubborn will. Not a patient—no, I'm wrong—there's his free patient, Maggie, "The Duchess of Dublin," as *Lucy* and I facetiously call her. A free patient! If we could only contrive to get one of the high and mighty snobs of the village into his clutches, we'd physic him until the whole population flocked to his office. (*Knock, L.*) Come in. (*Enter LUCY LINDEN, L.*) Ah, *Lucy*, come in. How d'ye do? (*Shake hands.*)

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Lucy. Where's Adam?

Friskey. The first of men is at his breakfast, replenishing his exhausted system before renewing the toil of practice.

Lucy. You're too bad, Frank. The dear fellow must not be laughed at. You know he has no practice.

Friskey. O, there you're wrong. The first patient has been found.

Lucy. You don't mean it? Who is it—Squire Prim, or Aunt Lucy Spear, Mr. Plumpface, or Mr. Oldbuck? Do tell me. I'm dying to know!

Friskey. A person of greater importance. One with a high-sounding title.

Lucy. Title—Judge Higgins? General Proof? You mysterious fellow, why don't you tell me.

Friskey. It's "The Duchess of Dublin."

Lucy. O, pshaw! Maggie Mullen. Frank Friskey, you're a torment. I really thought 'twas some distinguished character.

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Friskey. Well, the duchess had a fine *character* from her last place. By Jove! an idea.

Lucy. Get rid of it, Frank; it's dangerous.

Friskey. Hush! This is really a magnificent idea. Our doctor must have patients, for several reasons: First, he is engaged to a beautiful young lady, whom he will not marry until his practice will allow him to support her as he desires—

Lucy. Just as if I cared. I'm sure I'd rather help him up hill, than to wait for the elegant mansion he hopes to rear on the summit.

Friskey. There *you* are interested. In the second place, his sister is engaged to a fascinating young gentleman, ahem! and him she will not marry until her brother can afford to let her leave his house, of which she is the toiling mistress.

Lucy. And there *you* are interested.

Friskey. Exactly. Therefore we are both interested in increasing the doctor's practice as soon as possible.

Lucy. The sooner the better.

Friskey. Now listen to me. Suppose that a high-born lady, a titled lady of Europe, should visit this country; should pass through this village; should suddenly be taken sick. The aid of our good friend the doctor is required. He is called in. The news spreads like wildfire through the village. Patients flock to his office. His fortune is made, and we are happy in our loves.

Lucy. Ah, but where can we find such a patient?

Friskey. She's here beneath this humble roof—"The Duchess of Dublin," *incog.*

Lucy. Why, Frank, what a desperate idea!

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Friskey. Desperate cases require desperate means. What say you, will you join me?

Lucy. In what way?

Friskey. We will leave this house at once, separate, you go to the right, I to the left. Drop in here and there quite accidentally, and, in confidence, disclose the interesting news that "The Duchess of Dublin," *incog.*, is in the skilful hands of Dr. Aconite. Magnify it a little, and await the result. I am confident that before night Adam will be as happy as a rush of complicated disorders can make an M. D.

Lucy. Capital! only if we are found out—

Friskey. We'll laugh it off as a capital joke. If, in the mean time, Adam gets a good patient, he'll make his way to a good practice.

Lucy. It's an absurd idea to exalt our Maggie to so high a position. Should anybody see her—

Friskey. Ah, but nobody must see her. The duchess is *incog*. You must communicate in the strictest confidence, and have it distinctly understood that not a word must be said to the doctor about his grand patient.

Lucy. I understand, and you may depend upon me; only if the worst comes I shall throw all the responsibility upon you.

Friskey. And I'll agree to take it all. Come, let's set out.

Lucy. Without seeing Adam?

Friskey. Yes, for I shan't trust you with him until you are fully committed to this arch plot. Come.

Lucy. What, would you rob me of a sight of my Adam?

Friskey. Eve-n so. Am I not robbed of the sight of my Annie?

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Lucy. Not even one embrace?

Friskey. As a substitute embrace me. (*Throws his arms around her.*)

Lucy (screams). You horrid wretch! (*Runs off, L., followed by FRISKEY.*)

DR. ACONITE appears, R.

Dr. A. Am I awake? My friend, my bosom friend, with his arms about my affianced bride! Pills and powders! pestle and mortar! am I awake? Well, it's my usual luck. Day by day I've seen my stock of provisions sensibly decrease. I have this morning devoured the last fishball that could be manufactured from the slender stock of codfish and potatoes. It has vanished, and so has my love, with the friend of my bosom. There's nothing left for me now but to make a few slender meals of my sugar-coated pills, fricassee the canary, and then slowly but surely starve. (*Sinks into chair, L.*)

Enter ANNIE ACONITE, R.

Annie. Well, brother, what would you like for dinner?

Dr. A. Dinner? ha, ha! Dinner! Well, what say you to roast turkey with cranberry sauce?

Annie. Brother!

Dr. A. Or roast goose, with guava jelly?

Annie. Brother!

Dr. A. Or roast buffalo, with venison steak, devilled kidneys, and salmon, with oyster sauce on the half shell.

Annie. Adam, are you crazy?

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Dr. A. Why not? Our dinner must be an imaginary one, so let's have it as costly and luxurious as possible. There's nothing in the larder. Let's be extravagant, and cook it all.

Annie. Why, how you rave! Is the money all gone?

Dr. A. Every cent.

Annie. But the butcher?

Dr. A. Would carve me with his meat-axe if I asked for credit.

Annie. Then I'll try him. He won't carve me. Now don't be despondent. We have always had a dinner, and, depend upon it, you shall to-day.

Dr. A.

"O Woman, in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please;
But, when the dinner seems to lag,
You'll have it, if you boil the puddin'-bag."

Annie, why don't you marry Frank Friskey?

Annie. Adam, why don't you marry the little milliner?

Dr. A. Because I have no patients.

Annie. And I have patience to wait until you get them before I marry Frank.

Dr. A. But I never shall have a patient. There's a dead set against me. They're determined I shall not cure or kill anybody until I kill myself with waiting.

Annie. Not so bad as that, Adam. Be patient, and wait.

Dr. A. O, humbug! My instruments are all getting rusty, my pills old, my plasters cracking, and my drops drying up. Hang it, I'll go and doctor myself for amusement. (Knock, L.) [Pg 249]

Annie. Hush! Perhaps there's a call.

Dr. A. The undertaker, perhaps, in search of a job. Come in.

Enter DENNIS, L.

Dennis. The top uv the mornin' to ye's. Is the docther man in—I donno?

Dr. A. Yes, I'm the doctor.

Dennis. Is that so? Yer rivrance, if ye plaze, Squire Croony wants ye's quick. The ould missus's howlin' in the pangs uv insinsibility, the young masther's took wid the jumpin' croup in his skull, and the babby's got the janders—an' it's pisoned they all are intirely.

Dr. A. What, Squire Croony?

Dennis. The same, yer rivrance, onto the hill beyant.

Dr. A. O, you've made a mistake. He wants Dr. Allopath.

Dennis. Niver at all, at all. It's Dr. Ac—Ac—Acraoniting I was to sind.

Dr. A. (jumping up, and pulling off his dressing-gown). My coat—quick! quick! (*ANNIE runs off, R.*) Maggie, Maggie, my hat and cane! Here's luck. (*Enter ANNIE, with coat. He jumps into it.*) You're sure he sent for me?

Dennis. To be sure I am.

Dr. A. Glory! glory! Rich Squire Croony! I'm a fortunate man. Where's my medicine case? (Runs to table, R., and takes it.) My good man, I'm terribly afraid you've made a mistake.

Dennis. Troth, I'm afraid they'll all git well afore you git there. [Pg 250]

Dr. A. That would be fatal—ahem!—to me. I'm off. I'll return at the earliest possible moment. Should anybody call, let them wait. Tell them I am suddenly called to my rich patient, ahem! Squire Croony. (*Going off, L.*)

Enter MAGGIE, R., with DR. ACONITE'S hat and cane.

Maggie. Sure, docther, you're not going widout yer hat?

Dr. A (returning). That would be a mistake. (*Puts on hat.*) You're sure, my man—

Dennis. O, bother! Would ye lave them all to die suddenly wid a long illness?

Dr. A. I'm off. Glory! glory! Luck! (Dances to door, L., then suddenly stops, straightens himself, and puts on a serious face). Professional dignity, ahem! (*Struts off, L.*)

Annie. Maggie, remember, if anybody calls, "The doctor has been called to Squire Croony."

[*Exit, R.*

Maggie. That I will—the dear docther! The luck's a-coomin'.

Dennis. Ah, ye's the fine gurl! Sure ye's remind me uv Donnybrook fair, in the ould counthry, wid ye's rosy cheeks, and pearly teeth, as white as—as—as—tombstones.

Maggie. Ah, will, will! It's the blarney-stone ye've kissed, sure, in the ould counthry.

Dennis. To be sure I have, colleen. Ah, bliss the ould sod! Sorry's the day I lift it, wid my own purty wife, Molly, who's been dead and gone the year, an' me wid the childers wid their bills open for food loike the little birds— [Pg 251]

Maggie. 'Tis a widerer ye's are?

Dennis. A lone widerer, wid a tear in one eye and the other wide open tight for a purty girl to fill the sitivation made vacant by the absince of my Molly.

Maggie. Is it lonesome ye are?

Dennis. Lonesome is it? Begorra! ye may will say that. Sure there's not blankets enough to kape the chill out uv me heart, whin I wake in the night and miss the music uv Molly's snore—for she had a powerful organ, and could pipe "St. Pathrick's Day" through her nose widout missing a note. Could ye's riccommend me?

Maggie. Troth, I don't know what ye mane.

Dennis. To a nice, respectable gurl that wouldn't mind incumbrances in the shape of nine as purty childers as iver built stone huts or made dirt pies, the darlints.

Maggie. Troth, I think ye've give nine good raisins why no smart gurl would loike to take the head uv yer establishment. She'd be loike the ould woman that lived in a shoe.

Dennis. An' ye couldn't be prevailed upon yeself to share my fortunes?

Maggie. What's that, ye loonytic? Away wid ye's. I'll have none uv yer Molly's childers distractin' my shlumbers. So ye can take yer hat, misther, and yer lave to onct.

Dennis. O, now, pity the sorrows of a poor lone, afflicted widower.

Maggie. Git out er that, or I'll break yer skull. Away wid ye's. (*DENNIS runs off, L. Runs into OLDBUCK, who enters.*) [Pg 252]

Oldbuck. O, murder! my foot! you villain! you scoundrel!

Dennis. I ax yer pardon. Sind me the bill.

[*Exit, L.*

Oldbuck. Confound you for a blundering fool! Girl, give me a chair. (*MAGGIE sets chair, R. C. OLDBUCK, groaning, hobbles to it, and sits.*) Now, then, where's the doctor?

Maggie. Sure he's at Squire Croony's.

Oldbuck. Squire Croony's—O, that foot! Why, he must have a pretty good practice.

Maggie. Ye may will say that. He hasn't ate a morsel for three days, nor slipt for a wake.

Oldbuck. Now that's a lie—O, my foot! Bring me a footstool—do you hear? Quick!

Maggie. What's that?

Oldbuck. A footstool, quick, or I'll break this cane—

Maggie (snatching cane from him). Ye'll be civil, so yer will, or out uv this house ye go.

Oldbuck. Give me that cane—O, my foot! You torment.

Maggie. Be aisy now, misther, and till yer business.

Oldbuck. I want the doctor.

Maggie. He's away wid dacint sick folks, that don't howl and break canes, and the loike, ye ould hathen!

Oldbuck. Do you know who I am?

Maggie. I niver set my two eyes on ye's before the day, and I niver want to again.

Oldbuck. You're a saucy jade—O, my foot!

Maggie (poking his foot with the cane). Does it burn. [Pg 253]

Oldbuck. O! O! murder! Do you want to kill me?

Maggie. Kape a civil tongue in yer head, and I'll do ye's no harm.

Oldbuck. When will the doctor return?

Maggie. Soon as he's kilt or cured the sick folks at Squire Croony's.

Oldbuck. Has he any patients in the house?

Maggie. Yis, one. (*Aside.*) Sure, I'm his patient; that's no lie.

Oldbuck. Ah! Male or female?

Maggie. Well, from my sowl, ye's a mighty inquisitive ould chap. It's a famale.

Oldbuck (aside). Ah, it's true then. Sh! Come here, my good girl. (*MAGGIE approaches him, and hits his foot.*) O, my foot! You clumsy—

Maggie (poking his foot with the cane). Does it burn?

Oldbuck. O! O! O! Will you be quiet?

Maggie. If ye'll kape a civil tongue.

Oldbuck. I'm dumb. But tell me—this patient—who is she? I'll be secret.

Maggie. Sure, ye's mighty mysterious. It's myself.

Oldbuck. You? (*Aside.*) They said she was *incog*. This must be her. And now I look at her, there's a certain grace about her, a queenly air—O, it's the duchess. (*Aloud.*) Your grace—

Maggie. What's that?

Oldbuck. Pardon me, your grace, I failed to recognize, in this mean attire, the high-born lady, which your highness must be.

Maggie. The ould fellow's looney. (*Pokes his foot with the cane.*) [Pg 254]

Oldbuck. O! O! my foot!

Maggie. Will ye's kape a civil tongue?

Oldbuck. Ten thousand pardons. I forgot your disguise.

Maggie. Disguise is it? Troth, it's my belafe that it's yerself is disguised intirely—in liquor.

Plumpface (outside, L., coughing violently). Where's (*cough*) the (*cough*) doctor? (*Enters, L.*)

Oldbuck. Old Plumpface, confound him!

Maggie. The doctor, is it? Troth, he's away on a call. He'll soon return. Take a cheer. (*Hands him chair, L. He sits.*)

Plumpface (coughs). O, this infernal cough! I'm in the last (*cough*) stages of a decline. (*Coughs.*)

Maggie. The docther'll cure ye's in a jiffy.

Oldbuck. Not that cough. Egad, he's kept it up for twenty years, and grows fat on it. Hallo, Plumpface! I thought Allopath was your medical adviser.

Plumpface. He's a swindle. (*Cough.*) He does me no good. (*Cough.*) I'm going to try the new one. (*Cough.*)

Oldbuck. Humbug! Keep your money. There's nothing the matter with you. You've tried twenty doctors. They bleed your pocket, and add power to that infernal cough.

Plumpface. Humbug yourself! (*cough*) hobbling round (*cough*) with that (*cough*) foot wrapped up. (*Cough.*) Stay at home and diet. (*Cough.*)

Maggie. Ye'll make a die of it some day, sure, wid that watchman's rattle in ye's throat.

Plumpface (to MAGGIE). Here (*cough*), I want to whisper to you. (*Cough.*)

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Maggie (comes close to him.) D'ye call that a whisper?

Plumpface. Hush! (*Cough.*) Don't let Oldbuck hear. (*Cough.*) How is she? (*Cough.*)

Maggie. What she d'ye mane?

Plumpface. Hush! The doctor's (*cough*) patient here.

Maggie. Is it mysilf? Troth, I'm pickin' up lively.

Plumpface (aside). Her? Can she be the duchess? It must be, *incog.* Your grace. (*Cough.*)

Maggie (aside). Your what?

Plumpface. I'm delighted to (*cough*) meet your highness. (*Cough.*) When did you leave the old country? (*Cough.*)

Maggie. The ould counthry, is it?

Oldbuck. Here, this way. (*Aside to MAGGIE.*) Plumpface is an old fool. Don't mind him, your grace.

Maggie. Will, 'pon my sowl, if here isn't a couple of the quarest ould chaps I iver met. O, here's the docther. (*Gives OLDBUCK his cane.*)

Enter DR. ACONITE, L. Exit MAGGIE, R.

Dr. A. The ice is broken. I've cured four individuals in ten minutes. My fortune's made. (*Comes, c.*)

Plumpface (jumping up). O, doctor (*cough*), my cough!

Oldbuck (jumping up). Dear doctor, my foot—O!

Plumpface. Please attend to me first. (*Cough.*)

Oldbuck. No, I arrived first, and claim your attention first.

Plumpface. It's a lie. I sent an hour ago. (*Cough.*)

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Oldbuck. He's a humbug. That cough's hereditary.

Plumpface. You villain! (*Shakes fist at OLDBUCK.*)

Oldbuck. You swindler! (*Shakes fist at PLUMPFACE.*)

Dr. A. (stepping between them). Gentlemen, be calm. 'Tis the proud boast of medical science that it can settle all difficulties, mental as well as physical. You need my aid; but such are the claims upon my time that I cannot, without doing injustice to my numerous patients, attend to you at present. Give me your address, and I will call upon you at the earliest possible moment.

Oldbuck. I am Squire Oldbuck.

Dr. A. (aside). The rich squire—good!

Plumpface. And I am Peter Plumpface. (*Cough.*)

Dr. A. (aside). The great manufacturer—good!

Oldbuck. I can pay handsomely.

Plumpface. I can pay liberally.

Dr. A. Gentlemen, you shall receive my early attention. You will pardon me, but I have a patient in the house who requires my immediate attention.

Oldbuck (aside). "The Duchess of Dublin."

Plumpface (aside). The Dublin duchess. (*Cough. Aloud.*) My dear doctor, I have heard of your skill. May I depend upon you?

Dr. A. At the earliest possible moment.

Oldbuck. You will give me early attention?

Dr. A. Immediate.

Oldbuck. Then I'll hobble home at once. Good day, doctor. (*Aside.*) When old Plumpface is out of the way, I'll slip back again. [Pg 257]

[*Exit, L.*

Plumpface (coughs). I know your skill, doctor (*cough.*) and shall depend upon you. Good day. (*Cough. Aside.*) I'll come back and quicken his memory when Oldbuck is out of sight.

[*Exit, L.*

Dr. A. (rubbing his hands). Ha, ha! that's a capital joke. Dr. Aconite, poor physician, turns two of the richest men out of his office to wait his pleasure! But that's the right way. 'Twill never do to be too anxious. Egad! they're rich acquisitions; for, though I have never met them, that cough and that gouty foot have been the rounds of the medical fraternity. Wonder how they happened to drop in upon me? No matter; I can cure them both in time. Ah, Time, you are the doctor's best friend, for you pay as you go. Luck's come at last, and that imaginary dinner shall be a real, substantial feast, to mark the day when Dr. Aconite took his first fee.

Enter SHARPSET, L.

Sharpset. Heow d'ye dew. You're Dr. Aconite, I reckon?

Dr. A. I am.

Sharpset. Jes' so. Wall, I'm Silas Sharpset, E. s. q., 'he founder and proprietor of the "Excelsior Perambulating Museum of Wonderful, Whimsical, Extraordinary, and Eccentric Living Curiosities."

Dr. A. Indeed!

Sharpset. Jes' so. You'll find in my wonderful collection studies of human nater in every variety. The remarkable and only original living fat girl, seven years of age, who has attained the enormous weight of seven hundred and seventy-seven pounds by a daily diet of molasses candy and gum drops. [Pg 258]

Dr. A. Remarkable, indeed!

Sharpset. Jes' so. Also, the only real living skeleton, aged thirty-nine, weight seventeen pounds and three ounces, who lives on oatmeal gruel, eaten by the spoonful, once in forty-eight hours, who kin crawl through a stove-pipe of six inches diameter, and dance the Cachuca in a quart measure.

Dr. A. Ah, that's too thin.

Sharpset. Jes' so. Then there's the man born without either arms or legs, who can lift a hogshead with his teeth, and write a remarkably legible hand with his back hair, which he wears in a cue for that purpose.

Dr. A. Cue-rious, indeed.

Sharpset. Jes' so. Then there's the bald-headed accountant, with his head so full of figures that he can run up the longest account in no time, and, by the force of his stupendous intellect, make the sum total appear in round figures, visible to the naked eye, on the top of his head.

Dr. A. A calculating baldhead.

Sharpset. Jes' so. But the assortment is too numerous to mention. I kin only say, that for variety, versatility, and invention, this collection is unsurpassed, and kin be seen in all its beauty for twenty-five cents a head.

Dr. A. Well, sir, what is your business with me? My time is precious.

Sharpset. Jes' so. Wall, then, to come to the p'int. You've got a nat'ral living curiosity, and I want it.

Dr. A. I've got a curiosity? So I have—a curiosity to know what you mean.

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Sharpset. Jes' so. Mighty secret, but it's no use, doctor; it's all over town. You'll have to give in, so you might as well make the best terms you kin with me, for I've greater facilities for exhibiting the critter than any other live man. Jes' so—Silas Sharpset, E. s. q., can't be beat.

Dr. A. Exhibiting the critter, Mr. Sharpset? There's a wildness in your eye that betokens insanity. You are laboring under a wild hallucination. Go hence. Soak your feet, wrap a wet towel round your head, and return to your couch at once.

Sharpset. Jes' so. Keep it up, doctor. But it won't fool me. The critter's here. Turn her over to me, bag and baggage, and I'll pay you a thousand dollars down.

Dr. A. A thousand dollars—you'll pay me? Be calm, my friend, be calm. You betray unmistakable symptoms of a disordered mind. Will you oblige me with a little explanation?

Sharpset. Jes' so.

Dr. A. Who is the "critter" that you are in pursuit of?

Sharpset. The duchess, of course. Why, consarn it, it's all over town.

Dr. A. The duchess? Ah, yes, poor man, lunacy always takes high flights. Ah, who is the duchess?

Sharpset. Jes' so. Doctor, do you see anything of a verdant hue in this optic? (*Finger on left eye.*) It's no use. "The Duchess of Dublin" is in this house; is under your charge. Now do the handsome thing. I'll put her up as an extra attraction, charge double price, and divide profits. There's an offer.

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Dr. A. By doubling your price on "The Duchess of Dublin"? Now, you must excuse the question, but who is "The Duchess of Dublin"? and what have I to do with "The Duchess of Dublin"?

Sharpset. Consarn it, mister, are you a fool?

Dr. A. Now gently, friend. Be calm, be calm. (*Aside.*) O, he's very crazy!

Sharpset. Humbug! Will you, or will you not, accept my offer? Half profits for the duchess. Sharp's the word! Quick, or you lose it!

Dr. A. My dear friend, it wouldn't hurt you to lose a little blood. My lancet's handy.

Sharpset. Jehoshaphat! do you take me to be an idiot?

Dr. A. You'd better go home. Your wife and children are expecting you. No doubt the little folks are chanting, with their childish voices, "Dear father, dear father, come home."

Sharpset. Jes' so. You can't pull wool over my eyes, doctor. Silas Sharpset is sharpset by name and sharpset by nater. You can't fool me. You've got a prize, and want to keep it for yourself; but if I don't set the populace howling round your door, and make you show up the duchess, then you can shave my head, and lock me up for life. No monopolies here in living curiosities while Sharpset's around—not if he knows it: jes' so.

[*Exit, L.*

Dr. A. He's gone—home, I hope. He's very mad. Why don't his friends take care of him. It's dangerous to let a man run round with such horrid ideas as are rambling through his brain. The fat girl, the living skeleton, the bald-headed accountant, and "The Duchess of Dublin." 'Pon my word, the idea of my having under my charge a duchess! O, it's absurd. The man's crazy; he must be looked after; I'll follow him (*takes hat*), and see that he does no damage. (*Goes to door, L.*)

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Enters, suddenly, MISS ABIGAIL ALLOVE, with a large book under her arm. Seizes DR. ACONITE by arm, and drags him down, C.

Abigail (mysteriously). You are—are you?—or am I mistaken?

Dr. A. Eh? You may be right, you may be wrong, or you may be mistaken.

Abigail. You do not answer me; and I, poor lone orphan that I am, tremble in your presence.

Dr. A. Eh? Are you often alone? Miss, or madam, let's drop this nonsense. Have, you any business with me? I am Dr. Aconite.

Abigail. You are the friend of the unfortunate; the guide of suffering humanity to havens of rest; the healer of broken hearts; the finger-post that points the way to the mansion of health. O, human angel, list to my woes.

Dr. A. Madam, or miss, I shall be happy to aid you with my professional skill.

Abigail. Professional skill? Away with it. I want it not. I want sympathy, friendship, love.

Dr. A. Ah, indeed. Then I'm sorry I cannot help you. They are not in my line.

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Abigail. List to a tale of grief. At the age of four I lost my mother, at the age of ten my father, at the age of fifteen my sister, at twenty my only brother, at twenty-five my uncle, at thirty—

Dr. A. O, stop, stop, stop! Spare me. I didn't kill them. I haven't been in practice a year. You must see I had no time for such slaughter.

Abigail. I am alone in the world. No relatives, no friends, "no one to love,"—only this. (Shows book.)

Dr. A. And pray what is that?

Abigail. A treasure millions could not buy. A pearl of matchless value—my life, my friend, my love—my autograph album.

Dr. A. O, indeed, is that all? And you want my autograph? With the greatest pleasure. (Attempts to take book.)

Abigail. Away! Do not profane it with your touch. None but the noble stain its spotless pages.

Dr. A. Ah, indeed! Pardon my presumption.

Abigail. No, only the divine wielders of the pen, the classic movers of the artistic brush, the noble toilers with the gracing chisel, the seraphic sons and daughters of song, kings, emperors, queens, the high-born and the great can dot their i's in Abigail Alllove's autograph album.

Dr. A. Decidedly select.

Abigail (opening book). Behold the autograph of the Emperor of China.

Dr. A. (reading). "Will you come and take tea in the arbor. Te he!" Ah, did you te-ease him for that? [Pg 263]

Abigail. The name of the Emperor of the French.

Dr. A. (reading). "Put out the light, and then put—Napoleon." Which he did. Very good.

Abigail. The Queen of Sheba.

Dr. A. (reading). "Anything on this board for ten cents. Saloma." Attentive to business, very.

Abigail. Dr. Livingstone.

Dr. A. (reading).

*"On, Stanley, on,
Were the last words from Livingstone."*

Original, very.

Abigail. Joshua Billings.

Dr. A. (reading). "Duz time fli in fli time? Josh Billings." That's a very bad spell.

Abigail. Alfred Tennyson.

Dr. A. (reading).

*"When I can shoot my rifle clear
To pigeons in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to pork and beans,
And live on pigeon pies."*

A. Tennyson."

Abigail. Exquisite poet!

Dr. A. I admire his taste.

Abigail. Now, dear doctor, I would add one other name to my valuable collection. You can aid me. Will you? O, say you will—will you? and take the burden from the heart of a lone orphan.

Dr. A. Madam, or miss, I should be very happy to assist you—

[Pg 264]

Abigail. O, rapturous answer! O, noble disciple of Æsculapius! The lips of the lone orphan will bless you; the tears of the lone orphan shall bless you; the smiles of the lone orphan—

Dr. A. Be calm, be calm. In what way can I assist you?

Abigail. You have beneath your roof a noble lady—

Dr. A. Eh?

Abigail. From a foreign clime. You hold her here in secret. Let me but get her name in my autograph album, and Abigail Alllove will die happy.

Dr. A. Noble lady? (Aside.) Another lunatic.

Abigail. Yes, the name of "The Duchess of Dublin."

Dr. A. The—dickens! Stark, staring mad. My dear young lady, you are laboring under a

hallucination. Go home at once. Call your friends.

Abigail. Alas! I have no friends. Did I not tell you I am a lone—

Dr. A. Yes, yes; but call in the neighbors, the kind neighbors—

Abigail. But the duchess! I must see the duchess. The hopes, the fears, the life of a lone orphan—

Dr. A. Lone orphan, go home; let me alone. I have no duchess, know no duchess. You are deceived. No, no, dear, go home.

"Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

Abigail. O, you wretch! You mean, contemptible quack. You have read my album, my precious volume, and now refuse my request. [Pg 265]

Dr. A. But, my dear young lady—

Abigail. Don't come near me! You've broken the heart of a lone orphan. You're a base, ungrateful, ugly, miserable pill-box! and I hope you'll never live to own an autograph album—there!

[*Exit, L.*

Dr. A. Good by, lone orphan. Now there's a case that requires immediate attention. Poor thing! I ought not to have let her go until her friends appeared. (*Enter DENNIS, L. Stands in door, beckoning to DR. ACONITE.*) Hallo! who's that?

Dennis (mysteriously). Sh! sh! (*Creeps down, c., beckoning to DR. ACONITE.*)

Dr. A. Well, what is it?

Dennis. It's all right, docther, it's all right.

Dr. A. Well. I'm glad to know that, at any rate.

Dennis. Yis, I'll not brathe a word. It's from the owld counthry I am.

Dr. A. That's very evident.

Dennis. An' it's mysilf that would give the worrld to sit my two eyes on her. Now, docther, it's a lone widdy I am, an' would ye's go for to do me a kindness?

Dr. A. To be sure I would.

Dennis. Hiven bliss ye! Thin fich her out. Let me faist my eyes on her beautiful face, her illigant, dignified figure. Let me kiss the him of her magnificent dress, and hear her swate voice spake the brogue of the gim of the say.

Dr. A. What are you talking about? Who do you want to see?

Dennis. You know will what I mane—her grace, the noble, moighty, illigant "Duchess of Dublin." [Pg 266]

Dr. A. What? "The Duchess of Dublin?" Out of my house at once, or I shall do you an injury.

Dennis. Faix, you don't mane it. Rob an Irishman of his right to pay his rispicts to a high-born lady uv his own counthry?

Dr. A. Do you see that door?

Dennis. Faix, I'm not blind.

Dr. A. Then get the other side of it at once. (*Takes cane.*) I've had enough of "The Duchess of Dublin."

Dennis. Is that so? Thin I'm the b'y to take her off ye's hands.

Dr. A. Will you leave this house?

Dennis. To be sure I will, afther I've seen her grace.

Dr. A. (rushes at him with cane). O, you will have it—will you?

Dennis (backing to door). Aisy, docther; I want none uv ye's medicine. But I'll say the duchess, so I will, wid ye's lave or widout it.

[*Exit, L.*

Dr. A. Has the whole village gone crazy? or is this some infernal plot to drive me into hopeless lunacy?

PLUMPFACE coughs outside, then enters, L.

Plumpface. Doctor (*cough*), I thought you were coming to (*cough*) see me?

Dr. A. I'll be there in half an hour, Mr. Plumpface. Business of a very serious nature has detained me here.

Plumpface. Yes (*cough*), I know. She kept you.

Dr. A. She—Who do you mean?

Plumpface. O (*cough*), it's all right, doctor. I'm in the secret. (*Cough.*) I've seen her; spite of her disguise, I knew her at once. (*Cough.*) [Pg 267]

Dr. A. Knew her at once? Who, pray?

Plumpface. O, you sly dog! (*Cough.*) The duchess.

Dr. A. Heavens and earth! She here again?

Plumpface. She hasn't been away—has she? (*Cough.*)

Dr. A. Look here, Plumpface. Go home, quick! Go to your room, get into bed, and don't stir until I get there.

Plumpface. What's the matter now?

Dr. A. Your case has taken a serious turn. You are going to get rid of that cough. It's going to your head. You will be mad.

Plumpface. Mad? You don't say so! What a horrible idea! I'm afraid you're right. I haven't coughed for three minutes. O, doctor, is there no hope?

Dr. A. Don't stop to talk. Get home at once. (*Pushes him out of door, L.*) Run for your life. How he goes! The exercise will do his lungs good; but his head, poor fellow! He's got the duchess fever.

Enter OLDBUCK, L.

Oldbuck. I say, doctor, what's the matter with Plumpface? I met him, running. Is there a fire anywhere?

Dr. A. Yes, very near him—in his head. It has been turned.

Oldbuck. You don't say so. By what, pray?

Dr. A. By "The Duchess of Dublin."

Oldbuck. Egad! she's enough to turn anybody's head. But I say, doctor, how is she?

Dr. A. What? [Pg 268]

Oldbuck. I'm mightily interested in her. How's she getting along? I've seen her, too.

Dr. A. O, this is too much. Oldbuck, look at that foot.

Oldbuck. What's the matter?

Dr. A. It's swelling fearfully. A dangerous symptom. It must be kept down. (*Steps on his foot.*)

Oldbuck. O, murder! Confound you, what are you doing?

Dr. A. Keeping down the swelling. (*Steps again.*)

Oldbuck. O! Do you want to murder me?

Dr. A. (*steps again. OLDBUCK avoids him, and runs round stage, crying out.*) I tell you, there's no other way. (*Steps.*) Get home, quick! (*Steps.*) Quick! If the swelling continues (*steps*) 'twill reach a vital part. (*Steps.*) Go home! (*OLDBUCK runs out, L., crying out.*) He's gone. No more practice to-day. (*Locks door.*) O, that infernal duchess! She's nearly driven me mad, mad, mad! (*Sinks into chair.*)

Enter ANNIE, R.

Annie. O, brother, what does it all mean? The yard is filled with people.

Enter MAGGIE, R., with broom.

Maggie. And the fince is covered wid bys, roosting loike so many hins. I'll have them off, jist. (*Goes, L.*)

Dr. A. Stop! Don't open that door. My life's in danger if you open that door. (*Shouts outside, "Hi! hi! The duchess! the duchess!"*) O, Lord! the whole village has got it—and got it bad. O, Annie, if you love me, send for Dr. Allopath, send for Judge Busted, or I am completely busted. [Pg 269]

Annie. Brother, are you sick? What does this mean?

Enter FRANK and LUCY, R.

Frank. It means fame, fortune. O, it's glorious!

Dr. A. Glorious to have your front yard filled with a howling, yelling pack? Hear that. (*Shouts outside, "Hi! hi! The duchess! the duchess!"*)

Frank. O, that's all right.

Dr. A. (*jumping up*). All right! And perhaps 'twas all right when I saw you a half hour ago with your arms around my affianced bride.

Annie. You did? O, Frank, how could you?

Frank. It's all right, I tell you. (*Shouts outside, as before.*) I can explain. But, in the mean time, we've work before us. Here, Lucy, just throw that cloud around your head so your eyes alone will be visible. (*She does so.*) That's good. Now, doctor, give Lucy your arm.

Dr. A. But I would like to know—

Frank. So you shall. In the mean time unhesitatingly obey me. Your professional reputation is at stake. Give Lucy your arm, go up stairs, open the window, step out upon the balcony, and gracefully bow to the assembled people. (*Shouts as before.*)

Dr. A. Yes, but this proceeding—

Lucy. Is strictly proper. Depend upon it, Adam, there is no other way.

Dr. A. If there is no other way, will you be kind enough to tell me what this way is?

Lucy. Right up stairs. Come.

Dr. A. But what is it about?

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Lucy. About time we were up stairs—so come along.

[Exit, DR. ACONITE and LUCY, R.]

Annie. Now, Mr. Frank Friskey, I should like to know—

Frank. Hush! (*Goes to door, L. Shouts as before.*) I hear them above. Now he opens the window. Good. (*Outside shouts, "Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!"*) Splendid!

Alice. Will you oblige me—(*Outside shouts, "Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!"*)

Frank. Good, good! Ah, now he's shutting the window.

Maggie. 'Pon my sowl, is it the präsident?

Frank. The crowd is breaking up. (*Knock at door, L.*)

Enter DR. ACONITE and LUCY, R.

Dr. A. Will anybody, male or female, be kind enough to look in my face, and tell me if I am Adam Aconite, or if I am not Acom Adamite.

Frank. I'll be back in a minute. (*Runs off, R.*)

Maggie. Sure it's the most mysterious mystery that iver took place. It bates the deluge, sure. (*Knock at door, L.*)

Lucy. Shall I open the door, doctor?

Dr. A. No—yes—don't mind me. I'm not myself. I'm out of my head. I'm mad, mad, mad! (*Sinks into chair.*)

Annie. O, brother! isn't this terrible? (*Knock, L.*)

Maggie. Bedad, there'll be a breakdown at that door, or I'm mistaken. (*Opens door. OLDBUCK, SHARPSET, PLUMPFACE, and DENNIS tumble in on floor.*) Troth, is that a pelite way to inter the house? [*Pg 271*]
(*They pick themselves up.*)

Oldbuck. Introduce me, doctor.

Plumpface. No; me first, doctor.

Sharpset. I'll hold to my bargain.

Dennis. Presint me, docther.

Maggie (*swinging her broom round her head*). Shoo! Away wid ye's! Don't you say the docther's sick? (*They fall back.*)

Dr. A. (*rising*). Gentlemen, I am at your mercy. An hour ago I was the possessor of a noble intellect. Now, I am like the reed shaken by the blast. To whom shall I present you?

Oldbuck, Plumpface, Sharpset, Dennis. "The Duchess of Dublin."

Dr. A. "Monsieur Tonson come again." (*Sinks into chair.*)

Maggie. "The Duchess of Dublin." O, be aisy wid yer nonsinse. Sure there's nobody here that answers to that name at all at all.

Enter FRANK, R.

Frank. No, because her grace has just been driven away in her own carriage. I had the honor of bringing her here; I have had the honor to conduct her from this place, and to receive her thanks for the able manner in which she has been treated by Dr. Aconite.

Dr. A. (comes down, c.). Have you been taken, too, Frank? Alas! poor fellow!

Frank. O, it's all right! Listen to me. Annie! Lucy! (*Beckons to them. They come down, c. OLDBUCK, PLUMPFACE, SHARPSET, and DENNIS come down.*) Your pardon, gentlemen, a little family secret. [Pg 272]

Maggie (swings her broom around her head). Shoo! Ye are trespassing, d'ye mind! (*They retire.*)

Frank. Doctor, for all the trouble you have endured to-day, I, and I alone, am to blame. We are all interested in your success, and, to insure that success, Lucy and I put our heads together.

Dr. A. And your arms about each other—yes.

Frank. And concocted a scheme which has succeeded admirably. (*OLDBUCK, PLUMPFACE, SHARPSET, and DENNIS look at each other, then stealthily approach, c.*)

Maggie (flourishing broom). Shoo! Away wid ye's! Have ye's no manners, ye hathens?

Frank. You have your hands full of patients now, from the fact that it has leaked out that you had under your charge a high-born lady. You know that one good customer will attract others. Your success is assured, and our happiness, I trust, not in the distance, as it appeared to be an hour ago.

Dr. A. And you have deceived the trusty public, and given me position by a lie.

Frank. No, for "The Duchess of Dublin" is still under your roof. Have you forgotten the title I gave to Maggie? and she certainly was your patient.

Dr. A. I never thought of that, Frank. I owe you much. But if ever you attempt another such trick —

Frank. But I shan't. This one will give me a wife (*takes ANNIE'S hand*), and there will be no more mischief in me.

Dr. A. Lucy, what have you to say for yourself? [Pg 273]

Lucy. O, I'm delighted. It brings our wedding day so much nearer.

Dr. A. Well, I suppose I must be satisfied then. Gentlemen (*all come down R. and L.*), I have rather neglected my business to-day, but, having such a mysterious patient, I think you will pardon me. I intend, in the future, to give my attention strictly to village practice.

Oldbuck. It's all right, doctor. I'm proud to have as my physician a gentleman who has been the medical attendant of so distinguished a personage.

Plumpface. Yes, indeed, you've sent my cough off in a hurry, just by your advice; and if you can keep it from my head—

Dr. A. No fear, Mr. Plumpface. I'll cure your head in short order.

Sharpset. Say, doctor, can't you give me the address of the lady? I'll make her a splendid offer to take a position in my Living Curiosity Gallery.

Dr. A. No, that would be betraying profound secrecy.

Dennis. Sacrecy, is it? Be jabbers, it's no sacret that she's gone. Ye've a sthrong lift in the profession, and I've a mind to engage ye's to docther the nine childer, if ye'll make the fays conform to the size uv thim.

Enter ABIGAIL, L.

Abigail. And has she gone? and am I bereft of her autograph? O, cruel doctor! to so basely deceive a lone orphan— [Pg 274]

Dr. A. Now don't! Say no more about it, my dear miss—madam. It was a mistake. If you will pardon me, I will endeavor to obtain for you the autograph of the king of the Cannibal Islands, in red ink, made from the blood of a missionary.

Abigail. Will you? O, then I forgive you, with all my heart.

Dr. A. (to audience). Ladies and gentlemen, you have witnessed the success of Dr. Aconite during the last half hour in obtaining patients. It may possibly occur to you that they have been obtained by false pretences. But am I to blame? Maggie, come here. (*MAGGIE comes down L. of DR. ACONITE.*) I am seeking patients, and want a good recommendation. What can you say for me?

Maggie. Sure, ye's the illigant docther, so ye are, an' it's a plisure to be sick wid the chance of being cured or kilt by the loikes uv ye's.

Dr. A. You hear what she says. Can I hope for your support? Will you become my regular patients? If you will, it shall be my endeavor to serve you well; and you know I can bring a high recommendation from no less a personage than her grace, "The Duchess of Dublin."

Situations.
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 ANNIE. MAGGIE.
 FRANK. ABIGAIL.
 OLDBUCK. SHARPSET.
DENNIS. PLUMPFACE.
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