

# Masonic Reprints.

---

---

Reproductions  
of  
Masonic Manuscripts, Books  
and Pamphlets.

WITH NOTES.

---

By JOHN T. THORP, F.R.Hist.S.,  
P.G.D. (Eng.).

---

IV.

“Les Fri-Maçons. Hyperdrame. 1740.”  
A Translation by R. E. Wallace-James, S.S.C.

+XK+

LEICESTER :

PRINTED BY BROS. JOHNSON, WYKES AND PAINE, MARBLE STREET.

1921.

LES  
FRI-MAÇONS.  
HYPERDRAME.



· A LONDRES,  
Chez J... T... dans le Strand.

---

M. DCC. XL.

## General Foreword.

(1907.)

---

In the flood of Masonic literature, more or less ephemeral, which appears year by year, one class, and that certainly not the least entertaining and instructive, seems of late to have been entirely absent. These are the Reprints, with notes, of old Masonic manuscripts, books and pamphlets, or portions of such, which are curious, rare or valuable.

This work carried out in so splendid a manner by the "Quatuor Coronati" Lodge, No. 2076 London, in the years 1889 to 1900, has, alas, been discontinued, to the deep regret of all Masonic students.\* The unique character of the Reprints already produced, and the excellence of their execution, has laid the Masonic fraternity under a permanent obligation to that well-known and distinguished Lodge, and it is sincerely to be hoped that, ere long, the valuable work may be recommenced, as very much in that direction still remains to be done.

Meanwhile, something on a smaller and less pretentious scale may be undertaken with advantage by the "Lodge of Research," No. 2429 Leicester. It is therefore proposed to issue from time to time, as circumstances will allow, reprints of portions of little known Masonic manuscripts, books and pamphlets, which may be considered of sufficient interest, and are not easily obtainable by the ordinary Masonic reader.

---

\* A further Vol. was published in 1913.

Much of the Masonic literature of the eighteenth century would not prove of sufficient value or interest, much could not be reprinted without incurring the displeasure of the Masonic authorities, but enough remains to form a valuable series, even although it may be necessary in some cases, for obvious reasons, seriously to mutilate the work.

Some of these proposed reprints will be in exact fac-simile, others will be printed *verbatim et literatim*, with the same pagination and with type as nearly matching the originals as can be obtained. Plates of frontispieces or title-pages will be added, in order to make the volumes as valuable and useful as possible, to those who desire to become acquainted with some of the early literature of Freemasonry.

J. T. T.

54 PRINCESS ROAD,  
LEICESTER.



## Foreword to Vol. IV.

BY THE EDITOR.

---

The little Play which forms Vol. IV of the MASONIC REPRINTS issued by the Lodge of Research, No. 2429, is a free translation, by W. Bro. R. E. Wallace-James, of the French Hyperdrama *Les Fri-Maçons* which, although not printed until 1740, is said to have been written, and ready for production, as early as 1737. The author of the Play is unknown.

It was one of the first, perhaps the very first, of a long series of dramas, comedies, romances, and other works of fiction, which were written by French and German authors during the eighteenth century, all dealing with the various phases of Freemasonry as practiced, or supposed to be practiced, on the Continent of Europe during that period.

Kloss, the eminent German Masonic Bibliographer, in his *Bibliographie der Frei-maurerei*, published in 1844, gives a long list of works of fiction (*Ordens-Romane*, Nos. 3935—4012), which had come under his notice. Most of these are in the French or German languages, and are based either upon a legitimately or fraudulently acquired knowledge of Freemasonry, and the societies associated with it, or contained sufficient references thereto, as to warrant their inclusion in his list of Masonic works. He also quotes the titles of forty-one Masonic or quasi-Masonic dramas (*Ordens-Schauspiele*, Nos. 4013—4053), the first on the list being the Play of which a translation is

now published. He quotes it, in error, as *Les Francs-Maçons*, from which it may be inferred that he had never seen a copy: According to this bibliographer several editions were published, viz. :—

Londres.	1740,	8 vo.,	pp. IV + 87 and 2 ll.
”	”	”	2 ll. pp. 76 + 1 and 2 ll.
Brunswic.	”	”	”
Londres.	1741,	”	2 ll. pp. 104 + 3.
”	”	”	”
Strasbourg,	1769,	”	”

The title is curious, *Les Fri Maçons* being evidently an attempt to express in French the English words *The Free-Masons*, which at the time were not thoroughly understood by those abroad who used them. Already as early as 1737 Bernard Picart, in his great work *The Ceremonies and Religious Customs of the World*, originally written in French, had adopted the words “Les Free Massons” as an equivalent of “The Free Masons,” for the title of a Plate which depicted Pine’s 1735 Engraved List of English Masonic Lodges, and it was several years before the words “Les Francs-Maçons,” which are a more literal translation of the English term, came into general use.

The designation “Hyperdrame” indicates the character of the Play. It is an exaggerated form of drama or comedy, a representation of certain actions and episodes which would be unlikely ever to happen; indeed it might with justice be described as a “farce,” which is a dramatic composition of a broadly extravagant character. It will be well to bear this in mind when perusing the Play.

From the imprint “A Londres, Chez J . . . T . . . dans le Strand,” it has been assumed by

the translator and others that the Play was printed by Jacob Tonson, whose place of business was in the Strand, London, and who published many pamphlets, Masonic and others, in the first half of the eighteenth century. I am, however, unable to accept this conclusion for, among others, the following reasons:—the booklet has more the appearance of a French than an English pamphlet; I have never seen one of Jacob Tonson's productions issued under his initials, his name always appearing in full; it was also quite a common proceeding on the Continent at that time, to publish books with false or curious places of issue, and England being the acknowledged birthplace of modern Freemasonry, it gave to any work a greater value and authority, and a higher position in Masonic literature, if it appeared to have been published in London.\*

This class of literature had a much greater vogue on the Continent than in England. The French character and temperament—so different from the English—appreciated more highly, and was more deeply interested in the lighter class of fiction, than was the more sedate and serious English public, and this in a great measure, I think, accounts for the abundance and long-continued popularity of these quasi-Masonic works.

The question naturally arises, with what object was the drama written? It is almost impossible at this distance of time to say definitely. It must be remembered that although in 1740 modern Freemasonry had only been recently introduced into France, it had already taken a firm hold of a

---

\* Since writing the above, I find that my opinion was shared by the late Bro. Enoch T. Carson, the distinguished American Masonic bibliographer.

class of people which had both money and leisure ; it had become quite a vogue, people were talking about it, and enquiring what it meant. Its principal outstanding feature seemed to them to be the secret which it possessed, and of which it seemed both proud and tenacious. It had become quite a craze with some people, women especially, to endeavour to penetrate the mystery in which the Freemasons enshrouded all their proceedings. Every means was adopted, every method used—persuasion, cajolery, threats, impersonation, plot, stratagem,—all were successively tried, with probably little or no success, until at length the public came to the conclusion, either that there was no secret, or that it was not worth troubling about any further. The same thing occurred in England, but not to the same extent as in France.

The Play seems therefore an attempt to depict, in the form of a farce, the various means which were tried—persuasion, bribery, threat, and conspiracy to impersonate—with the object of obtaining possession of the Freemasons' secrets, and which resulted in failure in the Play, as it generally did in the ordinary life of the people.

The character of Mondor is difficult to understand. It seems strange that a man of quite recent admission to the Fraternity should occupy the position of Grand Master. I think, however, the wrong title has been given to him in the Play, and that he is intended to represent the Worshipful Master of a Lodge only.

Thanks should be accorded to Bro. R. E. Wallace-James, for placing at the disposal of the Lodge his translation of the Play. Adequate translation is not an easy task at any time, and Bro. Wallace-James has produced an excellent English rendering of *Les Fri-Maçons*.

J. T. T.

## TRANSLATED BY

R. E. WALLACE-JAMES, S.S.C. ; P.M. No. 57 ;  
 Past Prov. Grand Sec.y, Prov. Grand Treasurer,  
 Midlothian ; Representative from the Grand  
 Lodge of Saskatchewan, &c., &c.

---

## PREFACE

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

---

This play is said to have been the earliest Masonic play, and was performed in Paris in 1739, although Kloss seems to indicate that it was produced two years earlier ; it was subsequently published in London, Brunswick and Strasbourg. Its author is said to have been Constant (or Clement) of Geneva, who wrote under the assumed name of Vincent, but the identity of this writer has never been satisfactorily settled.

The publisher J. T. was Jacob Tonson (the third of that name), who in 1740 carried on business in the Strand, in the shop opposite Catherine Street so long occupied by the Tonson family. The business was founded by Jacob Tonson (b. 1656 : d. 1736). His nephew Jacob, who was in partnership with him, died a few months before him, and they were succeeded by the third Jacob Tonson, a son of the second. The third Jacob Tonson died in 1767, when " the time-honoured name was erased from the list of book-sellers."

---



LES  
FRI-MAÇONS.  
HYPERDRAME.

A LONDRES,  
Chez J.... T.... dans le Strand.

---

M.DCC. XL.



PREFACE.  

---

The piece which is here published should have been performed by French comedians at the beginning of 1737. Certain unforeseen circumstances arose which prevented it receiving this honour. Freemasonry was all the fashion in Paris at this time. Therefore readers who are not Freemasons are begged to imagine themselves in these circumstances, and not to form a hasty opinion upon a work, of which the main point is beyond their comprehension.

---

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

---

- LUCILE. A young widow extremely inquisitive.
- MARIANE. Femme de Chambre to Lucile.
- MONDOR. Grand Master of Freemasons, a lover of Lucile.
- CLITANDRE. A gay young spark, a lover of Lucile.
- L'ÉVEILLE. Valet de Chambre to Clitandre, in love with Mariane.

Several Freemasons and Candidates for  
Freemasonry.

---

The scene is laid in Paris in a Hall, in proximity to the  
apartments of Lucile.

---

## SCENE FIRST.

## MARIANE AND L'EVEILLE.

L'EVEILLE,—How charming you are to-day, Mariane. (He attempts to embrace her, but she repels him.)

MARIANE,—Just wait a bit, don't be in a hurry. You will discover that I shall be even more charming another day.

L'EVEILLE,—You are charming enough now, and I have no time to wait. (He again attempts to embrace her, and she again repels him.) Why: I shall soon have known you for six months, and courted you as long, and this is how you treat me.

MARIANE,—What do you want?

L'EVEILLE,—You do not love me then?

MARIANE,—No.

L'EVEILLE,—But you will marry me?

MARIANE,—Not likely.

L'EVEILLE,—And why did you not tell me sooner of all this?

MARIANE,—Just because you love me, and your love amuses me.

L'EVEILLE,—It would have amused you more, if you had loved me in return.

MARIANE,—I doubt it.

L'EVEILLE,—Do you wish me to prove it to you?

MARIANE,—I defy you to do so.

L'EVEILLE,—Good-bye, then.

MARIANE,—Listen, listen, L'Eveille,—tell me one thing,—spiteful one,—do you know what Freemasonry is?

L'EVEILLE,—Yes.

MARIANE,—And what is it then?

L'EVEILLE,—Upon my word, I don't know.

MARIANE,—Clever man!—then you are not a Freemason?

L'EVEILLE,—I? No.

MARIANE,—Then so much the worse for you, because if you had been, I would perhaps love you.

L'EVEILLE,—Oh! If that is all that is necessary, I will soon make that all right. But why do you wish me to be a Freemason?

MARIANE,—Because people are talking so much about the Freemasons.

L'EVEILLE,—You do not know them any better for that; and you want to know their secret?

MARIANE,—I am not curious for myself, but I am curious simply because of my good nature. Yes! in order to be able to tell Lucile, my mistress, who is anxious to know all about it. I have only been with her three days, and I wish by this means to establish myself in her favour.

L'EVEILLE,—Why do you not advise her to ask Mondor her neighbour, her very humble servant, and one who is a Freemason and a Grand Master?

MARIANE,—He has not been a Freemason long, and he has not been to see Lucile since I have been in her service. Besides I am not sure that Lucile cares for him sufficiently to ask this favour of him. She would choose, perhaps, rather to ask Clitandre.

L'EVEILLE,—My Master? Then she loves him better than Mondor.

MARIANE,—I have a suspicion, but I think she is much more attached to her foolish curiosity, than to either Mondor or Clitandre.

L'EVEILLE,—It is a serious passion,—that of curiosity in a woman. A passion sometimes stronger than love.

MARIANE,—I believe even, that in many women, love is nothing else but curiosity.

L'EVEILLE,—That is why they change their lovers so often, is it not? They are always curious to find out something new. At any rate you need not love me in this fashion.

MARIANE,—You are very particular. What would you do supposing that I did love you? And now that I come to think about it:—if I love you, will you tell me the secret of the Freemasons?

L'EVEILLE,—Good ! But you will know it from Lucile, who will get to know it from Clitandre. They are always together, and I will lay a wager upon it from what you tell me, that they are counting upon knowing it.

MARIANE,—You do not wish then to make me a promise yourself ?

L'EVEILLE,—Prudence is not my failing as you know. You make me say anything you wish, but to tell you frankly, regarding this secret, I do not know if you can make me find it out. It must be something very extraordinary, for I have a friend who is a Freemason, I have questioned him in every way, I have given him drink, I have made him drunk three or four nights in succession, but I have never been able to draw from him a single scrap of information about Freemasonry. I tell you it is the very devil, it is a secret which is even proof against wine.

MARIANE,—And you believe that he will continue to be proof against it ? Oh ! well, well, I shall find it out perhaps without your help. I am myself the daughter of a Freemason.

L'EVEILLE,—Was your father a Freemason ?

MARIANE,—Yes ! Yes ! Good-bye. See,—Here come your master and my mistress. (Exit.)

(L'Eveille remains behind a moment.)

## SCENE TWO.

(Lucile and Clitandre.)

LUCILE,—Allow me to accompany you, Clitandre, I also wish to visit the place where the Grand Master gives audience.

(Clitandre whispers to L'Eveille who goes out at once.)

CLITANDRE,—Yes, Madam, it is here that I wait upon him, and I believe that they intend to perform the ceremony of our reception here this evening.

LUCILE,—The ceremony of your reception ? Then you are certain of being received ?

CLITANDRE,—Yes ! I flatter myself.

LUCILE,—But if you should not be ?

CLITANDRE,—Why do you say that to me, madam ?

LUCILE,—What do I know about it ?

CLITANDRE,—(After meditating a little.) Oh : I shall be. Yes ! I am sure of it.

LUCILE,—I desire it with all my heart, but I confess to you that I have some doubts about it.

CLITANDRE,—You are always a little afraid when you are in doubt.

LUCILE.—That is true, but perhaps my fear has better foundation than that of mere doubt.

CLITANDRE,—You wish to annoy me, but you will not succeed. For I am a man who has a pretty high opinion of his own worth.

LUCILE,—One may be possessed of much worth, but not have exactly that kind which is suitable for Freemasons.

CLITANDRE,—I have every kind.

LUCILE,—It will be for them to determine that.

CLITANDRE,—You ridicule me, I think.

LUCILE,—I ! Not at all, but you have sometimes ideas about yourself which no one can agree with, consequently you imagine that you are being ridiculed.

CLITANDRE,—You never fail to follow these ideas.

LUCILE,—Oh ! You are angry, Clitandre.

CLITANDRE,—And you are very pleased, madam.

LUCILE,—I am very pleased to see that you take sufficient notice of what I say, to be angry at it. It is a relic of the influence which I do not believe that I still have over you.

CLITANDRE,—How can you speak to me in that fashion, madam, who has never esteemed, never loved anyone as I have loved you ? I am ready to sacrifice everything to assure you of my sentiments.

LUCILE,—I take you at your word, Clitandre,—tell me the secret of the Freemasons.

CLITANDRE,—What, madam, you are always dwelling upon this matter. How can I promise to tell you a thing which I do not even yet know ?

LUCILE,—When you do know it.

CLITANDRE,—But supposing that it is not of such a nature that it can be told. ?

LUCILE,—You can tell me in such a manner that I can guess what it is, without your thinking that I will be able to find it out.

CLITANDRE,—That is rather a delicate matter.

LUCILE,—Ah ! You ridicule me now.

CLITANDRE,—No, madam, but you must permit me to ask you again, what idea would you have of my discretion, if I revealed this secret to you ?

LUCILE,—The question for me now is to prove your good nature and not your discretion ;—besides it is not an indiscretion to confide our secret to one we love, especially when we take no very great risk in doing so. Between ourselves, I know already that you are rather indiscreet.

CLITANDRE,—Once and for all, madam, nothing will induce me to make a promise which I may not be able to keep.

LUCILE,—Listen, Clitandre,—I am my own mistress, young—although a widow,—of good family, sufficiently rich, and you love me, you say.—I have an unbounded desire to know the secret of the Freemasons, find it out for me, my hand is the reward.

CLITANDRE,—Oh : I will try to ascertain it some how or other, madam. You have only to order me to do it. Your hand is the reward ! I should be the happiest of all men if I could tell you, but I may have to hold my tongue. But madam, you jest perhaps, it is only in order to try me, that you speak to me thus.

LUCILE,—No, Clitandre,—for a very long time I have tolerated your persistency, and you can see for yourself that I have been more inclined to you than to Mondor, to whom I have not appealed, though he has been a Freemason for some time and a Grand Master.

Moreover, Clitandre, another sign of affection would be obtained by my deciding in your favour should you gratify my curiosity. I know quite well that it is silly, but it is perhaps because of this very fact that my desire is so strong. I have done what I could in order to cure it. I know it has been aroused, and I see no other remedy than to have it satisfied.

CLITANDRE,—Ah, well! madam, it must be satisfied.—  
My reply to you is, it shall be satisfied. Only endeavour not to die of impatience between now and this evening. It is all that I ask of you for today. (He goes away heedlessly.)

LUCILE,—But where are you going, then?

CLITANDRE,—Ah! madam, I do not know. I am restless; I have a heedlessness and an inconceivable joy.

LUCILE,—You are full of passion, Clitandre, I will not be deceived by the rashness of your first impulse. See, consider more calmly if you cannot do me this service. Because, in short, there must be something very worthy of esteem in this secret, seeing that up till now it has not been revealed, and that a great queen even, in vain, made efforts to discover it.

CLITANDRE,—Oh! You have greater power than this great queen, and the secret, let it be even a thousand times more estimable, will never be so much to me as your least wish.

LUCILE,—You did not say that a short time ago. But the oath, Clitandre, think of that,—for one swears to keep silence, and one swears, it is said, in a terrible manner.

CLITANDRE,—It is an oath which is known not to be binding. Don't worry about anything. I give you my word of honour, and if it is needed, I swear to you now, that you shall know everything this evening.

LUCILE,—You think so? Someone comes,—I must go.

(Exit Lucile.)

---

## SCENE THREE.

(Clitandre and L'Eveille.)

CLITANDRE,—Is that you, L'Eveille? I say! have you noticed if the Grand Master has arrived?

L'EVEILLE,—No, not yet, but here come two worthy Freemasons whom, in order to pass the time, I will have the honour of introducing to you. Take no notice of anything I do. I wish to see if they will take me for a Brother.

CLITANDRE,—Don't make me blunder after your fashion.

L'EVEILLE,—Do not trouble. Although bold I am also prudent. The devil! I must take care not to jest too seriously though. It will not suit my plans to frighten them. I wish to be a Freemason.

CLITANDRE,—So far as I am concerned, it is absolutely necessary that I become one, because I have promised Lucile to disclose the secret to her. Do not say anything in the meantime. You are such a babbler.

L'EVEILLE,—Take care not to say anything yourself. See, here they come with their aprons.

## SCENE FOUR.

(Clitandre, L'Eveille, Ariste, a Freemason, Leandre, a Freemason.)

(Clitandre and L'Eveille meet the Freemasons, and salute them.)

CLITANDRE,—Gentlemen, I am very delighted to meet you here, and I hope that you will not be sorry for knowing us.

ARISTE,—(Gravely.) You come, sir, doubtless, to present yourself to our Grand Master.

CLITANDRE,—Yes, sir, I am to be received this evening.

ARISTE,—But, sir, have you been proposed by some Freemasons, at some Lodge ?

CLITANDRE,—No, sir, but.....I present myself.

ARISTE,—Oh : Since you present yourself, I have nothing more to say.

CLITANDRE,—I dare flatter myself that I shall not be refused.

ARISTE,—But one should be prepared.

(L'Eveille makes signs to try to deceive the Freemasons. They notice him, he ceases. They look at him again, he again stops.)

ARISTE,—(To Clitandre.) Do you know this man ?

CLITANDRE,—Yes : he is my Valet de Chambre.

ARISTE,—(To L'Eveille.) Are you a Freemason, my friend ?

L'EVEILLE,—Sir, my name is L'Eveille. You may guess my other titles.

(The Freemasons look at him from head to foot, and from foot to head.)

ARISTE,—Go away, M. L'Eveille. You are not a Freemason, but you are a very impertinent fellow. (To Clitandre.) With your permission.

L'EVEILLE,—Sir.....

ARISTE,—What were these signs you were pleased to make to us ?

L'EVEILLE,—I did not know, sir, that they were Freemasons' signs.

ARISTE,—And who has told you that they were ?

L'EVEILLE,—Sir, I beg a thousand pardons.

CLITANDRE,—(To L'Eveille.) Leave us. (L'Eveille withdraws to a corner of the stage.)

CLITANDRE,—(To the Freemasons.) One is more a Freemason sometimes than one thinks.

ARISTE,—And sometimes a great deal less than one imagines.

But sir, have you a great desire to become a Freemason ?

CLITANDRE,—A desire beyond imagination, and an impatience, an impatience.....

ARISTE,—That is something.

CLITANDRE,—Yes, because.....in order to become a Freemason one has simply to desire it.

ARISTE,—Not quite, not entirely; and have you the qualifications for that to which you aspire?

CLITANDRE,—Qualifications? Certainly, great qualifications.

ARISTE,—And what further opinions do you hold?

CLITANDRE,—What opinions?

ARISTE,—Are your opinions favourable to Freemasonry?

CLITANDRE,—Yes, very favourable.

ARISTE,—But how do you know that they are favourable to the Institution, since you do not know what Freemasonry is?

CLITANDRE,—One knows by instinct.

ARISTE,—By instinct?

CLITANDRE,—By instinct,—as it is said.—But, why the devil do you put all these questions to me?

ARISTE,—In order to point out to you, sir, that you do not know what you are doing, when you demand to become a Freemason, and that in consequence you cannot become one.

CLITANDRE,—Why cannot I become one?

ARISTE,—No, sir, you never will. I can tell you that.

LEANDRE,—(Gravely.) And I confirm it to you. (Clitandre blushes, then turns pale and bites his lips. He notices the Grand Master coming.)

## SCENE FIVE.

(Clitandre, L'Eveille, Ariste, Leandre and Mondor, Grand Master of Freemasons).

CLITANDRE,—Ah: Good day, Mondor, I have waited for you with great impatience. I have come to petition you to receive me as a Freemason, and these gentlemen here tell me that I shall not be admitted. I appeal to you, my worthy friend, and Grand Master. I hope that

you will render me more justice. You know me, and I think I can say without vanity, that you have not many companions who are more worthy than I am.

GRAND MASTER,—Why was it then, Clitandre, that you did not tell me before-hand of your intention ?

CLITANDRE,—I did not think that it was necessary.

GRAND MASTER,—I should have given you some good advice.

CLITANDRE,—And what was that, I pray you ?

GRAND MASTER,—That you should not present yourself in order to become a Freemason.

CLITANDRE,—Why not ? Are you also of the same opinion as these gentlemen ?

GRAND MASTER,—Yes, my dear Clitandre. I am very sorry to be obliged to say it, but we could not accept you as a Brother.

CLITANDRE,—But.....But this is silly, Mondor, can a man like me not be received ?

GRAND MASTER,—That is just it. That is apparent at first sight.

(Clitandre changes colour.)

CLITANDRE,—Go on :—Go on now, stop joking.

GRAND MASTER,—Understand that a Freemason does not joke upon such a matter.

CLITANDRE,—Your seriousness will make me die of laughter.

GRAND MASTER,—And your forced laughter makes me more serious. You have distressed me, Clitandre, I would rather have rendered you a service.

CLITANDRE,—And what prevents you ?

GRAND MASTER,—My duty.

CLITANDRE,—Your duty ? You need not tell me also that I have not the characteristics necessary in order to be a Freemason.

GRAND MASTER,—No, without doubt, you have not got them.

CLITANDRE,—And what are they ? What are these characteristics and, in short, how can one acquire them ?

GRAND MASTER,—They are seldom acquired, they are born in one.

CLITANDRE,—But what are they ?

GRAND MASTER,—It is for you to have them, and for us to recognise them in you, without telling you what they are.

CLITANDRE,—Then I despise you from my heart with your mysteries !

(The Freemasons regard him seriously, he recognises that he has done a foolish thing and is confused.)

Excuse this small fit of anger, my dear Mondor, and judge from it how much I desire to be one of you.

GRAND MASTER,—You would desire it more, perhaps, if you realised what it is.

CLITANDRE,—(A little aside.) What the devil can it be ?

GRAND MASTER,—Set aside this uneasiness, Clitandre, there are things which you have never seen, which you have never heard mentioned, and which have never been known to enter into a common-place imagination.

CLITANDRE,—And are such things so very desirable ?

GRAND MASTER,—No, they are not desirable for you, since they are beyond your reach.

CLITANDRE,—But you, Mondor, are you pleased at being a Freemason ?

GRAND MASTER,—Apparently.

CLITANDRE,—Do you never tire of this everlasting mystery ?

GRAND MASTER,—Well, Clitandre, since you wish for a definite answer, I confess to you that I would rather renounce life itself than my right to wear this apron.

CLITANDRE,—Ah, well ! for the time being you do nothing but mock me.

GRAND MASTER,—Learn to control yourself, my dear Clitandre, take my advice and think no more about us. After all, what is our secret to you ? Have you not actually existed up till now, and will you not as a matter of fact, continue to live without this secret ?

CLITANDRE,—No, I cannot live any longer unless I know it.

GRAND MASTER,—Then you must just die.

CLITANDRE,—Why ! shall I never be received ?

GRAND MASTER,—Never, my poor Clitandre.

CLITANDRE,—My dear Mondor, receive me as an Apprentice at least. I will never aspire to be a Master if you do not wish it.

GRAND MASTER,—You can be neither a Master nor an Apprentice.

LEANDRE,—(To Clitandre.) You see!

ARISTE,—(To Clitandre.) We already told you so.

CLITANDRE,—Go on! gentlemen, you are all silly. I cannot be received, and so I do not wish any longer to be. But I shall find out the secret, and I shall print it, and shall perhaps have you all hung. Come along L'Eveille.

L'EVEILLE,—I will be with you in a moment, sir.

#### SCENE SIX.

(Leandre, Ariste, the Grand Master and L'Eveille.)

GRAND MASTER,—(To Ariste.) That is his man apparently.

ARISTE,—Yes, it is his Valet de Chambre.

L'EVEILLE,—(To the Grand Master.) Permit me to point out to you, sir, that you have treated my master with much harshness, for I can really assure you that he is a very good fellow. I have educated him, for although I am called his Valet de Chambre, I am really his tutor. You see that I have some ability. I have read a good deal, and certainly I have given him a suitable education. He is undoubtedly a little heedless, if you like, a little foppish,—but then he is quite young. Otherwise, as you may perceive, a thoroughly honest man, loving sport, women, the dance, plays and everything that is good for his age. A good companion, a little indiscreet, supping well, getting drunk with a good grace, dexterous at drawing a cork, holding merry discourse and contributing his song at the tables quite neatly.

GRAND MASTER,—That is enough to say about your master. Do you wish to be a Freemason yourself, my friend?

L'EVEILLE,—Sir :..... I am not bold enough to ask it  
 .....for I have just made myself foolish. (He  
 looks at the two Freemasons and trembles.) I wished  
 to see if these gentlemen would mistake me for a  
 Brother, and I made them false signs.....

GRAND MASTER,—What ! False signs ?

L'EVEILLE,—(Trembling.) Yes, sir, but I soon saw my  
 fault. I ask pardon of these gentlemen, and I feel they  
 are prepared to grant it to me. I have reason to fear,  
 —all the same,—that you may not think me worthy of  
 your favours.

GRAND MASTER,—Come, my friend, I do not wish to be  
 more severe than these gentlemen. I overlook your  
 false signs on account of the repentance which you have  
 displayed. (He regards him from head to foot.)  
 Besides I see you have the requisite qualities to a  
 sufficient degree. Enter the fourth door from here, you  
 will find there a Lodge assembled, and they will invest  
 you with an apron of the Order.

L'EVEILLE,—Ah ! gentlemen, I am obliged to you. Do not  
 imagine that I will disclose the secret to my master.  
 Besides sir, how could I disclose it when I have just  
 come from you. Would you have the goodness to give  
 me some token ?

GRAND MASTER,—I have given you one, my friend.

L'EVEILLE,—And where is it, sir, I pray you ?

GRAND MASTER,—I have given it to you, I say. Go ! do  
 not be embarrassed ; you will certainly be recognised.

L'EVEILLE,—(While going out.) What a wonderful thing  
 Freemasonry is.

GRAND MASTER,—(To L'Eveille.) Would you please tell  
 my Valet to bring in here the first two arrivals.

(Exit L'Eveille.)

---

## SCENE SEVEN.

(The Grand Master, Ariste, Leandre.)

GRAND MASTER,—We shall not have many applicants to-day, I think. I shall proceed to examine only those that remain. I charge you, gentlemen, to have at hand everything that we shall require for the festival this evening.

ARISTE,—We have done what you propose, we have anticipated you.

GRAND MASTER,—Above all see that the musicians do not keep us waiting.

LEANDRE,—Do not fear,—they are Freemasons.

## SCENE EIGHT.

(The Grand Master, Chrysologue (a doctor,) Trissot (a poet.)

GRAND MASTER,—I have seen your petitions, gentlemen, permit me to put some questions to you,—first to one and then to the other. (To Trissot.) May I ask you, what is your employment?

TRISSOT,—I have no employment, sir, and I come to seek one among the Freemasons.

GRAND MASTER,—Very good.—Is your father a Freemason?

TRISSOT,—No sir, he is dead, but he was a doctor.

GRAND MASTER,—A doctor?

TRISSOT,—(Looking at Chrysologue mischievously.) Yes, sir, a doctor of contagion. (Docteur Epidémique.)

GRAND MASTER,—A man who destroys that which Freemasons build. (Chrysologue appears anxious to speak. The Grand Master continues, addressing himself all the time to Trissot.) And why, sir, have you no occupation of any kind?

TRISSOT,—I read in the morning for my amusement, and sometimes I write anything that comes into my head.

GRAND MASTER,—I see what you are. You are a bashful author. Is that not true ?

TRISSOT,—I suspect it is.

GRAND MASTER,—And a poet, I will wager ?

TRISSOT,—I believe you have won.

GRAND MASTER,—And why did you not say so at once ? Is it any dishonour for the son of a doctor to be a poet ? Were you not at least born the child of Apollo ? One must be open and acknowledge what one is, my friend.

TRISSOT,—That is rather a delicate matter sometimes.

GRAND MASTER,—Why : Are you a bad one ?

TRISSOT,—Upon my word :—perhaps so.

GRAND MASTER,—That will not prevent you becoming a good Freemason. (To Chrysologue.) And you, sir, will you also begin by hiding from me your profession ?

CHRYSOLOGUE,—I might have some reason for doing so after what you have been saying just now ; because I am a doctor, and I really ask your pardon for that fact.

GRAND MASTER,—I am not surprised that you had a desire to interrupt me. But, then, why are you a doctor ?

CHRYSOLOGUE,—Oh ! do not worry on that score, because I do not practice.

GRAND MASTER,—You do not practice ? Then what, sir, do you do ?

CHRYSOLOGUE,—I go and see patients for my amusement, in order to amuse them, in order to talk with them, to discuss with them the news of the day ; and if I must say so, to show them the little wit that nature has endowed me with.

GRAND MASTER,—But you take money for your visits ?

CHRYSOLOGUE,—No ! Only now and again,—only when it is offered to me.

GRAND MASTER,—And you call that not practicing as a doctor? Go along, sir,—You are a doctor, and a very good doctor, the more so for, from this view of it, your profession embraces everything, even the maladies of the mind. It is not necessary even to be ill in order to require your assistance. That is very convenient, and you are not dangerous in the very least.

CHRYSOLOGUE,—You will agree then, sir, that I am not altogether in the class to which you referred, and that there will not be a very great risk in receiving me among the Freemasons.

GRAND MASTER,—I do not indeed fear so much for my life, but.....

CHRYSOLOGUE,—But might I not risk a little myself in entering your Society? It is said that you admit into it certain people.....

GRAND MASTER,—Well sir, what kind of people?

CHRYSOLOGUE,—But you have assured me that you only associate with the best company in the world.

GRAND MASTER,—Whom do you call good company? I do not intend to say more than 'good company.' Do you think that 'good company' can only be composed of men of quality and gay spirits?

CHRYSOLOGUE,—Oh no! I am persuaded that good company consists of the largest number and of the greatest variety.

GRAND MASTER,—You will soon see that it has been reserved to the Freemasons to form a company very numerous, very varied and at the same time very good.

CHRYSOLOGUE,—At all events it is a very exclusive privilege that you possess.

GRAND MASTER,—We are the more proud of it on that account.

CHRYSOLOGUE,—But how do you manage to reconcile so many different kinds of people?

GRAND MASTER,—We are human, innocent and of good faith.

CHRYSOLOGUE,—Have you not also a few.....well, liberties.....there as well.....by favour ?

GRAND MASTER,—How can you expect otherwise, when we receive doctors and poets ?

CHRYSOLOGUE,—I will ask only one other question. It is regarding what you do. Are you able to give us some idea in advance ? One of your Brothers told me, plainly, that you only build castles in the air.

GRAND MASTER,—We have sometimes our reasons for thus speaking, but you may take it for granted, that our buildings are on good foundations and solid. You will see us work in due time. You will yourself set your hand to the work, and we will show you the plan of our buildings.

CHRYSOLOGUE,—But are you really occupied with building ?

GRAND MASTER,—We love one another, and cultivate all the arts and all the useful sciences.

CHRYSOLOGUE,—Why then have you chosen the name of Masons in preference to others, which would have brought you more honour ?

GRAND MASTER,—We have chosen the name which represents the more perfectly our principal occupation. We consider the taking of titles as derogatory. A simple name suits a solid employment better.

CHRYSOLOGUE,—You have closed my mouth.

GRAND MASTER,—Be good enough, gentlemen, to return here in two hours. I will give you the apron. (He looks at them, the one after the other.) I have seen for myself that you have the personal qualities necessary for Freemasonry.

CHRYSOLOGUE,—I did not know, sir, that I had the honour of being known to you.

GRAND MASTER,—It is only from this moment, gentlemen, that I have had the pleasure of knowing you. We Freemasons can see at a glance. You will not deny it when you have been initiated. Go, gentlemen, go and prepare yourselves to receive worthily the great privileges of the Order.

(Chrysologue and Trissot go out. Trissot returns.)

---

SCENE NINE.

---

(The Grand Master and Trissot.)

TRISSOT,—Permit me, sir, to make a further small request. To be accepted is not everything. It is said that it costs ten louis to be received, and you know well that a poet is not able to give ten louis.

GRAND MASTER,—Understand, sir, that we do not take money.—We give, on the contrary, to those of our Brethren who are in want. It is true that it is the custom that the newly initiated pay for the supper which is served on the occasion of their reception, and that comes sometimes to ten louis for each, but we shall not have many present today. It will likely not exceed four or five louis for your share.

TRISSOT,—That is four or five times more than I can pay. Could you not have me received without following the rule? I need not remain to supper.

GRAND MASTER,—Whether you remain to supper or not, it is the same thing.

TRISSOT,—But do you never receive men of talent gratis?

GRAND MASTER,—Yes! men of talent, but we do not care very much for poetry, and over and above that, you declared that you were a poor poet.

TRISSOT,—Is it necessary to believe implicitly in my modesty?

GRAND MASTER,—Why did you wish that I should suspect a poet of being modest?

TRISSOT,—Between ourselves, I really thought I could hardly expect to be received gratis, except under the title of a poor poet. So in the meantime would you allow me this confession ?

GRAND MASTER,—Do not worry, my dear sir. You are worthy of being a Freemason, that is enough. You are not rich, that is not a fault. You will be honourably received and without paying anything.

TRISSOT,—On considering the matter properly, one cannot be received more honourably than by being received gratis. But may I not be allowed to pay, if not money, something else, to give you at supper this evening, a little dish of my own composition ? Count upon some verses in honour of the Order and of the Grand Master.

GRAND MASTER,—Mons. Trissot, do something better, do not make any verses.

TRISSOT,—You are right, that would be more dignified.

GRAND MASTER,—It would be better in every way.

(Exit Trissot.)

## SCENE TEN.

(The Grand Master alone.)

Thus is my audience finished, I believe. But let me look about me a little. This Clitandre returns to my mind. Why should he have this great desire to become a Freemason? When I recall to myself the whole scene with him . . . . . He blushed, he turned pale and passed in an instant through every colour and shade. He was bold, he was humble, then he recovered himself, he wished to jest and he was humble again, he was passionate and then indifferent. Surely there is some especial cause for all this, some deep-laid plot of which I may be the victim. But here comes Lucile. My suspicions are redoubled. It will be necessary to keep calm.

## SCENE ELEVEN.

(The Grand Master and Lucile.)

LUCILE,—(Followed by Mariane.) I am very glad to have found you, Mondor. Let us remain here since we are alone. Leave us, Mariane.

(Exit Mariane.)

GRAND MASTER,—And to what must I attribute, madam, such an agreeable visit?

LUCILE,—I want to scold you, and to entreat with you on behalf of Clitandre. You see his eagerness, how he worries himself about this trifle, and you refuse him that which you grant to everyone else. What do you mean by acting in this way with those whom you know?

GRAND MASTER,—Ah! madam, it is precisely because I do know him, that I am obliged to refuse him. Nothing would have pleased me more, than to be able to admit him.

LUCILE,—Dare you speak thus to me? And with what, I pray, have you to reproach him?

GRAND MASTER,—The lack of the qualifications necessary for Freemasons.

LUCILE,—Go along, Mondor, none of those ridiculous speeches. Answer me seriously.

GRAND MASTER,—Madam, I do answer you very seriously, and believe me, Clitandre has some merit, but he has not all those qualities which you, perhaps, really imagine.

LUCILE,—What folly.

GRAND MASTER,—You admit that.

LUCILE,—Oh! certainly;—And you, sir, doubtless, have all the merit imaginable, seeing that you have been raised all at once to the dignity of a Freemason and a Grand Master. It is not more than four days since you were neither the one nor the other. .

GRAND MASTER,—I do not deceive myself about the good qualities which I lack, but I am proud to possess those which are at least suited to Freemasonry.

LUCILE,—And what about Clitandre? Cease acting the Freemason, sir, you make me angry. Enough,—I have interested myself on behalf of Clitandre, and I wish you to admit him into your Society, whatever his quality and condition may be.

GRAND MASTER,—You are not ignorant, lovely Lucile, what my sentiments are towards you, so that I need not again declare them to you. Everything that depends upon me is at your disposal. But what motive, so pressing, can you have in interesting yourself on behalf of Clitandre in an affair of this nature?

LUCILE,—Is it not enough when I tell you that I do interest myself very much in it?

GRAND MASTER,—Permit me to guess for you, madam, have you not yourself the same desire to know our secret?

LUCILE,—Well, yes! I am dying with the desire, since it is necessary to confess it to you.

GRAND MASTER,—And do you believe that if Clitandre knew the secret, he would have the weakness to inform you?

LUCILE,—I do not flatter myself, but he also earnestly desires that I should know it as well. My curiosity waits on his, and if I have not the pleasure of getting it gratified, I shall have, at least, the consolation of finding a friend who succeeds.

GRAND MASTER,—How generous of you, madam.

LUCILE,—And how intolerable you are, Mondor. I have heard it said that you Freemasons do not put yourselves about to be obliging towards the ladies.

GRAND MASTER,—They wrong us, Lucile. We render to your sex all the homage that is due to you. It is one of our first laws, and the most pleasing one we have. Much more so is it, that nowhere else do you find lovers so fond, or husbands so true, as in the Society of Freemasons. Do not lead me to think you doubt my word, charming Lucile.

LUCILE,—I greatly wish for what I ask, sir. Allow Clitandre to be received and we will see.

GRAND MASTER,—You still demand of me the impossible.

LUCILE,—The impossible? Is it impossible for Clitandre to belong to the Society of Freemasons? I cannot see that. When I try to reconcile all your replies, I get certain ideas. But as you are so full of beautiful sentiments towards the ladies, how is it that you do not admit them into your Order?

GRAND MASTER,—The more we love you, Lucile, the more we dread your charms. The source of our pleasure would, ere long, produce discord, and what would become of this perfect equality, which the first of our regulations establishes among all the Brethren? How could we keep up this equality? How could we reconcile our necessary liberty with this victorious influence which renders you the mistresses of our hearts? Have you not already got enough power over us, without this one which you do not miss, by your getting even into our assemblies? And how many dangerous distractions would you not cause in our work which would, perhaps, be tedious or too laborious for you?

LUCILE,—You could not have excused yourself more gallantly. But to make me believe it, it will be necessary to show me a Freemason who is dying for love of a pretty girl.

GRAND MASTER,—Many may have died in this way without my having known it. At least, I can assure you, that no person is so capable of carrying love to this point . . .

LUCILE,—As a Freemason—Is that not so?

GRAND MASTER,—As a Freemason.

LUCILE,—But with all these qualities you ought to be the favourites of the ladies. I do not know, all the same, that you are looked upon as such, and I am not able, personally, to regard you except as a set of pitiful lovers.

GRAND MASTER,—I see then, Lucile, that the ladies whom you know, are precisely those whom we have not the pleasure of knowing.

LUCILE,—But may they not know a Freemason ?

GRAND MASTER,—One can never know them perfectly. It is an inexhaustible subject, but one can always know them well enough to prefer them to an ordinary mortal.

LUCILE,—What would you risk therefore in making yourself known perfectly ? And what can that deserve, which fears the light and is obliged to hide itself ?

GRAND MASTER,—Have you never heard, madam, what happened to the most valiant of the Hebrews ? He had the indiscretion to confide in his mistress wherein lay the seat of his extraordinary strength. His strength left him at the same time as his prudence, and very soon he became the slave of those very people to whom he had been a terror.

LUCILE,—Tell me no more of these histories. I am not at all curious about them. Tell me simply one thing, which you can tell me without any risk, and I will leave you in peace. Please reply without further joking. Can your secret after all be revealed ? Would it be possible for a Freemason who wishes to tell it, to tell it truly ?

GRAND MASTER,—It is possible from its nature, but impossible morally.

LUCILE,—It is possible. From its nature or morally, that does not matter. It is possible. You can tell me and you will tell me. I ask it of you on my knees. (She throws herself at the feet of the Grand Master.)

GRAND MASTER,—(Endeavouring to raise her.) Lucile !

LUCILE,—No : I will not leave your feet until you tell me.

GRAND MASTER,—(Throwing himself at her feet.) Cease pressing me, adorable Lucile, to reveal an inviolable secret which I have as great a desire to tell you, as you have to know it.

LUCILE,—No ! No ! If that were so, you would yield to my entreaties.

GRAND MASTER,—See : here is someone coming, madam. It is Clitandre. (They rise.)

---

## SCENE TWELVE.

(The Grand Master, Lucile and Clitandre.)

LUCILE,—(To Clitandre.) You see what I am doing for you, sir, but we have to deal with the most inflexible and most stubborn of all Freemasons. I resign him to you. Speak to him yourself. You may succeed better than I.

GRAND MASTER,—Are you not going to be just to me, madam ?

CLITANDRE,—(To Lucile aside.) Leave me to act. I have found a means of making him do what I wish.

(Exit Lucile.)

## SCENE THIRTEEN.

(The Grand Master and Clitandre.)

CLITANDRE,—Pardi : If the ladies throw themselves on their knees, tell me what posture it is necessary for me to assume. Would you have me grovel in the dust ?

GRAND MASTER,—I will let you off that.

CLITANDRE,—Oh ! come, Mondor, are you very angry with me ?

GRAND MASTER,—And why should I be ?

CLITANDRE,—Oh ! because of what I said to you when I left you a little while ago.

GRAND MASTER,—Do you think that I would lower myself to be vexed about such things ?

CLITANDRE,—Oh ! some people vex themselves without any reason, for example, against a rival. Listen ! now that we are alone. Confess that there is a little rivalry in your proceedings regarding me. You love Lucile.—There is nothing wrong in that, because she is very lovable, and it is a match which would suit you eminently, but I can tell you in a friendly way that she does not love you.

GRAND MASTER,—I am very sensible of this mark of friendship with which you honour me. Is it Lucile herself who has declared her indifference to me ?

CLITANDRE,—Not in exact words, but she has confessed that she loves me, and it is certain that she cannot love both of us.

GRAND MASTER,—And why not ? Could she not love me a little and love you more ? That would not prevent her marrying me.

CLITANDRE,—Oh ! well,—I tell you I don't believe that she loves you even a little, but I am sure of this, that she will not marry you,—at least she cannot marry us both at the same time,—you a little and me more.

GRAND MASTER,—Has she then promised to marry you ?

CLITANDRE,—Listen ! my dear friend. I want to take you into my confidence, and to tell you at the same time the condition on which this promise has been made. I would here recall all your generosity, my dear rival. The more interested you are in me, so much the more ought you to do as I desire. That is quite plain. You believed, when I besought you to admit me, that it was curiosity which took possession of me in regard to the matter, and you turned the thing into a jest. I let that pass. But I inform you now, that all my fortune, and all the happiness of my life are in your hands. That from the moment you make me a Freemason, you make me master of Lucile, and that this is the only bribe by which I can become her husband.

GRAND MASTER,—I understand you, Clitandre. That is to say, that you have promised Lucile to tell her our secret when married.

CLITANDRE,—I have nothing more to hide from you, my dear Mondor. It is true ; I have promised your secret to Lucile, in order to complete her resolve to make me happy. Do you not admire the confidence which I have in you, and will you abuse it ?

GRAND MASTER,—No, Clitandre, I will not abuse your confidence, but it would not be any more just for you to abuse my weakness, and put our secret in peril.

CLITANDRE,—You would not run the least risk, my dear friend, I promise you, and I swear to you to guard it as an honest man. Only receive me as a Freemason. I will make Lucile believe afterwards what I please. Do you not see that she would not be able to assure herself of anything except on my word, whether I tell her a false secret or a true one! and how can she verify it from other Freemasons? They will always say that I have deceived her. She will feel indeed that they cannot say anything else, and there is nothing else she can do, but rely upon my good faith.

GRAND MASTER,—On your good faith?

CLITANDRE,—Oh! I have weighed everything, I have considered everything I intend to do, Mondor. Simply receive me, I ask you.

GRAND MASTER,—Honest man that you are, Clitandre. You wish me to put you under the necessity either to betray your Brethren, or to deceive your wife, as the price of her hand. A fine qualification to become a Freemason.

CLITANDRE,—My God, but you are simple, my dear Mondor, in your ideas of deceiving. By telling Lucile a false secret, what injury do I do her? And even suppose that I do tell a little one, the wrong cannot be compared to the advantage which we would attain, she and I, by the celebration of our marriage.

GRAND MASTER,—I confess to my simplicity, Clitandre. We are weak enough to believe, we Freemasons, that it is dangerous to keep two contrary engagements. Either it is necessary to be firm in keeping one's word when one gives it freely, or else not to give it at all when one suspects that he cannot keep it. Any other proceeding we believe is unworthy of an honest man.

CLITANDRE,—I see now, Mondor, that it is time to speak to you in another fashion. That it is necessary, in short, that I come to the last extreme with you.

GRAND MASTER,—That might not be pleasant.

CLITANDRE,—Will you receive me as a Freemason ?

GRAND MASTER,—I cannot.

CLITANDRE,—Will you tell me your secret then without receiving me ?

GRAND MASTER,—Still less so.

CLITANDRE,—(Putting on his hat.) Have therefore the goodness to name the place and the hour today when we shall meet.

GRAND MASTER,—(Also putting on his hat.) I am quite ready at this moment Clitandre, but I shall be sorry to take your life, and warn you that if you took mine you would not be benefitted in the least. You would be obliged then to address yourself to some other Freemason, who would not receive you any better than I do; and at any rate you would not have the good fortune, or the skill, to kill them all one after the other. I defy you ever to enter into their Society or their secret. So in the meantime do what you please. I will follow you wherever you wish, provided it is not very far from here, because I have a ceremony to perform as you know, and it is necessary that I should be here again in half an hour, if you do not kill me.

CLITANDRE,—I would much rather kill myself.

GRAND MASTER,—That would certainly be the best way.

---

#### SCENE FOURTEEN.

---

(The Grand Master, Clitandre and L'Eveille.)

GRAND MASTER,—But you are very good, Clitandre, to amuse yourself with me in order to be instructed, considering that you have an old servant who is a Freemason.—See here he comes.

CLITANDRE,—Is L'Eveille a Freemason ?

GRAND MASTER,—That he is, without doubt. Have you not found anything changed about him ?

CLITANDRE,—(Regarding L'Eveille attentively.) It seems to me that there is something. Are you a Freemason, L'Eveille ?

L'EVEILLE,—Yes, I am, from head to foot. Permit me to embrace you as a Brother, my worthy Grand Master. (They embrace each other mysteriously, Clitandre gazes at them.)

GRAND MASTER,—(To Clitandre.) You burn to be alone with him. Try to make him tell. I leave you, for I can see well enough that you have no more desire to fight.

(He makes a sign to L'Eveille as he goes out, and L'Eveille makes another sign to him.)

## SCENE FIFTEEN.

(Clitandre and L'Eveille.)

CLITANDRE,—And how the devil have you managed to be made a Freemason ?

L'EVEILLE,—I was introduced, examined, and then received. I then left the Lodge. That's all.

CLITANDRE,—Oh ! come, my dear L'Eveille, tell me the secret.

L'EVEILLE,—My dear L'Eveille ! The expression is pleasant but it is a little too familiar. I can do nothing else, I who am a Freemason, except address you as my dear Clitandre.

CLITANDRE,—Call me what you like, so long as you tell me the secret.

(L'Eveille walks across the stage, and Clitandre follows him.)

L'EVEILLE,—Pardi : I must tell you that this secret is something very amazing.

CLITANDRE,—Very amazing !

L'EVEILLE,—(Turning towards Clitandre.) And very simple never-the-less.

CLITANDRE,—Very simple !

L'EVEILLE,—(Continuing to walk about.) And very stupendous for all that.

CLITANDRE,—Simple and stupendous !

L'EVEILLE,—No, I would never have suspected it in the slightest.

CLITANDRE,—Tell me therefore quickly, my good L'Eveille.

L'EVEILLE,—If you could have seen how my heart beat in the ante-chamber. There is an ante-chamber.

CLITANDRE,—(Aside.) What the devil does it matter to me about this ante-chamber.

L'EVEILLE,—I was seized with a violent fit of palpitation, when I heard them open the door of the Lodge itself.

CLITANDRE,—And what did you see ?

L'EVEILLE,—I opened my eyes at last, and I began to take cognisance of things.

CLITANDRE,—Let me know them too, I entreat you.

L'EVEILLE,—How I regret the time I have lost by not becoming a member of the Society of Freemasons earlier.

CLITANDRE,—Oh ! How you provoke me, L'Eveille !

L'EVEILLE,—And how I pity you, my dear master, for not being able to become my Brother.

CLITANDRE,—You will kill me, L'Eveille, if you make me wait any longer.

L'EVEILLE,—But what do you want me to tell you ?

CLITANDRE,—To tell me their secret.

L'EVEILLE,—You know very well that I am not permitted to tell it.

CLITANDRE,—Permitted or not,—tell me, and I will give you a hundred louis.

L'EVEILLE,—A hundred louis ?

CLITANDRE,—Yes : A hundred louis.

L'EVEILLE,—A hundred louis . . . . . No.

CLITANDRE,—Listen, L'Eveille, I will make your fortune.

L'EVEILLE,—Nonsense !

CLITANDRE,—You know that Lucile will marry me, if I can tell her this secret. She is very rich. What do you say if we divide her wealth? I will give you half.

L'EVEILLE,—Be done, sir, with any more of this kind of proposal. You must know well enough that they are offensive to a man like me.

CLITANDRE,—My friend L'Eveille,—I will not give you anything, but will deprive you of something. I owe you four thousand francs, I warn you that you shall never receive a sou of it from me, until you have told me their secret.

L'EVEILLE,—Then the four thousand francs are lost to me. But you do not owe me quite four thousand francs.

CLITANDRE,—To speak the truth I owe them to you, and something more besides.

L'EVEILLE,—No, sir, you do not owe me so much, I tell you. Led away by circumstances, I have committed some small peculations. I am ashamed of having committed them, but I am not ashamed to confess them to you. I will give you an exact account, and you may be sure of my honesty for the future, on the faith of a Freemason.

CLITANDRE,—Ah! You have robbed me. Very well. If you do not tell me the secret of the Freemasons, I will have you punished.

L'EVEILLE,—I defy you to do that, because you have no proofs. That will not prevent me restoring to you everything conscientiously.

CLITANDRE,—Well! You are an honest man, quite disinterested, but there is a certain Mariane in the world. Would you like to hear me speak of that princess?

L'EVEILLE,—Mariane!—Well! yes. That is not very wonderful.

CLITANDRE,—Oh! no, something else is necessary.

L'EVEILLE,—What does it matter, she is sufficiently——

CLITANDRE,—Why? Is she good enough for a man like you?

L'EVEILLE,—You know that I am not very hard to please.

CLITANDRE,—And if one were to offer to help you with her ladyship,—that would not appear very shocking, would it ?

L'EVEILLE,—Ah ! sir, you are very pressing.

CLITANDRE,—I begin to see that to be a Freemason, one is not less a man.

L'EVEILLE,—Very much to the contrary,—upon my word.

CLITANDRE,—Well, L'Eveille, you appear to me to be a dreamer. Answer me however. If I were able to influence Mariane in your favour ? Eh ! L'Eveille ?

L'EVEILLE,—(In an angry tone.) Shall I give utterance to an unworthy thought,—low and base ? I stifle it,—it is renewed,—it flatters me,—and angers me. Love incessantly presents it to me.....No !.....All that I can do is to detest it.

CLITANDRE,—(Furiously.) L'Eveille !

L'EVEILLE,—(In almost the same tone.) I beg your pardon, sir.

CLITANDRE,—If you do not tell me what I ask, I will kill you with my stick, without any further ado.

L'EVEILLE,—I would not advise you to do so. One might perhaps afterwards have to make you take legal action, and when you have summoned me, do you think that I would tell you my secret ?

CLITANDRE,—(Gently.) L'Eveille.

L'EVEILLE,—(In the same tone.) Sir.

CLITANDRE,—I recognise that neither force nor skill is of any avail against a Freemason. But, all the same, I pity you.

L'EVEILLE,—That is the strongest and most artful trick that you can employ with me.

CLITANDRE,—(Sprightly and with joy.) What ! My dear friend. Have I at last found the way.....

L'EVEILLE,—Do not raise your hopes so quickly. But listen,—I have just met a mason.

CLITANDRE,—(Opening his mouth widely.) Yes !

L'EVEILLE,—An ordinary working mason.

CLITANDRE,—I am listening.

L'EVEILLE,—He told me that he was coming to present himself to the Grand Master, in order to be made a Freemason.

CLITANDRE,—Well! . . . . .

L'EVEILLE,—And that they had agreed to it without making any difficulties, or asking many questions.

CLITANDRE,—(Sprightly.) And what does that matter to me?

L'EVEILLE,—Perhaps there may be in this trade of working mason some secret virtue, which of itself prepares one to become a Freemason. (Clitandre regards him with impatience.) If you wish to try by passing through the first profession in order to arrive at the other, perhaps you could not do better than take my place, and serve me for some time, because no one has put to me any difficult questions.

CLITANDRE,—Horrible! L'Eveille. So then that is how you would repay the kindness which I have shewn you for ten years?

L'EVEILLE,—No, sir, I am not ungrateful. You have deigned to live with me, rather as a friend than as a master. I have had a share in your pleasures. You have given me everything. You have allowed me everything. I have always felt it with gratitude or with regret. I feel it today more than ever, and the engagement which I have just taken will redouble my respect for you and my attachment to you. If I have made you suffer for some moments, I beg a thousand pardons. It was only to make you feel how wrong you were in expecting the impossible from me. Ask me to do anything else, and you would see me fly to do your bidding, so long as it was not opposed to my honour, nor to the secret which I owe to my Brethren.

CLITANDRE,—I stand corrected. I have never heard anything so extraordinary. And so L'Eveille, you simply cannot help me with the least advice in the situation in which I am placed?

L'EVEILLE,—Well!—this is all I can advise you. I have heard it said that candidates have been received in one Lodge who have been refused in another. The one to which I go is still assembled. Go there,—it is just four doors from here, on the same side. Present yourself, without seeming to take notice of anything that has passed here between you, and Mondor, and the other two. Who knows what may happen?

CLITANDRE,—You are right, L'Eveille, that is the only course which remains for me to take, and I will take it.

L'EVEILLE,—Go there at once ;—there is no time to lose.

CLITANDRE,—Four doors from here?

L'EVEILLE,—Yes, on the same side.

(Exit Clitandre.)

SCENE SIXTEEN.

L'EVEILLE, (Alone.)—See me happily delivered from the first assault. It is to be hoped that in time I shall be quite competent.

SCENE SEVENTEEN.

(L'Eveille and Mariane.)

MARIANE,—Ah! There you are, L'Eveille. My mistress is terribly excited about Clitandre. Do you know if he is a Freemason yet?

L'EVEILLE,—I do not know if he is, but I am.

MARIANE,—You! You one?

L'EVEILLE,—It is only just during the last moment that I am one; but it is for all my life.

MARIANE,—Seriously though, are you?

L'EVEILLE,—Yes! I swear upon the honour of a Freemason.

MARIANE,—Go along! You will not impose upon me. I shall know very well if you are. My father was one. Come now, show me some signs.

L'EVEILLE,—Did your father then show you some of the Freemasons' signs?

MARIANE,—As often as I wanted.

L'EVEILLE,—And how did he make those signs? Let me also see them.

MARIANE,—He often showed them to me, but upon my word, I don't now remember them.

L'EVEILLE,—That is sufficient proof that he never showed you any, because the signs of a Freemason are never forgotten.

MARIANE,—That is to say, I do not remember them well enough to repeat them myself, but if you were to show them to me, I should recognise them quite easily.

L'EVEILLE,—Are you sure that you would recognise them?

MARIANE,—Immediately.

L'EVEILLE,—That is precisely why I will not show them to you.

MARIANE,—(Aside.) In truth, he may really be one. (To L'Eveille.) I ask for only a single one, my dear L'Eveille, the very smallest of them all if you wish.

L'EVEILLE,—Then look, I am going to walk towards you as a Freemason. (He walks towards her in his usual manner.)

MARIANE,—(After having watched him attentively.) Ah! That is exactly the way in which my father used to walk. You are really a Freemason, my dear L'Eveille. Yes, I recognise you as such. (She wishes to embrace him, but he repels her.)

L'EVEILLE,—Stop! Stop! One does not embrace a Freemason like that.

MARIANE,—Oh! Surely, that is so.

L'EVEILLE,—You believe now that I am one, from this hour?

MARIANE,—I am convinced that you are.

L'EVEILLE,—If I were not, you would be very surprised?

MARIANE,—No! No! You are, I am not deceived.

L'EVEILLE,—See ! I am one, but you are deceived, because I have not walked like a Freemason.

MARIANE,—No ! No ! Now you wish to put me on the wrong scent. You have advanced to me as one. You wish to repent, but I am not to be duped, and if you do not tell me everything else, I will myself tell all the world as much as I know.

L'EVEILLE,—Tell it if you will, it will not worry me ; but understand that you know nothing, and what's more you never will.

MARIANE,—If you only saw my poor mistress, the worry she is in as to what the secret is, you would resist no longer.

L'EVEILLE,—I am just come from resisting my dear master who is in the same mood, and I love you much more than your mistress. Do you think that I would do for her what I would not do for you ?

MARIANE,—I should be under a greater obligation, than if it were for myself. But I see quite well that you do not love me any longer.

L'EVEILLE,—Not only do I love you ; but I tell you that you also love me.

MARIANE,—I !—How should I love you after the refusal which you make to me ?

L'EVEILLE,—Yes, I know what I say, and I will lay a wager on it, if you wish.

MARIANE,—Stake your secret then.

L'EVEILLE,—You have perhaps some secret to stake against mine. But put aside our secrets, and look at me very attentively,—there.—(They strike different attitudes.) You confess to me now that you do not hate me.

MARIANE,—Yes, I assure you, I hate you very much at this moment.

L'EVEILLE,—Good : a sign that you will love me presently. Look ! Look at me !—Do you perceive nothing ? . . . . .

MARIANE,—Nothing at all.

L'EVEILLE,—Oh !—Speak sincerely. You begin to feel somewhat for me.

MARIANE,—Oh!—only a very little.

L'EVEILLE,—(Sprightly.) Look at me again, I entreat you.

MARIANE,—(Aside.) Can this be some charm?

L'EVEILLE,—(With great vivacity.) That does extremely well. Again! Again!

MARIANE,—(Somewhat aside.) Shall I allow myself to be beguiled?

L'EVEILLE,—Ah! You resist. You turn away your eyes; look at me well, I conjure you.

MARIANE,—Ah! He fascinates me.

L'EVEILLE,—(After having looked at her again for a moment with more marked attention.) That has done it, I have touched your heart, I triumph, you love me at last. Yes! You love me, charming Mariane.

MARIANE,—(Aside)—Really, I believe he is right.

L'EVEILLE,—Oh! For this once, we must embrace. (He embraces her, which she permits.) I feel my love increase, even as it has inflamed yours. Could I have become more ardent by becoming a Freemason? Who could tell me what I should do to love you more, than I have done hitherto?

MARIANE,—But tell me, L'Eveille; have you never deceived me? Am I really fond of you do you think?

L'EVEILLE,—Yes! my dear Mariane, you can count on your love for me. You love me, you will marry me, and you will love me although you marry me.

MARIANE,—Oh! seeing that you are so very discreet, it will be quite sufficient to remain my lover. It is unnecessary that I marry you.

L'EVEILLE,—No.—No.—You will marry me. I know very well what I say.

MARIANE,—But you have told me absolutely nothing of your secret.

L'EVEILLE,—No, Mariane, I shall never be able to tell you anything of it.

MARIANE,—I at least know something of it.

L'EVEILLE,—Adieu,—my dear love, dream well of your lover. Here is your mistress who would tempt me again, it is as well for me to go. I will see you again presently.

(Exit L'Eveille.)

SCENE EIGHTEEN.

(Mariane and Lucile.)

LUCILE,—Well, what news, Mariane? Have you seen Clitandre? Have you seen Mondor? Why does L'Eveille leave you?

MARIANE,—It is because he is afraid you will urge him to speak. He is a Freemason.

LUCILE,—He?

MARIANE,—Yes: Quite recently.

LUCILE,—And he has not told the secret to his master?

MARIANE,—No,—nor to me,—and he will never tell us. I have been worrying him to do so ever since I left you. And would you believe the trick he played on me. In place of telling me his secret, he has made love to me, I think, and even says that I shall marry him.

LUCILE,—That is perhaps his secret. And yet I shall never know it myself.

MARIANE,—Unless we could contrive some new stratagem  
.....

LUCILE,—Get away with your stratagems. You are nothing but a useless girl.

MARIANE,—Stop! Stop! An idea comes to me.

LUCILE,—Leave me, I tell you. Good, here comes Mondor. Go away immediately.

MARIANE,—(Aside on retiring.) Yes, I may not be quite so useless as she thinks.

(Exit Mariane.)

## SCENE NINETEEN.

(Lucile and Mondor.)

MONDOR,—I was going to your house, madam, to ask a favour.

LUCILE,—And what is it, Mondor ?

MONDOR,—Our ceremony is about to take place. I was going to ask you to be good enough to allow us to have the use of this room for a short time, and the passage which you have on this side.

LUCILE,—I shall be very glad. And so Clitandre has obtained no satisfaction ?

MONDOR,—Do you think that I would have yielded to his entreaties after I had resisted those of Lucile ?

LUCILE,—Well ! I know the secret now myself, and I wish to tell it to you.

MONDOR,—That is a small matter apparently.

LUCILE,—So small a matter, sir, that the person who has bought it, is out of conceit with it very soon, and has never been able to sell it at cost price.\*

MONDOR,—That is what I cannot admit, because the one you speak of is the best of fifteen or twenty which are current in the town.

LUCILE,—Listen to me ! Here is the truth. Will you confess it to me, if it is so ?

MONDOR,—We will see, madam.

LUCILE,—Your aim is nothing else but to amuse yourselves with the curiosity of the public. Your only secret is that there is not one. And your oath is only, not to say that there is no secret at all.

MONDOR,—We may amuse ourselves at the curiosity of the public, without that being our aim. With regard to the oath, I cannot tell you if there is one or not.

LUCILE,—And the secret ?

---

\* One knows at what price an actress of the Opera bought the pretended secret, which was published, and how she replied to a respectable person, who wished to induce her to tell it to him.

MONDOR,—As for the secret, you may count upon this, that it is one which is of considerable value and very venerable.

LUCILE,—I am persuaded that it can be nothing less than that.

MONDOR,—If you believe that, Lucile, why do you still ask me questions ?

LUCILE,—I don't know. It seems that my curiosity has become excited of its own accord, and I worry myself about a matter whose objects are the most trivial. It is strange, still I have a thousand things to ask you. But I am foolish with my questions. I feel that they are ridiculous,—unreasonable even, but it pleases me to ask them, and I listen with a species of fury to all your replies, which tell me nothing I can believe. I am sure that your secret cannot be of any use to me. It would, on the contrary, give me pain if I knew it. Can you guess what object I have in wanting so much to know it ? For the pleasure of telling it to all the world ? No ! But for the pleasure of keeping it. This sentiment may appear to you strange in a woman, but it is quite simple. I am not surprised that one should be indiscreet, when one has been only slightly curious, but when one is infinitely so, one is jealous of the discovery. He makes himself a glutton by enjoying alone what he has desired with so much eagerness. In a word, nothing is so natural as extreme curiosity, consistent with extreme discretion, and that is how it happens that our sex is often more discreet than yours.

MONDOR —I am as persuaded of your discretion as of your curiosity, charming Lucile.

LUCILE —You are not yet sufficiently persuaded of it, Mondor. Remember that I am a woman,—that I am still young,—that curiosity is the strongest passion of my sex, and of my age. That this passion is aroused in me to the highest point of impetuosity. That I

cannot live happily,—that I cannot even continue to live, while it remains unsatisfied, and that you are the most cruel of all men if you do not have pity on my state. If you could imagine, my dear Mondor . . . . . No,—you can never conceive my curiosity to know your secret.

MONDOR,—I conceive at least that it is equal to the pleasure which I have of knowing it.

LUCILE,—Ah! You have finished by inflaming the imagination. I can guard it no longer. You love me, Mondor; I do not hate you. It is true that I have grown to incline a little in favour of Clitandre. His love for me seems more ardent than yours. He has promised to tell me your secret. I have agreed to this condition. He has not been able to fulfil it. I sacrifice him to you, and if you speak the word, I will give you my hand. If you will grant me what I ask of you.

MONDOR,—Lovely Lucile. You have placed me in the most grievous and most pressing temptation that I have ever experienced in my life. You do not know all the affection which I have for you. My love has been timid. The most lively passions are not always those which show most. And what overwhelms me is, that you increase my joy in this cruel and pleasing moment, when I realise that I could have been happy, and when I feel I cannot be so.

LUCILE,—No, Mondor, you cannot be happy, if your happiness depends upon me, and if you always refuse to satisfy my curiosity. Not that I disapprove of you, but I confess it to my shame, I should love you more, perhaps, if I had less to esteem you for. But how do I know that I do esteem you? So much discretion is apparently only too well founded. I cannot, at least, control my suspicions.

---

## SCENE TWENTY.

(Lucile, Mondor and Clitandre.)

CLITANDRE,—One never finds Lucile now, without Mondor.

LUCILE,—It is perhaps the last time that you will find me here, Clitandre.

CLITANDRE,—How is that? Have you quarrelled? You appear so happy together. Of course one is happy at being Grand Master of Freemasons.

MONDOR,—You would have been more than happy to have been the last of my apprentices. Yes! sir, you make yourself agreeable, but you are, all the same, ill at ease, —sad even. What would you have then? Do you come from again presenting yourself to some assembled Freemasons, where they do not wish to have you? I should be very sorry, Clitandre.

CLITANDRE,—It ill becomes you to speak thus to me, sir! Stop: madam, behold my rival. He will do everything that he can to thwart our happiness. I warn you of it. It is not generous. I wished to excite him to honour. I have declared to him openly my position. I have confessed everything to him. That you love me, that I have promised you the secret of the Freemasons. That you will marry me if I can get it for you. That my fortune was in your hands and in his. Nothing has made any impression on him; on the contrary, he is even more furious with jealousy. It is also on account of his intrigues, I am sure, that I owe the refusal which I have just received from the Lodge from whence I have come. Do not be duped, madam. Believe me, get rid of your curiosity. What does it signify after all, that I should be a Freemason? I am an honest man, and since you love me . . . . .

LUCILE,—(After having listened as in a dream.) No! My mind is made up. I renounce entirely all the men in the world. They are to me all equally suspicious. (To

Clitandre.) You are not able to keep your promise, I withdraw mine. I want nothing from you, Clitandre, since you are not a Freemason, nor from you, Mondor, because you are one. Fight it out now, gentlemen, if you judge it the right time.

(Exit Lucile.)

---

SCENE TWENTY-ONE.

---

(Mondor and Clitandre.)

MONDOR,—Follow her, Clitandre. Upon my word, I am your rival, without being your enemy. That would only decide against me. For you it is only a caprice which may change any moment. I can see that Lucile has really a liking for you. Follow her, I tell you. I do not doubt that you will bring her back.

CLITANDRE,—(Embracing Mondor.) You are right, my dear Mondor, and I will pardon you everything, if I only win Lucile.

(Exit Clitandre.)

---

SCENE TWENTY-TWO.

---

MONDOR,—(Alone.) Behold then my hopes which have vanished at birth.

---

SCENE TWENTY-THREE.

---

(Grand Master, his valet and four serving brothers  
—as Freemasons.)

VALET,—They are waiting for you, Grand Master. The hour has struck. Most of the Brethren are in the Lodge.

GRAND MASTER,—And those that are to be received, have they arrived?

VALET,—There is one of them present.

GRAND MASTER,—Tell him to come in here. You will bring in the others also as they arrive.

VALET,—I am charged to tell you also, sir, that they are going to bring forward one who has not yet been proposed to you.

GRAND MASTER,—Well,—we will examine him here. I am going for a moment to see our Brothers take the apron, and I will come back again.

(Exit the Valet.)

GRAND MASTER,—(To the serving brethren.) You guard this door,—you, that one, and you two follow me.

(Exeunt.)

#### SCENE TWENTY-FOUR.

(Trissot, the Grand Master's Valet and two guards.)

The lights are lowered slightly. The guards have each a drawn sword in their hand.

VALET,—It is necessary, sir, that you wait here until they are ready. Have the goodness to give me your sword. (Trissot gives up his sword and begins to tremble.) I warn you that the first sight of the ceremony will astonish you, but I think it is hardly necessary to recommend you to be firm.

(Exit the Valet.)

#### SCENE TWENTY-FIVE.

(Trissot, two guards.)

(Trissot watches the Valet go out, looks at each guard and all round the hall.)

TRISSOT,—I begin to tremble. What have I done? Have I lost hope of their coming to deliver me, and will they imprison me here without my knowing why or how?

Go on ! I am an idiot, there is nothing to be afraid of. Am I the only one ? Ah ! I have often been told that I am afraid of the least thing. These cursed Freemasons know that I am trembling here, yet they take a cruel pleasure in tormenting honest people in this way. These men are watching me. (He looks at the guards one after the other.) It is unfortunate to be unable even to tremble at one's ease ; to be a coward, and at the same time to be obliged to appear brave. I can hold out no longer. (He approaches one of the guards.) Listen, my dear friend, let me out of here, I pray you.

GUARD,—That is not possible.

TRISSOT,—I am dying of fright.

GUARD,—I am sorry for that.

TRISSOT,—Here are twelve francs,—it is all I have upon me.

GUARD,—Sir, I am a Freemason.

TRISSOT,—I know I do not give you enough, but remember that I am not rich. I assure you that I was to be received gratis. But stop ! I will make out a bill for thirty louis, only let me out of here at once, I entreat you.

GUARD,—That cannot be done. (Trissot makes efforts to get out. The guard grips him by the shoulder.) No, sir. You are in our charge. You must remain here.

TRISSOT,—Ah ! It seems to me that it is the devil who has got me. (The guard loosens his hold, and pushes him into the hall.) I deserve all that has happened to me. My wife warned me well about it. (Someone knocks twice within.) Ah,—I feel my fears redoubling. Here they come.

#### SCENE TWENTY-SIX.

(Ariste as a Freemason, Trissot, Chrysologue, Mariane (disguised), the Valet and two guards.)

ARISTE,—(To one of the guards.) What is all this noise that we hear ?

GUARD,—It is nothing. It is only this gentleman who is afraid, and wants to get out.

CHRYSOLOGUE,—What, Mr. Trissot, you are afraid? You appeared to be so resolute.

TRISSOT,—But I have changed since then, doctor, I am dead. Feel my pulse.

ARISTE,—(To Trissot.) Reassure yourself. Here comes the Grand Master.

(Trissot gives a start, the lights are lowered.)

SCENE TWENTY-SEVEN.

(The same as in the preceding scene. Six serving brothers. Eight Freemasons, the Grand Master, all in their aprons. They enter two by two, the Grand Master last, between two Freemasons. The two first Freemasons on entering look at each other, and smile.)

LEANDRE (Freemason),—Worshipful Grand Master, permit me, before proceeding further, to prostrate myself at your feet, and express a fear which has been troubling me for the last hour.

GRAND MASTER,—Let those who are not Brothers retire.—Speak.

LEANDRE,—I ask nothing but your clemency. Judge me according to the rule of strictest justice. The more severely I am punished the more satisfied I shall be.

GRAND MASTER,—Explain yourself.

LEANDRE,—I am afraid that I have disclosed too clearly some of our mysteries.

GRAND MASTER,—Stop! Let all those who are not yet Masters retire. It may not be proper, perhaps, that they should hear this confession. Proceed.

LEANDRE,—After I had executed your orders, I went to a house where I met two Brethren. We did not recognise one another at first, but we very soon found ourselves on a level with one another, as you know. We separated, but soon after we met again in the same position. The company noticed it and we were asked the reason. Unfortunately I allowed to escape from me, the word of.....

GRAND MASTER,—Answer me, without troubling yourself. You have not added anything to that word, which could help one to understand the meaning ?

LEANDRE,—No ! worthy Grand Master.

GRAND MASTER,—You have not mentioned any of the seven proper terms ?

LEANDRE,—No, by that square which hangs upon your breast.

GRAND MASTER,—You have not explained any of the twelve signs of our Zodiac ?

LEANDRE,—No, by the Mason's rule which you carry in your right hand.

GRAND MASTER,—Salute the mysterious rule. Go, my Brother, be quite easy. This scrupulousness for a slight fault convinces me of your prudence in the future.

LEANDRE,—You have restored my life, worthy Grand Master. May you long continue the centre of this great Society, and may the Sublime Compasses of Fate extend its limbs favourably in tracing the circumference of your days.

GRAND MASTER,—You can come near, gentlemen. (On looking at Mariane.) It is apparently of this man that you have spoken to me.

ARISTE,—(Freemason, who has introduced Mariane.) Yes, Worshipful Sir, it is I who have brought him here, and who takes the liberty of presenting him to you. I have not the honour of knowing him very well personally, but I was formerly very intimate with his father who was a Master Mason, and a very worthy person.

GRAND MASTER,—I do not doubt that he has transmitted these virtues to this gentleman, and with whom there will be no difficulty, since he is the son of a Master Mason. But, sir, tell me, how old are you ?

MARIANE,—(blushing and replying hesitatingly.) I am . . . . .about . . . . .eighteen years.

GRAND MASTER,—And why, sir, do you hesitate about your age like a woman ? (Mariane blushes still more.) I only ask this question, because you appear to be too young to have entered into our Society.

MARIANE,—(With a tone and air reassured.) I am eighteen years old, sir.

GRAND MASTER,—We have every reason to hope, that you will be an honour to our Order in the estimation of the ladies. Your figure and countenance, at least, are certainly well qualified to make an impression on them.

MARIANE,—I have not perceived, sir, up till now, that the ladies regard me with affection, and I do not know if this arises from resentment on my part, or simple prejudice against them on account of the peculiarity of their character. I have not a very great idea of the pleasure which would be derived from living with them.

GRAND MASTER,—I hardly approve of these sentiments, sir, I quite expect that you will soon change them, as soon as you are received amongst us ; and I count so strongly upon it, that I cannot help beginning, by saying a word to you upon this subject. You are entering upon life, and you will do as you like there. You may be loved there. Remember, sir, that it is not enough to be gallant with the ladies, but that it is necessary to be in every respect an honest and respectable man. Always keep their secrets as you would keep ours. It is a sex to be respected by us in their frailties, and even in their infidelities. As to our Society, sir, you will find there plain people, solid friends, sensibly alive to good qualities, full of indulgence for pardonable faults, living freely together on a perfect equality. (To the Freemasons.) I believe, gentlemen, that all our

company has arrived. We will enter into the Lodge and commence the ceremony at once.

LEANDRE,—Stop! Brethren, Stop! There is someone here who is deceiving us. (They all look at him. Mariane is a little put about.)

GRAND MASTER,—That cannot be. I know all those who are here, except perhaps, this gentleman who has been presented to us by too good a hand for any one to doubt him.

LEANDRE,—It is he who is deceiving us, Venerable Sir. See! See how he is put about, and how he blushes.

GRAND MASTER,—That is not the reason. A well-born person would blush at the accusation or suspicion, even as much as for a fault.

LEANDRE,—But open your eyes well, Venerable Master. How is it that this disguise is able to escape your great insight?

GRAND MASTER,—(After having again looked at Mariane, who is still more put about.) You are right; it is a woman. I do not know why I was not able to discover it myself.

MARIANE,—Oh! But you must be more———

ARISTE,—No! No, gentlemen, you wrong him, he is a respectable man, and I will proceed to convince you of it. You know our laws in such a case. I demand that they be executed to the letter.

---

## SCENE TWENTY-EIGHT.

---

(The persons of the previous scene, with L'Eveille.)

L'EVEILLE,—Gently! gently! gentlemen, if you please.

MARIANE,—Ah! Now for the blow.....Wait a bit, gentlemen, here is one of your Brothers to whom I am particularly well-known. You will believe it upon his word. This is ridiculous, L'Eveille. They accuse me, me! me! of being a woman. What do you think of that?

L'EVEILLE,—You demand of me more than I can give, but I fancy I know something about you, since I am your lover.

MARIANE,—What does that prove? Oh! come my good friend, give evidence of my truthfulness. Speak plainly, I pray you. (She fixes her gaze upon him.)

L'EVEILLE,—(After a moment of suspense.) Now look, my dear Mariane, you are, upon my word, far too pretty to be a mere man.

MARIANE,—Go on! You are nothing but a silly animal yourself.

GRAND MASTER,—(To Mariane.) Console yourself, Mademoiselle, for the small accident that has happened to you. We lose by it perhaps, more than you. (To L'Eveille.) You, my Brother, you have done your duty to us, but you have offended Mademoiselle; endeavour to reconcile yourselves; it is worth the trouble. I leave you here for that purpose. Come, gentlemen, let us enter. (To the Valet.) Conduct these two gentlemen (Trissot and Chrysologue) into the small ante-room, and then into the Lodge.

(They leave the stage in the same order in which they entered.)

---

### SCENE TWENTY-NINE.

---

(Mariane, L'Eveille and two guards.)

(Mariane and L'Eveille look at each other for a moment without speaking.)

MARIANE,—What is it, traitor? See how discreet you are. This is how you love me. Is this how you would try your hand, even before marrying me?

L'EVEILLE,—Do not worry yourself, Mariane; I shall always love you. Judge by the attachment that I have for my Brethren, how deep it will be for my wife.

MARIANE,—(Very warmly.) Do not worry yourself. You wished to prove to me that you loved me, and instead of that you betray me. I will tear your eyes out, you cursed Freemason.

(Enter Lucile.)

LUCILE,—(To one of the guards.) I hear my Femme-de-Chambre. I can very well go in if she is there.

### SCENE THIRTY.

(Lucile, L'Eveille, Mariane and two guards.)

MARIANE,—Come! Come! Madam, come and help me to scratch the face of this monster, who prevents me doing you a service. I had disguised myself as you see. They had presented me, I had replied to their questions. If it had not been for him I should have been received, and then informed you. It could only have been this disguise which has betrayed me.

L'EVEILLE,—That is not everything. I warn you that Monsieur here is under arrest, and that he cannot leave without good sureties.

LUCILE,—How under arrest, what does that signify? Go and tell your Grand Master at once, that I wish to speak to him, and that I beg him not to keep me waiting.

L'EVEILLE,—Madam, I cannot leave.

LUCILE,—Go at once and do as I tell you, I advise you to do so. (L'Eveille goes into the Lodge.)

### SCENE THIRTY-ONE.

(Lucile, Mariane and two guards.)

LUCILE,—Fear nothing, Mariane, I take everything on myself. Listen, but you must have seen something.

MARIANE,—I have seen them wearing aprons. I have heard some of them talk, and I must tell you, to the honour of the Freemasons, that I have heard nothing but what has given me the very highest opinion of their character, of their good faith, of their equity, of their politeness. No! madam, I have never seen anyone as estimable as these people. I confess to you above everything else, that the Grand Master has won my heart; he spoke to me in a charming manner.

LUCILE,—He knew you perhaps.

MARIANE,—Certainly not. He gave me good advice on the manner in which I ought to conduct myself with women, and I had at first a desire to laugh; but he said such kind things to me that I was affected almost to tears. And then he had such engaging manners, that he had no wish even to suspect me at the time when they were accusing me, so that I actually accused myself by my embarrassment.

LUCILE,—But how comes it then that he had you arrested?

MARIANE,—Eh! I don't understand it. It is L'Eveille who says so. That is the first news I have of it.

LUCILE,—What you have told me about Mondor is very satisfactory.

MARIANE,—Oh!—You will love him,—I tell you. You will not be able to resist him. And only look at this L'Eveille, for whom I do not even care,—has he not forced me to love him, after having refused what I asked of him; and at the very moment too when he was playing the cruelest trick on me. I really believe that I have already forgiven him everything. I tell you, madam, one cannot hold out against these magicians; I believe now that if I could have a hundred husbands, I would choose them all from the Freemasons.

LUCILE,—You have become perfectly mad about your Freemasons.

---

## SCENE THIRTY-TWO.

---

(L'Eveille, Lucile and Mariane.)

L'EVEILLE,—Madam, the ceremony is concluded, and you can go to see the Grand Master.

---

## SCENE THE LAST.

---

(Lucile, Mondor, Mariane, L'Eveille and two guards.)

(Dumb-show between Mariane and L'Eveille, behind Lucile and Mondor.)

MONDOR,—(To Lucile.) You are troubled about Mariane. I can re-assure you, madam, it is all L'Eveille's folly, for which I beg your pardon. Mademoiselle is at full liberty. Since I learned she belonged to you, I have rightly conceived the reason which made her do it, but I have not refrained from finding fault with her.

LUCILE,—You are polite, Mondor,—generous even. You sent Clitandre back to me, when I had dismissed both of you. You believed that I could re-consider the matter favourably to him. I have been astonished at your consideration.

MONDOR,—You know all the same, madam, upon what it was founded.

LUCILE,—Is it not perhaps much better than my curiosity which begins to abate ?

MONDOR,—Would you not, madam, rather give me your respect ?

LUCILE,—No ! but I might arouse curiosity in you in my turn, if I wished.

MONDOR,—I do not doubt it, madam.

LUCILE,—If you think you are the only one that has secrets, you deceive yourself. I also have a secret of my own.

MONDOR,—And why not ?

LUCILE,—It is a secret all the same which may interest you.

MONDOR,—Nothing is more likely. It only requires that you should be interested in it yourself to interest me.

LUCILE,—I assure you that it interests me exceedingly.

MONDOR,—And I am rude enough to ask what it is, madam.

LUCILE,—Certainly very rude, and it will be perfectly useless, because I have very good reasons for not telling you.

MONDOR,—And if I should happen to guess it ?

LUCILE,—If you are able to guess it ?

MONDOR,—If I do guess it, madam, will you confess it to me ?

LUCILE,—I may, perhaps, be more generous with you, than you have been with me.

MARIANE,—Madam, if he does not guess it, I will guess it for him.

LUCILE,—Hush ! Mariane. You do not even know the first word of it.

MONDOR,—But ! madam, you rather embarrass me.

LUCILE,—I must revenge myself.

MONDOR,—If I should guess something which might be injurious to me ?

LUCILE,—You would, in that case, perhaps, guess correctly.

MONDOR,—Yes, but that does not help me at all. On the contrary, it may suit me better to say at once what I most desire, and what I least dare hope for. Will you deign, adorable Lucile, to accept me for your lover and for your husband ?

LUCILE,—Is it possible that you could imagine me to do such a thing as that ?

MONDOR,—Upon my word, madam, I have often felt that it was hardly probable.

LUCILE,—All the same it is true. Yes, Mondor, I have thought over the matter. Your reticence regarding your secret, the purity of your opinions about yourself, your generous action towards your rival, his entreaties against you, and the recital which Mariane has just given me, have decided me fully in your favour.