

In one of her daily rambles, among the many whom her appearance attracted, was the then admired Mr. R——, of Drury-Lane Theatre, who, not to be repelled by difficulties, employed every art to obtain repeated interviews, to learn the nature of her situation, and to offer such plausible advice as might render his real views unsuspected. He at length succeeded to her confidence, and the stage was pointed out to her as a most probable scheme of support. It had also the advantage of being extremely well adapted for the gratification of one whose sole motive for relinquishing her home was to see the world. — But an acquaintance thus formed with a man of intrigue was not long to continue: Our heroine soon discovered Mr. R——'s real views, and, positively rejecting them, was once more left destitute; but not of every prospect she had formed of a livelihood from the stage: For this performer had assured her, that the impediment in her speech was no insurmountable obstacle to her arriving at a certain situation in a theatre; as a particular attention to, and frequent repetition of her parts, would enable her to repeat them before an audience, so as to obtain, with the advantage of so charming a person, a respectable, if not brilliant department in the *dramatis personæ*. In an aspiring and persevering mind, Hope is soon converted into Resolution, not to be baffled by petty disappointments, nor to be conquered by the intrusion of apparent impossibilities; and such was the mind of our heroine. Left once more to provide for herself, she had no sooner discarded her libertine admirer, than she determined to profit by his plan, however doubtful she might be of the sincerity of him who proposed it. — As a total stranger, without recommendation, and with a defect in her speech that must have struck every one; on first hearing her, as an invincible bar to all public speaking, she immediately applies to Mr. King, of Drury-Lane Theatre, then manager of the Bristol House during the summer. — His surprise, and the replies she made to his interrogations, have furnished so many different Green-room anecdotes, that, however whimsical and entertaining each of them may be, we are here obliged to decline them all, lest we risk our veracity by adopting those which are fictitious. Suffice it say, that this was, perhaps, one of the most comic scenes Mr. King ever was engaged in; and that notwithstanding all impediments, after having rehearsed with her a short time, he did not wholly discourage her idea of being an actress. But declined giving her any engagement.

Disappointed in this application, she consulted the play-bills; she remembered the name of Mr. Inchbald, who was then of Drury-lane Theatre, having seen him perform several seasons together at Bury St. Edmund's, the town near the village from whence she came. With this gentleman she had not the least acquaintance, but she felt a confidence in him, which his having been frequently in that neighbourhood had alone inspired. The most remote tie was now a near one, while it had reference to a place she was at this time brought to reflect upon with the most tender regret; having at length seen something of the world, and doubtless convinced of the happiness of home. To Mr. Inchbald she resolved to apply for advice respecting an engagement at some theatre. Mr. Inchbald, at that time a man of noted gallantry and intrigue, was struck with her beauty, but just then attached to the wife of Col. —, and engaged in other adventures, he was not tempted to the seduction of that innocence which now sought his friendship; but introduced our heroine to Mr. D——, of Drury-lane House, who had purchased a share in a country theatre, to which he was going as acting manager.

At the first sight of Miss Simpson, D—— hesitated not a moment, but without any trial, he immediately engaged her as his pupil; gave her many parts to study, in spite of the impediment in her speech, which he promised to render at least articulate; and became her instructor. — She was now supplied with every convenience, in the prospect, as she supposed, of future services as an actress, and began to think the world growing kind, when one evening having been reciting a part to her new master a most violent quarrel arose, which, from a reserved behaviour on her part, drew him at last coolly, but firmly to tell her, that he meant to be repaid for the engagement he had assigned her as an actress, with other services than those required for the theatre; and that by such an acquiescence he was willing to hold the agreement, but on no other terms. The tea equipage happened then to be on the table, and our heroine, not so happily blessed, as most women are, with the powers of loquacity, replied to this speech by proxy; the comedian soon felt the effects of a basin of scalding water on his face and bosom; and before he had time to recover from his surprize and the immediate sensation of pain, his pupil had flown down stairs, and was gone for ever!

This momentary revenge imparted a gleam of transport as she quitted D——'s house, but by the time she had reached her