

their business with a flea in their ears. After that he stalked unannounced into the presence of Dulcina.

She was alone, sitting before a mirror trying jewels, and not yet decided what necklet sorted best with the gown she had donned in honour of Sir Pomoroy. Very ill-pleased was she with the intrusion of the Dissenter.

"Who are you?" she cried. "How came you here? Ann, who is this person?"

But Miss Ann was not within earshot and Tobiah was quite ready to answer for himself.

"I am here," said he curtly, "to ask you one question. Where is now to be found she whom you thrust as wife on Richard Marvell these two years gone?"

"Richard Marvell?" Dulcina flashed, then her manner changed swift to languid contempt: "Richard Marvell? Who is he? A rustic by the name; I have naught to do with your clods."

"Ah?" said Tobiah. "Then I take it you were lying when t'other day you said you brought message to him from the woman, his wife?"

Dulcina gave a gasp of sheer surprise: "I lying! I——" and words for a moment failed her even as did breath at such insult and impudence. "I will have you turned from the house!" she cried at last. "You impudent knave!"

Tobiah sat down: "Mistress," said he, "I perceive that you have been very ill-taught in the ways of righteousness, the respect for age, and other matters of common virtue, I will do my best to amend this."

And then and there he began with deliberation.

Dulcina was beside herself with indignation; yet she did not know how to stay him nor what to do. She called for Ann and her maid, but they did not come. She raised her voice for the men of her household, but