

PIP. (*Aside.*) Ha! A very pretty situation! (*Aloud to the REGENT.*) Your royal highness is looking for something?

REGENT. Yes, I've lost—

PIP. (*innocently.*) Perhaps, sir, it was—(*picking up ladle and giving it to him*), the spoon. (*They look at each other a moment, then burst out laughing.*)

PIP. Your Royal Highness is wanted sadly in the kitchen. It is a question whether beccaficoes should be dressed with ham or bacon.

REGENT. Heavens! If they've used bacon! (*Hurries off* L. PIPANDOR goes to door R. and taps.)

PIP. Mam'selle Helene! (*HELENE opens door cautiously and comes out.*)

HELENE. Ah, Monsieur Pipandor. That dreadful man! he wanted to kiss me.

PIP. That's nothing; only court manners. But stay where you are, don't move till I come for you. It will all come right.

HELENE. But Maurice?

PIP. Oh, that will be all right. I've such an idea. (*HELENE returns to room, R.*) What a night we shall have of it. But here come the revellers. (*Ladies and gentlemen re-enter, L. 2 E., without caps and aprons. The REGENT, MADAME GIGOT and BABETTE follow.*)

REGENT. There, now, while the supper is being prepared, what shall we do?

PIP. Some maskers outside desire to entertain your Royal Highness with a dance.

REGENT. Admit them. (*Aside to PIPANDOR.*) Is it all right? Everything arranged as I directed?

PIP. Everything. The Duke and Duchess of Maine will be arrested as the clock strikes four.

REGENT. Very well, we'll have some fun with these little conspirators. (*He sits, R. 2 E. ESCARGOT, CHATEAUGRIS, MAURICE and GIGOT and two others enter dancing from centre. They are all disguised as Scaramouches, and each carries in front of his face an open umbrella, painted to represent a huge grotesque face. The handles conceal swords. All wear masks.*)

GROTESQUE SONG AND DANCE.

(*ESCARGOT, MAURICE, CHATEAUGRIS, GIGOT, and two others.*)

One, two, three, four, five, six,
(*Aside.*) Here we are in readiness the Regent's
job to fix.

Two, three, four, five, six, one,
(*Aside.*) And there'll be a pretty row
before the
job is done.

Three, four, five, six, one, two,
(*Aside.*) But they've not the least idea what we
mean to do.

Four, five, six, one, two, three,
(*Aside.*) Won't His Royal Highness find his
supper disagree?