

PIP. Aha! The peddler's box! How my fingers do itch to overhaul it. I must. I really must. There's no one looking. Here goes. (*Seat himself on ground by box, so that the rustic seat is between him and the house. Ribbons, and frills, and laces, and—pshaw—women's jim-cracks. (Takes out bottle, opens it and tastes.) Medicine! bah! (Touches spring, secret drawer flies open.) Hullo! Here's something! (Takes out papers.) Paper again! with a big red seal too. I never could resist paper. What's this? another family tree, perhaps. (Unfolds paper. (MADAME GIGOT enters from house, looking back as she enters.)*

MAD. GIG. There is something mysterious going on. The Marquis and the peddler are whispering together as if they had a state secret to hatch. Unfortunately the keyholes in this house are all too small. When I am Marquise there'll be no secrets from me. When I am Marquise. Tut! I will be Marquise; and when a woman says I will, why, she will. (*Sees PIP.*) There's that scamp Pip again. He shall be dismissed the first moment when I am Marquise. (*Goes behind him quietly.*)

PIP. (*Puzzled.*) Hang me if I can make it out. Well it may be useful some day. I'll put it in a safe place. (*Is going to put paper in his pocket. MADAME GIGOT snatches it away, taking hold of his ear with her other hand.*) Bo off, sirrah!

PIP. My ear again! (*At back going into house.*) I wish I were a man. I'd—(*Makes threatening gestures behind her back.*) I know; I'll go and put a mouse in her bed.

MAD. GIG. (*Reading.*) "To the Duchess of Maine." A pretty peddler, indeed. So ho! a rising in Brittany. "Philip of Spain will send a fleet to assist." Ah! here's luck. Here's the plot at last! (*Goes towards box.*) Perhaps there's more here. (*Looks off, R.*) Somebody coming! (*Goes off hastily, L. HELENE enters, R. U. E.*)

HELENE. Oh, how happy Maurice has made me. He has told me he loves me ten times as much as ever. Poor fellow, he says he is only the mate of a ship from Seville with a cargo of oranges for marmalade. Marmalade! how sweet! He says it might have been coals. But what does that matter? I love him, and what does love care for cargoes? (*Sings.*)

IT IS LOVE.

HELENE. Birds fly high in the rosy sky,
And the sunflower turns to the sun;
And I sleep no more in the dream-time of yore,
For the waking of life has begun.
Ah why? Ah why?
It is love! it is love! it is love!

Now I know why the blossom is growing,
Why the vine's twining tendrils upcurl,
Why the humming bird's breast is a-glowing,
With emerald, ruby and pearl.

Why the sweet maiden rose in all blushes,
And the lily bends shyly her head;