

politics and his sneers, and he grew feebly jovial over the empty bottles. Mr. Wharton's Whigs debated noisily of horses and women, with Mr. Wharton loudest and loosest of all. The night was old when Russell and Laleham and Twyford lurched off arm in arm, Mr. Wharton bidding them good-night in a view halloa! from the door. Coming back, he found that Mr. Dane was fallen asleep with his head on the table. Mr. Wharton shook him vigorously and in vain. Mr. Wharton leant back against the wall and regarded him austerely :

"Do—you—know," says he slowly and very distinctly, "you are a sad sot?" Mr. Dane snored. A servant came in and touched Mr. Wharton's arm.

"Pardon, sir. The gentleman you was to see—I do not know if you will see him?" Mr. Wharton stared.

"Damme, I think I will see two of him," says he. "Put Mr. Dane to bed." And off he went.

So regard Mr. Wharton holding on by the table with his wig awry and a leer on his ugly flushed face while his guest bows to him. "You are my M. de Beaujeu?" says Mr. Wharton, with penetrating clarity of speech.

"I am, Mr. Wharton. But that is not my name."

"Oh, the devil!" said Mr. Wharton, and sat down and stared at him. "Are you a plot? If you are—good-night! Plots always upset me."

"When sober?" M. de Beaujeu permitted himself a sneer. Mr. Wharton straightened his wig.

"I am," says he modestly, "as drunk—as I can ever get—but I am sober enough for you, Mr. An—An—onymous."

"Nor I am not that neither," said Beaujeu, smiling.

"Then what are you?" Mr. Wharton roared angrily.

"On your honour to keep it secret——" Beaujeu began.

"No, damme, no!" cried Mr. Wharton in haste. "I am not so drunk that I'll listen to secrets." M. de Beaujeu's cold blue eyes gazed on him a moment in contempt, then