

was, and Diana's own were the gentle curves of her form and her lithe grace. The yellow candle-light scarce availed to dim the dazzling whiteness of arm and neck and bosom. The incomparable Charlbury! M. de Beaujeu smiled and applauded his own boyish taste.

The act ended in roaring cheers. Mistress Charlbury must curtsy thrice with laughing wide-eyed glances to the fine gentlemen in the boxes. Mr. Dane turned to Beaujeu laughing, "Well, sir, and is she not divine?"

Mr. Wharton sniggered. "'Tis an admirable actress," said Beaujeu. "But I've seen her in an apter part. As Lyndaraxa she was reality."

"Lyndaraxa? The traitress?" cried Jack Dane. "Why, that would not suit Mistress Charlbury."

"Oh, by your leave! It became her mightily."

Jack Dane looked puzzled. "Begad, nor I cannot call her to mind as Lyndaraxa neither. Can you, Wharton?" Mr. Wharton, who was looking curiously at Beaujeu, shook his head.

"I think it was before you went to the play, Mr. Dane," said Beaujeu.

"I think not, sir. I can remember all her parts," Mr. Wharton sniggered. "Why, 'tis but four years since she came to town, and till then she lived in a village on my uncle's estate." Mr. Healy pricked up his ears. Mr. Wharton still studied Beaujeu, who yawned and said lightly:

"Ah, is it so, then? My memory goes away."

"Now does it that?" said Mr. Healy to himself. "'Tis the first time yet. And a mighty mysterious gentleman you are." Mr. Wharton was trying to remember all the scandal he had ever heard of Mistress Charlbury. At last he was convinced that there must be some which he had not heard. The thought piqued Mr. Wharton.

The curtain rose upon the next act. Charity forbids description. Through all the trials and tribulations of the heroical heroine passed Almahide — Mistress Charlbury.