

SCENE II.

Willesden Junction Railway Station—enter TIMKINS carrying a black valise which he deposits on the platform.

Timkins—Well ! here I am on my way to the country ; Mrs. T. was right ; I require a change ; Great guns, what I have gone through during the past few weeks. How a man retired from business with a decent income could have been so infatuated as to gamble on the Stock Exchange, I cannot understand ; but this is what I have been doing ; and what will Mrs. T. say, when she hears about it ; What will she do if she ever learns that I dropped no less than ten thousand pounds in one week. Dr. Pills is sure to hear about it, and he will as surely tell Maria ; but if he does—if he does, I'll—I'll make a powder of him ; I'll grind him into snuff, and Pills will take a pinch of himself. Oh ! that Stock Exchange ; talk of gambling hells, cards and dice are flea-bites to Stock gambling ; don't I know it from bitter experience. Reform Monaco, say they ; reform nearer home, say I. I'd blow my brains out, only it is such a disagreeable alternative. I prefer going to the country ; but where 'll I go ? Maria suggested Scotland—Wales ; but no ! I'll go to Ireland. I'll go in for freedom. Hillo ! there, porter, I say.

Enter Railway Porter.

Timkins—Say, my man, when does the Holyhead express leave.

Porter (looking at clock)—Fifty-four and three quarters of a minute from now.

Timkins—Really to the minute.

Porter—To a tick.

Timkins—By Jove ; take my valise till I get something to eat and something (*winks*) to drink.

(Porter touches hat and lifts valise.)

(Exit TIMKINS.)

Enter SIMKINS carrying a black valise the exact counterpart of the one left by TIMKINS with the Porter.)

Simkins—Porter ! Porter ! Great Caesar ! there never is a porter about when you want him. (*Observes Porter.*) Ah ! there you are. When does the next train leave for Addison Road ?

Porter (looking at clock)—In four minutes and two-thirds of a second.

Simkins—Never behind time ?

Porter—Never.

Simkins (looks at clock)—Clock right ?

Porter—Never wrong.