

MAD. B. (*Offering butter on a knife.*) Butter.

DUVAL. (*Not seeing it.*) No, it isn't. (*Sees butter.*) Oh! (*Takes butter.*) Is anybody coming yet?

MAD. B. (*Looking off, L.*) Yes, the Mayor. Do make haste! pray make haste!

DUVAL. Take it coolly. I say, Cousin Mary, tell me I may hope.

MAD. B. Perhaps! Oh, pray be quick!

DUVAL. I'd eat fifty letters, all stiff parchment, a yard long, with that for a relish! Fortunately this is very thin paper. Then the silk business?—

MAD. B. Is the restoration of the rightful heir to the throne of France, the Comte de Provence.

DUVAL. By Jove! and I'm an active partner in the concern. (*Begins to eat.*) I'm swallowing the profits already.

(*Enters the Mayor, Blacksmith and Pierre, L. Duval bows to the Mayor ironically, still eating.*)

DUVAL. (*Recitative.*) My dear sir, allow me to offer you a sandwich, I cannot particularly recommend them, they're very tough, very tough.

MAD. B. Ah, my dear Mayor! (*Laughing.*) Where have you been hiding yourself? You never came to ask me for a dance.

MAYOR. I'll give you a dance presently, madame, and you, too, monsieur. (*Aside.*) I'll frighten them.

DUVAL. Thanks, but I don't dance slow dances.

MAYOR. Never fear, the one I propose will be fast enough for your taste. (*Unfolds proclamation.*)

MAD. B. (*Aside to Duval.*) He means mischief.

DUVAL. (*Aside.*) Old porcupine! let him!

MAYOR. (*Reads.*) "A most dangerous conspirator and pronounced Royalist is known to be now somewhere in disguise on the western coast. She is in communication with the Comte de Provence, and probably carries valuable papers. See that all suspicious persons are immediately arrested and closely searched. She has a slight scar on her left arm, and her real name is the Comtesse de Beaudry." (*Madame Barrie gives a slight start.*) Hullo! what's this! Why I believe she is the Countess after all! Ah, you turn pale, Madame Barrie! Widow Barrie! mantua-maker, from Paris! Oblige me, Madame Barrie, mantua-maker, from Paris, by uncovering that charming left arm of yours. (*He tries to take her hand. She hastily withdraws it.*) So! so!