Act II

Scene: Palace Yard, Westminster, Westminster Hall, L. Private Willis discovered on Sentry, R. Night.

No. 14. "When all night long a chap remains" Song Private Willis















No. 15. "Strephon's a member of Parliament" Chorus

Fairies and Peers

































(Enter Lords Tolloller and Mountararat)

- Ld. Mount.: Perfectly disgraceful! disgusting!
- Celia: You seem annoyed.
- Ld.Mount.: Annoyed! I should think so! Why, this ridiculous protégé of yours is playing the deuce with everything! Tonight is the second reading of his bill to throw the peer-age open to competitive examination.

- Ld. Toll.: And he'll carry it, too!

Ld. Mount .: Carry it ? Of course he will! He's a Parliamentary Pickford - he carries everything.

Leila: Yes. If you please, that's our fault.

Ld. Mount .: The deuce it is!

Celia: Yes; we influence the members, and compel them to vote just as he wishes them to.

Leila: It's our system; it shortens the debates.

- Ld. Toll.: Well, but think what it all means! I don't so much mind for myself, but with a House of Peers with no grandfathers worth mentioning the country must go to the dogs.

Leila: I suppose it must.

Ld. Mount.: I don't want to say a word against brains — I've a great respect for brains; I often wish I had some myself — but with a House of Peers composed exclusively of people of intellect, what's to become of the House of Commons ?

Leila: I never thought of that.

Ld. Mount.: This comes of women interfering in politics. It so happens that if there is an institution in Great Britain which is not susceptible of any improvement at all, it is the House of Peers.

No. 16. "When Britain really ruled the waves" ¹⁵³ Song and Chorus

Lord Mountararat, Fairies and Peers





Leila: (who has been much attracted by the Peers during the song) Charming persons, are they not?

- Celia: Distinctly. For self-contained dignity, combined with airy condescension, give me a British representative peer!
- Ld.Toll.: Then, pray, stop this protégé of yours before it's too late. Think of the mischief you're doing !
- Leila: (crying) But we can't stop him now. (Aside to Celia) Aren't they lovely? (Aloud) Oh why did you go and defy us, you great geese?













(Exeunt Mountararat and Tolloller. Fairies gaze wistfully after them. Enter Fairy Queen.)

- Queen: Oh, shame! shame upon you! Is this your fidelity to the laws you are bound to obey? Know ye not that it is death to marry a mortal?
- Leila: Yes; but it's not death to wish to marry a mortal.
- Fleta: If it were you'd have to execute us all.
- Queen: Oh, this is weakness! Subdue it!
- Celia: We know it's weakness, but the weakness is so strong !
- Leila: We are not all as tough as you are.
- Queen: Tough? Do you suppose that I am insensible to the effect of manly beauty? Look at that man (referring to Put. Willis). A perfect picture! -- (to Put. Willis) Who are you, sir?
- Pvt.Willis: Private Willis, B Company, First Battalion Grenadier Guards.
- Queen: You're a fine fellow, sir.
- Pvt.Willis: I am generally admired.
- Queen: I can quite understand it. (To Fairies) Now, here is a man whose physical attributes are simply godlike. That man has a most extraordinary effect upon me. If I yielded to a natural impulse I should fall down and worship that man. But I mortify this inclination; I wrestle with it, and it lies beneath my feet. This is how I treat my regard for that man.

No. 18. "Oh, foolish fay" Song and Chorus Queen and Fairies







(Excunt Fairies sorroufully, headed by Fairy Queen) (Enter Phyllis)

Phyllis: (half crying) I can't think why I'm not in better spirits. I'm engaged to two noblemen at once. That ought to be enough to make any girl happy; but I'm miserable. Don't suppose it's because I care for Strephon, for I hate him! No girl would care for a man who goes about with a mother considerably younger than himself.

(Enter Lord Mountararat)

Ld.Mount.: Phyllis! my own!

Phyllis: Don't! How dare you? But perhaps you are one of the noblemen I'm engaged to?

Ld.Mount.: I'm one of them.

- Phyllis: Oh! But how came you to have a peerage?
- Ld.Mount .: It's a prize for being born first.
- Phyllis: Oh, I see-a kind of Derby cup.
- Ld.Mount .: Not at all. I'm of a very old and distinguished family.
- Phyllis: And you're proud of your race? Of course you are; you won it. But why are people made peers?
- Ld.Mount.: The principle is not easy to explain.

(Enter Lord Tolloller, L.)

- Ld. Toll.: Phyllis! my darling! (embraces her)
- Phyllis: Here's the other! Well, have you settled which it's to be?
- Ld.Toll.: Not altogether; it's a difficult position. It would be hardly delicate to toss up. On the whole, we would rather leave it to you.
- Phyllis: How can it possibly concern me? You are both earls, and you are both rich, and you are both plain.

Ld.Mount.: So we are. At least I am.

Ld. Toll.: So am I.

Ld. Mount .: No, no!

- Ld. Toll.: Oh, I am indeed very plain.

Ld.Mount.: Well, well! perhaps you are.

Phyllis: There's really nothing to choose between you. If one of you would forego his title and distribute his estates among his Irish tenantry, why, then I should see a reason for accepting the other. (*Phyllis retires up*).

- Ld.Mount.: Tolloller, are you prepared to make this sacrifice ?
- Ld. Toll.: No!

Ld.Mount.: Not even to oblige a lady?

- Ld. Toll.: No!

Ld.Mount.: Then the only question is, which of us shall give way to the other?Perhaps, on the whole, she would be happier with me? I don't know; I may be wrong.

- Ld. Toll.: No, I don't know that you are. I really think that she would. But the painful part of the thing is, that if you rob me of the girl of my heart, one of us must perish.

Ld. Mount.: Again the question arises, which shall it be? Do you feel inclined to make this sacrifice?

- Ld. Toll.: No!

Ld. Mount.: Not even to oblige a gentleman?

- Ld.Toll.: Impossible! The Tollollers have invariably destroyed their successful rivals. It's a family tradition that I have sworn to respect.
- Ld.Mount.: I see. Did you swear it before a commissioner?

- Ld. Toll.: I did, on affidavit.

- Ld.Mount.: Then I don't see how you can help yourself.
- Ld. Toll.: It's a painful position, for I have a strong regard for you, George. (shake hands)
- Ld.Mount.: (much affected) My dear Thomas!
- Ld. Toll.: You are very dear to me, George. We were boys together at least I was. If I were to destroy you, my existence would be hopelessly embittered.

Ld.Mount.: Then, my dear Thomas, you must not do it. I say it again and again: if it will have this effect on you, you must not do it. No, no! If one of us is to destroy the other, let it be me.

Ld.Toll.: No, no!

Ld. Mount.: Ah yes! By our boyish friendship I implore you. (shake hands)

- Ld. Toll.: (much moved) Well! well! be it so. But no, no! I cannot consent to an act which would crush you with unavailing remorse.

Ld.Mount.: But it would not do so. I should be very sad at first—oh! who would not be?— but it would wear off. I like you very much (shake hands) but not, perhaps, as much as you like me.

Ld.Toll.: George, you're a noble fellow, but that tell-tale tear betrays you. No, George, you are very fond of me, and I cannot consent to give you a week's uneasiness on my account.

Ld.Mount.: But, dear Thomas, it would not last a week. Remember, you lead the House of Lords; on your demise I shall take your place. Oh, Thomas, it would not last a day!

Ld.Toll.: It's very kind and thoughtful of you to look at it in that light, but there's no disguising it, George—we're in a very awkward position.

Phyllis: (coming down) Now, I do hope you're not going to fight about me, because it really isn't worth while.

Ld.Toll.: I don't believe it is.

Ld. Mount.: Nor I. The sacred ties of friendship are paramount. No consideration shall induce me to raise my hand against Thomas.

Ld.Toll.: And in my eyes the life of George is more sacred than love itself.

No. 19. "Tho' p'rhaps I may incur your blame" Quartet

Phyllis, Lord Tolloller, Lord Mountararat and Private Willis











No. 20. "Love, unrequited, robs me of my rest" Recitative and Song Lord Chancellor



































































And his
























During the last lines Lords Mounturarat and Tolloller have entered. They gaze sympathetically upon the Lord Chancellor's distress. At the end of his song they come forward.



Ld. Mount .: I am much distressed to see your lordship in this condition.

- Ld. Chan.: Ah, my lords, it is seldom that a Lord Chancellor has reason to envy the position of another, but I am free to confess that I would rather be two earls engaged to Phyllis than any other half-dozen noblemen upon the face of the globe.
- Ld. Toll.: (without enthusiasm) Yes. In a way, it's an enviable position.
- Ld.Mount.: Oh yes no doubt most enviable. At the same time, seeing you thus, we naturally say to ourselves, "This is very sad. His lordship is constitutionally as blithe as a bird - he trills upon the bench like a thing of song and gladness. His series of judgments in Fsharp, given *andante* in six-eight time, are among the most remarkable effects ever produced in a court of Chancery. He is, perhaps, the only living instance of a judge whose decrees have received the honor of a double encore. How can we bring ourselves to do that which will deprive the court of Chancery of one of its most attractive features?"
- Ld. Chan.: I feel the force of your remarks, but I cannot make up my mind to apply to myself again. I am here in a double capacity. Firstly, as a Lord Chancellor entrusted with the guardianship of this charming girl; and, secondly, as a suitor for her hand. In my latter capacity I am overawed by my dignity in my former capacity; I hesitate to approach myself—it unnerves me.
- Ld. Toll.: It's a difficult position. This is what it is to have two capacities. Let us be thankful that we are persons of no capacity whatever.
 - Ld.Mount.: But take courage! Remember, you are a very just and kindly old gentleman, and you need have no hesitation in approaching yourself, so that you do so respectfully and with a proper show of deference.
 - Ld.Chan.: Do you really think so? Well, I will nerve myself to another effort, and if that fails I resign myself to my fate.

No. 21. "He who shies at such a prize" Trio

Lord Tolloller, Lord Mountararat and Lord Chancellor





























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⁽Dance, and exeunt arm-in-arm together. Enter Strephon.)

¹⁸⁸ No. 22. "My bill has now been read a second time" **Recitative and Song**

Strephon









Ter - ri-ble your

















(Enter Phyllis)

Phyllis: (starting) Strephon!

Strephon: (starting) Phyllis! But I suppose I should say, "My Lady". I have not yet been informed which title your ladyship has pleased to elect.

Phyllis: I haven't quite decided. You see, I have no mother to advise me.

Strephon: No; I have.

Phyllis: Yes, a young mother.

Strephon: Not very_a couple of centuries or so.

Phyllis: Oh, she wears well,

Strephon: She does; she's a fairy.

Phyllis: I beg your pardon-a what?

Strephon: Oh, I've no longer any reason to conceal the fact-she's a fairy.

Phyllis: A fairy! Well, but-that would account for a good many things. Then I suppose you're a fairy?

Strephon: I'm half a fairy.

Phyllis: Which half?

Strephon: The upper half-down to the waistcoat.

Phyllis: Dear me! (prodding him with her fingers) There is nothing to show it. But why didn't you tell me this before?

Strephon: I thought you would take a dislike to me. But as it's all off, you may as well know the truth—I'm only half a mortal.

Phyllis: (crying) But I'd rather have half a mortal I do love than half a dozen I don't.

Strephon: Oh, I think not. Go to your half dozen.

Phyllis: (crying) It's only two, and I hate 'em! Please forgive me.

Strephon: I don't think I ought to. Besides, all sorts of difficulties will arise. You know my grandmother looks quite as young as my mother. So do all my aunts.

Phyllis: I quite understand. Whenever I see you kissing a very young lady I shall know it's an elderly relative.

Strephon: You will? Then, Phyllis, I think we shall be very happy. (embracing her)

Phyllis: We won't wait long before we marry; we might change our minds.

Strephon: Yes-we'll get married first.

Phyllis: And change our minds afterwards.

Strephon: Yes, that's the usual course.

No. 23. "If we're weak enough to tarry"

Duet

Phyllis and Strephon





























Phyllis: But does your mother know you're — I mean, is she aware of our engagement? (Enter Iolanthe)

- Iolanthe: She is, and thus she welcomes her daughter-in-law. (kisses her)
- Phyllis: She kisses just like other people! But the Lord Chancellor?
- Strephon: I had forgotten him.—Mother, none can resist your fairy eloquence. You will go to him and plead for us?
- Iolanthe: (Aside) Go to him?-(aloud) No, no! impossible!

Strephon: But our happiness, our very lives, depend upon our obtaining his consent.

Phyllis: Oh, madam, you cannot refuse to do this?

Iolanthe: You know not what you ask! The Lord Chancellor is my husband!

Strephon: Your husband?

Iolanthe: My husband and your father! (Strephon overcome)

- Phyllis: Then our course is plain. On his learning that Strephon is his son, all objections to our marriage will be at once removed.
- Iolanthe: Nay, he must never know. He believes me to have died childless; and, dearly as I love him, I am bound, under penalty of death, not to deceive him.But see, he comes! Quick, my veil! (Retires up)

(Enter Lord Chancellor. Jolanthe retires with Strephon and Phyllis)

Ld. Chan.. Victory! victory! Success has crowned my efforts, and I may consider myself engaged to Phyllis. At first I wouldn't hear of it; it was out of the question. But I took heart. I pointed out to myself that I was no stranger to myself—in point of fact, I had been personally acquainted with myself for some years. This had its effect. I admitted that I had watched my professional advancement with considerable interest, and I handsomely added that I yielded to no one in admiration for my private and professional virtues. This was a great point gained. I then endeavored to work upon my feelings. Conceive my joy when I distinctly perceived a tear glistening in my own eye! Eventually, after a severe struggle with myself, I reluctantly, most reluctantly, consented. (*lolanthe comes down, Strephon and Phyllis going off.*)

But whom have we here?

No. 24. "My lord, a suppliant at your feet" Recitative and Ballad Iolanthe







(The Lord Chancellor is moved by this appeal. After a pause-)

No. 25. "It may not be" Recitative Iolanthe, Queen, Lord Chancellor and Fairies



























(The Peers and Strephon enter. The Queen raises her spear. Lord Chuncellor and Strephon implore her mercy, Leila and Celia rush forward.)

Leila: Hold! If Iolanthe must die, so must we all, for as she has sinned, so have we. Oueen: What?

(Peers and Fairies kneel to her-Lord Mountararat with Leila; Lord Tolloller with Celia.)

Celia: We are all fairy duchesses, marchionesses, countesses, viscountesses, and baronesses.

Ld.Mount.: It's our fault; they couldn't help themselves.

- Queen: It seems they have helped themselves, and pretty freely too!-(After a pause) You have all incurred death, but I can't slaughter the whole company. And yet (unfolding a scroll) the law is clear: Every fairy must die who marries a mortal!
- Ld.Chan.: Allow me, as an old equity draughtsman, to make a suggestion. The subleties of the legal mind are equal to the emergency. The thing is really quite simple; the insertion of a single word will do it. Let it stand that every fairy shall die who don't marry a mortal, and there you are, out of your difficulty at once!
- Queen: We like your humor. Very well. (Altering the MS. in pencil)-Private Willis!

Pvt.Willis: (coming forward) Ma'am?

- Queen: To save my life it is necessary that I marry at once. How should you like to be a fairy Guardsman?
- Pvt.Willis: Well, ma'am, I don't think much of the British soldier who wouldn't ill-convenience himself to save a female in distress.
- Queen: You are a brave fellow. You're a fairy from this moment. (Wings spring from Sentry's shoulders.)-And you, my lords, how say you? Will you join our ranks?

(Fairies kneel to Peers, and implore them to do so.)

- Ld.Mount.: (to Tolloller) Well, now that the peers are to be recruited entirely from persons of intelligence, I really don't see what use we are down here.
- Ld. Toll .: None, whatever.
- Queen: Good! (Wings spring from the shoulders of Peers.)-Then away we go to Fairyland!

No. 26. "Soon as we may, off and away" Finale

207

Ensemble



















Make upyour minds that grief 'twill bring, lf ev - 'ry bow, go to Wards He will be sure - ly hap pier, for He's in Chan-ce-ry, ev - 'ry bow, 'twill bring, Make up your minds that grief 1f go to Wards He will be sure - ly hap - pier, for He's in Chan-ce-ry, that grief ev - 'ry bow, Make up your minds 'twill bring, 1f go to hap -Wards in Chan-ce-ry, He will be sure ly pier, for He's if. R go ev - 'ry bow, Make up your minds that grief 'twill bring, lf to He's Wards in Chan - ce - ry, He will be sure -1y hap pier, for Þ ev - 'ry bow, Make up your minds that grief 'twill bring, If go to Wards in Chan - ce - ry, He will be sure ly hap pier, for He's go ev - 'ry bow, Make up your minds 'twill bring, If to that grief Wards in Chan-ce-ry, He will be sure ly hap -He's pier, for z: 0.









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