

MODUS OPERANDI;

OR,

The Automaton Chess-Player.

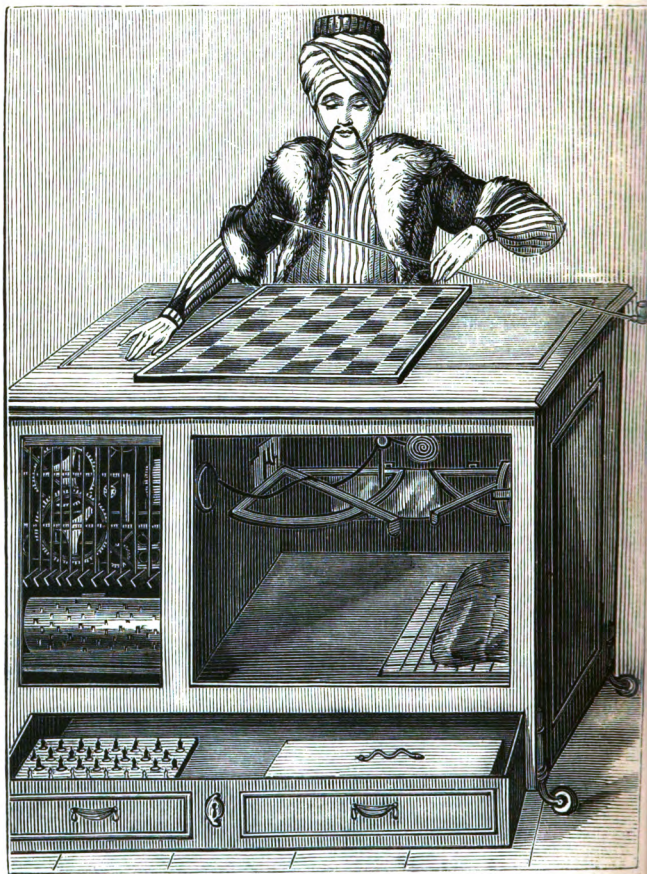
A PLAY IN THREE ACTS.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS, AND EXTRACTS FROM ORIGINAL
LETTERS ON DE KEMPELIN'S AUTOMATON CHESS-PLAYER,
PUBLISHED IN 1784.

BY J. WALKER.

LONDON:
T. H. LACY, 89, STRAND.

1866.



Front View of the Automaton Chess-Player, with doors removed
to exhibit the interior.

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REMARKS.

As the Automaton Chess-Player is made the subject of the following Play, and as the origin and history of that celebrated and ingenious invention are but little known, even among chess-players themselves, it is presumed that a few extracts from letters published on the first appearance of this automaton before the public will be found amusing to the general reader, and more especially so to all amateurs of the game of chess. The title and preface to those letters were as follows :—

INANIMATE REASON ;

OR,

A CIRCUMSTANTIAL ACCOUNT

Of that Astonishing Piece of Mechanism

M. DE KEMPELIN'S

C H E S S - P L A Y E R .

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LETTERS OF
M. GOTTLIEB DE WINDISCH.

LONDON :

PRINTED FOR S. BLADON, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1784.

PREFACE. .

THE boldest idea that ever entered the brain of a mechanic was doubtless that of constructing a machine to imitate man in something more than figure and motion. M. de Kempelin not only conceived this idea, but also carried it into execution, his Automaton Chess-player being, beyond contradiction, the most astonishing automaton that ever existed. Never before did any mere mechanical figure possess the power of moving itself in different directions as unforeseen circumstances might require, playing the most difficult and complicated of all games, frequently beating the most consummate adept, and setting him right if he ever deviated from the rules of the game. This phenomenon was too extraordinary not to make a great noise on its first appearance, and accordingly, the literary journals were eager to announce it. There had hitherto appeared but one description tolerably exact and free from exaggeration, which was published in 1773, in some public provincial paper by M. de Windisch, the respectable author of the "History and Geography of the Kingdom of Hungary," and the intimate friend and countryman of M. de Kempelin. But that description was too concise, was circulated in too narrow a sphere, and was insufficient to make known, as it deserved to be to all

Europe, an invention as surprising as incredible. The above-named author has therefore furnished, in the letters we are now publishing, more ample details of this celebrated machine, describing its component parts in such a manner as to leave nothing to be wished for *except the inventor's secret*. The better to do this, he has added three copper-plates, representing the chess-player in so many different situations, from M. de Kempelin's own drawings, which cannot fail to be exact.

Extracts from Letter 1.

“Presburg, September 7th, 1783.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“Do not expect that I shall answer every question that you put to me relative to M. de Kempelin's chess-player; you must be contented with such information as my observations, made with the utmost care, will enable me to give you. You say, that far from believing all that you have heard related or read concerning this machine, your reflections on it have only increased your wish to be farther informed, as you doubt the possibility of things so incredible.

“I am not surprised at this, since I myself, who have so often seen it, examined it, and played with it, am obliged to make the humiliating avowal that it is as incomprehensible to me as it can be to you; and others, endowed with superior knowledge and quicker apprehension than myself, have not been more successful.

“Among the many thousands of all ranks who have seen it not one has been able to develope the mystery. It is a deception! Granted. But a deception more beautiful, more astonishing, than any to be

met with in the different accounts of Mathematical Recreations.

“When I first saw the inventor wheel his automaton, fixed to a large chest, out of an alcove, I could not help suspecting that this chest contained a child of some ten or twelve years old; but when I saw M. de Kempelin tuck up the dress of the figure, pull out the drawer, and open all the doors, and in that condition roll it round the room, so as to enable each person present to examine it on all sides, I was convinced of my mistake. I examined the minutest corner of it without being able to discover a place capable of concealing anything even of the size of my hat. But more in my next.”

Extracts from Letter 2.

“As I see you will place no trust either in my eyes or in those of so many others, only be patient and you shall know the whole, *except that little secret*, which probably the inventor will never trust to any one.

“In order to render my description as clear, and as easy to be understood as possible, I enclose you copies of three drawings of the machine, done by M. de Kempelin himself, and which, consequently, cannot fail to be exact.

“The first represents the machine such as M. de Kempelin exhibits it for the examination of the curious, before he sets it to play with the doors and drawer open; the second shows the back, with the dress of the figure tucked up; and the third represents the automaton at play.” (A copy of the first drawing is prefixed to this work.)

“By the help of these drawings and the explanations I shall give you, you will be able to form as clear an

idea of the automaton as if you had seen it yourself. The order which I observed the exhibitor constantly adopted, and his explanations are so familiar to me that I think myself capable of showing the machine myself, were it not for the difficulty I should find in setting it in motion. . . . M. de Kempelin resides here (at Presburg) with his family, and occupies the first floor of the house: his little workshop and study are on the second floor. When the automaton is exhibited, the company assemble in the lower apartment, whence they are conducted upstairs. In passing through the workshop, which serves as an ante-chamber to the study, you see nought but joiners', smiths', and clock-makers' tools lying in heaps, in that confusion which is so characteristic of the abode of a mechanical genius. The walls of the study are in part hidden by large presses containing books, antiquities, and a small collection of natural history. The upper part of the presses is glazed, the lower part shuts with folding-doors, the whole of oak, and the floor is of deal. I think it necessary to be thus particular, in order to spare you the necessity of asking one question which you certainly would have asked, if your imagination, after being worn out by a number of useless conjectures, had, like mine, found itself necessitated to have recourse to the idea of a communication with some neighbouring apartment. The first object which meets your eye, as you enter the study, is the automaton, a full-sized human figure in the Turkish costume, sitting behind a chest or cupboard, which is about three and a half feet long, two feet wide, and two and a half feet high, and is easily moved about the room. The figure rests its right arm on the chest, in its left it holds a pipe, and plays with this hand when the pipe is removed. The cupboard

is divided into two unequal parts; that on the left is the smaller, and is filled with machinery, that on the right contains a few wheels, spring barrels, two horizontal quadrants, &c., but more hereafter, and so good night!

Extracts from Letter 3.

“Presburg, September 14th.

“I must turn back in order to add some observations which I ought to have made in my former letter. The drawer before-mentioned contains two sets of chessmen, a chess board for the party who plays with the automaton on a separate table, and also a cushion on which the figure rests his right arm. There is, likewise, a small oblong box, containing six small chess boards which show each the conclusion of a different and difficult game, and which he certainly wins, whether he plays with the white or the red men. I must also observe that the inventor opens not only the front, but also the back doors of the cupboard so that the wheel work becomes so exposed as to afford the most thorough conviction that no living being can possibly be concealed; and, in order to do this the more effectually, the exhibitor generally places a wax light in the cupboard, which enables you to see every corner of it. He then lifts up the automaton’s robe and turns it over his head, so as to display completely the whole internal structure, which consists of levers and wheel work, of which the body of the automaton is so full that there is not room enough to hide a kitten. Do not fall into the error of supposing that the inventor shuts one door as soon as he opens another; no, you see *at one and the same time* the whole open *at once*. In this situation he moves it

from place to place, and submits it to the inspection of the curious; he then shuts all the doors and places it behind a balustrade, which serves to prevent the company from shaking the machine by leaning upon it while the automaton is at play.

“I must not forget to mention the little case which M. de Kempelin places on a small table at some distance from the automaton. There is, however, no visible connexion between them, though the inventor has recourse to the case while the machine is playing the game, opening the case from time to time to examine its contents, which are unknown to the company. It has been pretty generally supposed that this case is generally introduced to distract attention, and is totally independent of the automaton. Nevertheless, the inventor assures me that it is indispensable, and that the automaton could not play without it, and that whenever he shall disclose his secret, the world will be convinced of the truth of his assertion.”

NOTE.

THE letters from which these extracts are made fill several pages with remarks on the great mechanical genius of M. de Kempelin, and with descriptions of his other inventions; but all except what relates to his Chess-player is omitted here. Suffice it to say that this automaton, after visiting the principal cities of Europe during a period of forty years, was brought to New York in or about 1825 or 1826, by M. Maelzel, and was by that gentleman exhibited with great success throughout the United States.

Within twelve or fifteen months after the arrival of this automaton in America, a second chess-player, made by J. and D. Walker, was announced for exhibition in New York. This, as may be supposed, caused no little surprise, especially among the chess-players, and gave rise to many amusing articles in the newspapers of that day in regard to the *Modus Operandi*, and the respective merits of these rival chess-players.

To that of De Kempelin was awarded the superiority of skill in playing its game, and its more natural pronunciation of the French word *Echec*! over that of its rival in the English word *Check*! While on the other side, the latter had the advantage by its more natural and graceful movement of the arm, as well as in the more complete and satisfactory exposure of its

interior to which it was subjected. Both these automatons, however, were destined shortly to come to an *untimely end*. That of De Kempelin, after the death of its proprietor, M. Maelzel, having been deposited in the Museum at Philadelphia, was burned in the fire which destroyed that building; its rival, after being exhibited in several cities of the United States, was purchased by M. Eugene Robertson, the French aëronaut, and by him taken to Mexico and never afterwards heard of by its makers.

A third Automaton Chess-player, constructed on a more simple principle, was made for private exhibitions, and was used for the stage in the representation of the following piece many years since at the Bowery Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Hamblin.

Dramatis Personæ.

GAMBIT	{	<i>An Old Gentleman, extremely fond of Chess.</i>
CAPTAIN CHECK . .	{	<i>Rival Lovers of Caroline.</i>
SQUIRE DASHWOOD.		
PAT	{	<i>Servant to Captain Check ; a humorous half - educated Irishman.</i>
PROPRIETOR OF THE AUTOMATON.		
CAROLINE		<i>Niece to Gambit.</i>
LUCY		<i>Her maid.</i>

Scene in the City of New York.

MODUS OPERANDI;

OR,

THE AUTOMATON CHESS-PLAYER.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Sitting-room in CAPTAIN CHECK'S Lodgings.

(To CAP.—enter PAT.)

Cap. Well Pat; and so you have really got back at last. You have been gone a confounded long while sir.

Pat. Yes; and a confounded long way sir—for I have run from one end of New York to the other.

Cap. Why, how happened that? I told you the house was in the next street to this, and that you were to turn to the *right*.

Pat. Turn to the *right*, did you say? 'Faith, then, I must have turned to the *wrong*; for I went a full mile out of my way. And that wasn't the worst of it; for when I found the *street*, *divil a bit* could I find where the house was.

Cap. But you know I gave you the number of the house.

Pat. Yes; sure enough, you did; and that was

what bothered me, for it was *three* and *twenty* that you told me the number was.

Cap. No, sir ; I told you the number was *thirty-two*.

Pat. Thirty-two, did you say ? Well ; may be, that's what it was *thin* ; for I was sure the *three* began first.

Cap. Well ; I hope you have made no mistake. I suppose you know the house at last ?

Pat. As well as the people do that live in it.

Cap. And you remember the name of the gentleman you have been inquiring about ?

Pat. What ! ould Gambit, you mane ? The uncle of the lady what you are in love with ? Sure enough, I didn't forget that.

Cap. Then, so far, all is right ; and, *now* for business. I have had another interview with the proprietor of this automaton chess-player, and he has accepted my offer, so now it only remains to be seen if old Master Gambit can be induced to let this automaton be brought to his lodgings ; and the sooner we ascertain that fact the better. You have undertaken to personate the proprietor of the automaton ; and are you now prepared to keep your promise ?

Pat. Certainly, I am prepared ; unless you think you can find another gentleman better qualified for the office.

Cap. Why, as far as assurance and impudence go, you cannot easily be surpassed.

Pat. And for talent, Captain, do you know another gentleman to be compared to me ?

Cap. My acquaintance in this city, Pat, is very limited, and, in a case of emergency, I must do the best I can.

Pat. Then you ought to be thankful that you have

found the right man for you. I wasn't born with a hod on my shoulder, I was dacently brought up, and by associating with *gintale* people I learned to overcome the difficulty of my mother tongue, and have acquired a degree of exterior polish suitable for this undertaking.

Cap. As for your qualifications, I think from the teaching you have had that you perfectly understand what you will have to do ; and, but for two objections, I should not wish for a better man.

Pat. And, pray, what may them objections be ?

Cap. The first is your total ignorance of the game ; you are not a chess-player.

Pat. And do you think I am going to let old Gambit know that ? A *sinsible* man, Captain Check, will always find a way to *consail* his ignorance. So, make yourself aisy about that, and let me hear what is the other.

Cap. The other objection is the greater of the two. The truth is, Pat, you have too much assurance ; you are too fond of your fun as you call it, and you are very apt to carry your jokes too far. Mr. Gambit is a simple eccentric old gentleman ; and, having such a subject to deal with, you may commit some act of rudeness or impropriety which will betray you, and if so you will ruin the business at once.

Pat. Never fear me ; I'll be on my guard about that. But, a little modest assurance is indispensable in an undertaking like this, and I shall feel my way with him as I go.

Cap. Well ; you are aware of the importance of what you undertake. Mr. Gambit has this young lady's fortune in his hands, and my object is to obtain a few hundred dollars from him for present use by the sale of this automaton.

Pat. Yes ; and to get your own self into the house ; and to run away with the young lady.

Cap. Exactly so—you see, in case of failure I shall lose both the money and the lady ; and you——

Pat. Yes ; and I may get a good threshing, I suppose, and be kicked out of the house for an impostor.

Cap. And does not the possibility of this alarm you ?

Pat. No ; divil a bit am I alarmed about that ; for I niver see any fear when I don't apprehend any danger.

Cap. But I told you that I have a rival in this lady's love ; a fierce hot-headed country squire. Now, that gentleman will probably be at the house, and may be troublesome by his interference.

Pat. Never mind that ; I must teach him a little politeness, if he doesn't know how to behave himself.

Cap. Then begin at once, and dress for your character. I have hired a few articles for your outfit, which I think will suit you exactly. There now, slip on this, and let me see how you look in it. (*Hands him a loose cloak or gown.*)

Pat. Why, what the divil do you call this ? *Thunder and turf!* Why, it's a mile too big for me.

Cap. No ; try it on—it is intended to go over your other clothes, to give you a more respectable and imposing appearance.

Pat. If *imposing* is what you *mane*, I shall be able to fill it out, I see. (*Putting it on, and assuming an important air.*)

Cap. Why, Pat, that is the very thing for you ; it fits you to admiration. Now for your white neck-cloth. (*Helps to tie it on.*) There now, your wig and your cocked hat.

Pat. Now, give me the glass to see myself in.

Faith, and I look mighty well, I think. (*Surveying himself.*) What females have they in the house, I wonder; for, perhaps, I'll fall in love when I get there, if I happen to take a fancy to any of them.

Cap. Love, sir, you have nothing to do with. You are a *sage grave man*, a professor; Doctor Philidorus, named after the great Philidor, and I hope you will not degrade your high character by making yourself familiar with any female in the house. Your business is only with Mr. Gambit.

Pat (*aside*). He is a little jealous of me, I see, now that I have got inside my new clothes.

Cap. Well, now for your spectacles and your snuff box. (*Gives them; and Pat puts on the spectacles.*)

Pat. And where are my gold-headed cane, and my *diploma*?

Cap. Here they both are, and now I believe you are complete, and I must say that your appearance promises success. But, before you make your *début*, what think you of one more rehearsal?

Pat. Faith, I think that we have had rehearsing enough. Why, you talk as if I didn't know a *Queen* from a *Bishop*.

Cap. But, the speaking part of the business?

Pat. Let me alone for the *spaking part*. The remembering part is apt to bother me sometimes, but then I never get anything by heart, and so there's no danger of forgetting it.

Cap. Well, take your own course; only bear in mind the dignity of your character, and keep clear of the *brogue* as much as possible, and take special care how you behave to Mr. Gambit.

Pat. When you are travelling in the dark let the horse choose his own road, and I warrant he'll not *lade* you into the ditch.

Cap. Well, then, start off immediately and pay your visit to Mr. Gambit. Come along, and I'll call a coach for you.

Pat. To be sure I must go in a coach now, for that is more genteel and gentlemanlike than walking all the way on my own feet. A pretty figure I should cut for a professor, to have a crowd of dirty vagabond boys following me through the streets. Divil a bit of dignity would there be in that! (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.

A Parlour in GAMBIT'S Lodgings.

Enter GAMBIT' a little lame, with one foot in a cloth shoe, and the SQUIRE leading him roughly along by the arm.

Squire. Come along, come along; I'll show you the way to do it.

Gambit. Gently, squire! gently!

Squire. There, take a firm step, and walk the same as I do.

Gam. Well, well, give me a little time.

Squire. What do you want so much time for? The quicker you make your moves the better, you are not playing at chess now, sir.

Gam. No sir; but let me tell you that caution here is equally necessary.

Squire. Exercise is all you want; I'd cure your gout in one week if I had you out with me a fox-hunting. Rolling about in the ship over the salt water mountains cured one leg, and a good jolting in the stage coach over the Alleghany mountains would soon cure the other. Come, now, what say you to

starting for Ohio at once to take a survey of this land I have purchased?

Gam. To tell you the truth, Squire, I am not very desirous to undertake a long journey at present. I wish to enjoy a little repose, and I think I can pass a few months more pleasantly in New York over the chess board with a friend in my own room, than by scampering about the woods after the foxes, or measuring land among the Indians.

Squire. Did we cross the Atlantic, sir, to be cooped up all our days in the city? No sir; my object was to see the country, and to look at the land I have purchased, therefore I say, let us jump into the stage and drive off to the West as fast as the horses can carry us.

Gam. You are too rash, Squire—too precipitate; and I much doubt if ever you make a great chess-player. You should reflect upon the consequences of a move before you put your finger upon the piece; trace the result through all its branches to the very end, and if you see neither checkmate, loss of piece, or unprofitable exchange can occur, then, and not till then, make your move.

Squire (aside). The old fellow is a confounded bore with his chess-playing, but I suppose I must endure him, because I always like to make myself agreeable. I should like to know Mr. Gambit, how it can be a bad move to take a trip into the country?

Gam. Many ways sir; the stage may upset and break our necks; and that would be a *bad move* I think! There is *checkmate* at once for us!

Squire. Pooh, pooh! nonsense! I never think of *my* neck when I go a fox-hunting.

Gam. (aside.) Deuce take the fellow! He talks about nothing but fox-hunting! Besides, sir, you pro-

fess to be desirous to gain the affections of my niece Caroline, and she, you know, is quite averse to this journey.

Squire. That is only an excuse to keep out of my company. The young lady requires the same treatment as you do. A little jolting about will cure love sickness as well as the gout.

Gam. She acts on the defensive, you see; but I think with a little of my help you may *checkmate* her at last.

Squire. But she plays so close a game, that I can seldom get a chance to attack her.

Gam. Ha! ha! ha! There she shows her judgment, you see. Never advances a step unless she can retreat in safety; never exposes her game to her adversary, never lays herself open to an attack, or suffers herself to remain *en prise*.

Squire. That confounded maid of hers plagues me the most, for she is always at her elbow, and if ever I venture to make a move, she pops herself between us and gives me *check* in a moment.

Gam. Ha! ha! There you see the use of learning chess. The one supports the other like two pieces upon the board. She plays by system, you see; exactly according to Philidor. I have often told you, Squire, that life is a kind of chess.

Squire. I know that making love is, for there is *checking* enough there.

Gam. The world sir, is one large chess board, and we, its inhabitants, are merely as the pieces moving upon its surface. There are kings and queens, and bishops for you, the same as in real life, all ranks and degrees, from the private soldier to the prince, and promotion according to merit.

Squire. Ay, it's all very well; but, to my mind,

there is nothing on earth to equal a good fox-hunt.

Gam. Ha! ha! ha! Really, Squire, I am ashamed of you. Why sir, the antiquity of chess is alone sufficient to——

Squire. As for antiquity, I believe that fox-hunting is the more ancient of the two.

Gam. But there is no art, sir, no invention, no science, nothing mental in it. But the greatest men in all ages, philosophers, statesmen, generals, and even kings, and queens, sir, have been chess-players.

Squire. And kings and queens, sir, and even gods and goddesses have been fox-hunters. (*Sings*)

“Hark, the goddess Diana calls out for the chase,
Bright Phœbus awakens the morn.”

Gam. All that sir, I consider as merely allegorical of the game of chess. The goddess Diana ranging the woods with all her nymphs at her tail, signifies nothing more than the queen upon the chess board, chasing and hunting as it were, and driving everything before her.

Squire. Well, there is some resemblance between the two ladies, I must confess.

Gam. A most striking resemblance sir! Ancient history and mythology are filled with these mystical allusions; and, when rightly understood, all the great heroes of antiquity are merely representations of the various pieces upon the chess board.

Squire. The devil they are!

Gam. Yes sir; there is no doubt of it. You are not aware, Squire, of the respect which has in all ages been paid to the merits of this incomparable game. I have studied it all my life, and when I did my best, I never met with the man who could beat me.

Squire. Beat you ! No ; damme you're *invulnerable*.

Gam. Invincible, you mean.

Squire. Ay, invincible. You are like Alexander. You have vanquished all your enemies, and now you come here for new worlds to conquer.

Gam. You may think it vanity in me sir, but, by the immortal Philidor, I wouldn't forfeit my renown as a chess-player, to be thought the greatest general that ever led an army to the field. But, come, we are losing time, so let us make a beginning ; you know you promised to play the whole day with me.

Squire. Anything to make myself agreeable.

(Yawning and preparing to play.)

Gam. I hope Squire, you wont go to sleep as you did yesterday ; for there is no pleasure in beating you if you don't play with your eyes open.

Squire. Well, I must confess I can't help nodding a little sometimes, but when you call *check*, I am awake in a moment.

Gam. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Well, I suppose I must give you a castle ; you should read Philidor, my dear fellow, and learn to play the gambit. I feel now as happy *(they commence play)* as a prince, with the chess board before us, the room to ourselves, and nobody to interrupt us.

Enter PAT.

Pat. I come right in, you see, without any ceremony at all.

Gam. Yes ; I see you do.

Pat. Faith, and that's the best way, I think. That ringing the bell and knocking at the door I don't like ; it's only troubling the servants for nothing, and when a gentleman comes in a carriage, why, you see,

he does not wish to be kept standing at the door as if he was asking for charity.

(GAMBIT and SQUIRE rise and stare at PAT.)

(*Aside.*) Sure enough that's the country Squire the Captain told me about. I must treat him with a little politeness.

Squire (aside). Now, there's a chance, and I'll make the best of it. It's not the first time I've run out of school to get clear of a lesson. (*stealing off.*)

Pat (to the Squire). So you wont play before me, I see; maybe my presence confounds you! When the sun comes into the room, it soon puts all the candles out.

Squire. Sir, do you mean to insult me?

Pat. No sir; not if you behave yourself like a gentleman, and act with propriety and discretion.

Squire. What did you mean sir, by the sun putting the candles out? (*approaching PAT.*)

Pat. Why, you must be something *combustible*, for you are all in a blaze I see; but I'll soon cool you down if I make use of my extinguisher (*holding up his cane*).

Gam. Zounds, gentlemen! (*interposing.*) What do you mean?

Squire. You are an impertinent scoundrel.

Pat. You don't know what I am sir, and I shall be to blame if I tell you, for I disgrace myself by being so familiar. You can't take a joke I see.

Squire. Yes sir, I can take a joke, or resent an insult as well as any man.

Pat. Why, now you talk as you should do. You must *give* and *take*, you know, if you profess to be a chess-player.

Squire. I profess to *take* nothing from *you* sir, but civility and good manners.

Pat (*bowing*). All I have to spare, sir, shall be at your service, for there is nothing you stand more in need of. And as for your chess-playing, if you have a few hundred pounds to dispose of, just drop me a line in the post-office, and any day in the week, except Sunday, you'll find me ready to wait on you.

Squire. I never settle my disputes upon the chess board, but if that is the kind of satisfaction you require, I trust this gentleman is as competent to deal with you in one way, as I consider myself to be in another. (*Exit.*)

Pat. Now he has more sense than I thought he had, for he gets a substitute when he expects a good bating.

Gam. Who are you sir, I should like to know, and what is your business?

Pat. No *business* at all, sir; you take me for a tailor, or shoemaker, or gentleman's servant, perhaps? You don't know me, I see.

Gam. I really have not that honour. Who *are* you, pray? (*bowing*).

Pat (*bowing*). Give me leave sir, to ask you the same question? For if you are not Mr. Gambit himself, why, then, I don't know who you are.

Gam. Gambit, sir, is my name.

Pat. Then I have found you at last. Say no more, but let me embrace you. (*Drops his hat and cane, and throws his arms about Gambit's neck.*)

Gam. Gently, gently! What does all this mean? Pray sir, explain.

Pat. You are really then, Mr. Gambit, the great chess-player.

Gam. I *am* Mr. Gambit, and a chess-player ; and now sir, if you please, who are you ?

Pat. Who am I, did you say ? You have heard, I suppose, of one Philidor ?

Gam. Philidor ? Certainly ; who has not heard of him ? The greatest man that ever the sun shone upon !

Pat (*bowing*). Except one, by your leave ! And you have heard of the Anonymous Modenese, I suppose, that great writer on chess whose name was Dal Rio ?

Gam. And what then, if I have ?

Pat. Why then, I'm not *him*.

Gam. But why don't you say who you are ?

Pat. Why then, you've heard of one Franklin I *blave*, the philosopher, that great lover of chess ?

Gam. Franklin ! Why, he's been dead these fifty years.

Pat. Then, of course, I'm not *him*.

Gam. Confound the fellow's impudence, I don't know what to make of him.

Pat. Well sir, and did you ever hear of Doctor Philidorus, the gentleman there has been so much talk about in the papers ? Descended, *diagonally*, as we chess-players say, by the *mother's side*, from the great Philidor, and his only and eldest child ; the best player in the world, that can bate ten men at once.

Gam. I never heard of him in my life.

Pat. Then, sir, I *am* the man. Doctor Philidorus, professor of chess, and proprietor of that celebrated and wonderful machine, the Automaton Chess-player.

Gam. The Automaton Chess-player, did you say ? Is it possible that you can be in possession of that machine ?

Pat. No sir, I am not in the possession of the machine, but the machine is in my possession ; and I do you the honour (myself I *mane*) of paying you a visit

on my arrival in this country to take a bit of dinner with you, and to show you some letters of recommendation (*introduction, I mane*), which I have somewhere here;—I always carry my character in my pocket, and then it's in my own keeping, you know. There, just read that now, and see if I'm an *impostor*, or not. (*Gives a paper to GAMBIT.*)

Gambit (*reading*). "This is to certify that the bearer hereof, Doctor Philidorus——"

Pat. That's me!

Gam. (*still reading*). "Proprietor of the celebrated Automaton Chess-player, is a worthy and respectable member of our club; and, whereas the said Doctor Philidorus——"

Pat. That's me!

Gam. (*still reading*). "Has, to the inexpressible sorrow and regret of his brother-members, left his native country to exhibit unto all the nations of the earth the wonderful powers of his astonishing machine, we humbly beg and entreat all amateurs of the noble and scientific game of chess to give unto the said Doctor Philidorus——"

Pat. That's me!

Gam. (*still reading*). "All the aid and assistance which, in case of need, he may require, and to treat him with that courtesy and respect to which his modesty and merit so justly entitle him."

Pat. Jist read that again, now; "to treat him with that courtesy and respect to which his modesty and merit so justly entitle him." Do you hear that, now?

Gam. This paper, sir (*returning it*), is a passport to the house of every chess-player.

Pat. To be sure it is. It is what we call a *diploma* you see.

Gam. Doctor Philidorus, give me your hand; I shall feel honoured by your acquaintance.

Pat. *Honoured by my acquaintance!* Yes sir, that you shall by every man of them!

Gam. And, pray, to whom am I indebted for the favour of this visit?

Pat. Why, to me, to be sure; who else should it be?

Gam. Yes, yes, Doctor; I am well aware of my obligation to you. Fully sensible of the honour you confer (*bowing*).

Pat. Don't mention it sir, you'll make me blush if you do.

Gam. But somebody certainly must have told you that I was an amateur of the game, and where I was to be found.

Pat. Oh, yes; my master told me all about that.

Gam. Your master!

Pat. Botheration! What am I talking about now? That is the Automaton, I mean. I call him my master because he can beat me, you see.

Gam. But the Automaton could not tell you anything about me, sir!

Pat. No; by no means, sir: but I am acquainted with all the great players, you know, and the name of Gambit is in every man's mouth; the name of Gambit, like the name of the great Philidor, will never be forgotten so long as there is a man living in the world that can remember it.

Gam. Why, really, Doctor, I was not aware that my name——

Pat. Your name, sir, is as familiar to me as my own; for a gentleman of my acquaintance talks of you from morning till night. Follow old Gambit to New York, says he.

Gam. Old Gambit !

Pat. No, no ; that was not it. Follow *Mr.* Gambit to New York, says he, and let *Mr.* Gambit play a game with your Automaton, for if any man can be found to beat it, *Mr.* Gambit is the man.

Gam. I am afraid, Doctor, you over-rate both my skill and my reputation.

Pat. I am afraid I don't, sir, for the sake of my own.

Gam. Well, be that as it may, I have heard so much of the Automaton Chess-player, and have read so many wonderful accounts concerning it, that by the immortal Philidor, I should like to try a game with him.

Pat. And so you shall sir ; for that is what I called to see you about, just to give you an exhibition in private. For, thinks I, *Mr.* Gambit is a great man and a chess-player, and his recommendation (*patronization I mane*) will be the thing for me. Genius must be supported, you know ; for, without a foundation to go upon, a man is always travelling, as it were, in a bog, and the greater his load, the deeper he sinks in the mire.

Gam. But, my dear Doctor, I am a stranger in this country, and——

Pat. And so am I, too, sir ; and for that *raison* we should *cling* together you know.

Gam. I shall be very happy, sir, to——

Pat. To give me any assistance in your power ;—I know you will, sir, for men of *janius* naturally feel a regard for each other. And now, just to show the respect I have for you, if the Automaton Chess-player is worthy of your acceptance, you have only to say the word and he is yours.

Gam. No, no, Doctor, excuse me, you are too generous.

Pat. Not generous at all, sir ; but I should like you to have it, because I know you'll pay me my price for it.

Gam. I certainly should not take it without.

Pat. Sure I know it, sir ; you're too much of a gentleman for that.

Gam. And pray, Doctor, what is the value of this Automaton ?

Pat. No value at all sir, for the thing is *invaluable* ; but if it's the price that you're talking about, why, then, sir (*pompously*), I ask you five thousand pounds for it.

Gam. An immense sum.

Pat. (*rapping his box*). A mere pinch of snuff, sir, between you and me ; but, then, I wish to *oblige* you, you know.

Gam. Well, Doctor, I hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing it, but buying it, at that price, is entirely out of the question.

Pat. Well sir, you must see it directly, for you wouldn't buy a pig in a poke you know, and you shall be waited upon at home without having to cross the threshold, for you are a little gouty I see, and that is a complaint I never was troubled with. But, remember, the exhibition must be in private.

Gam. Oh, certainly sir, certainly. But my friend, or a lady or two, I hope would not be objectionable ?

Pat. The ladies objectionable ! No, not if you have a house full of them ; only take care they don't bring their sweethearts with them. (*Going, L. H.*)

Gam. I shall await your return Doctor, with impatience.

Pat. Yes sir, and so shall I too ; (*aside*) and so will my master. (*Exit.*)

Gam. This is strange behaviour for a man of science, I think. But those great geniuses always have something singular about them.

Pat (*re-entering*, L). Very singular indeed, for I had forgotten my manners, and was going away without taking my leave of you.

Gam. You are very polite, sir.

Pat. Yes sir, and so is every man of good *braiding*. And now sir, permit me, without any ceremony at all, to bid you farewell for the present, and to *subscribe* myself, with the greatest respect, your most worthy and honourable friend and highly esteemed humble servant, Doctor Philidorus. (*Exit, bowing with mock gravity.*)

SCENE III.

Another apartment in GAMBIT'S house.

Enter CAROLINE and SQUIRE.

Squire. Why, indeed, miss, the truth is as you say; I did promise to devote this day entirely to the service of your uncle. But, as good luck would have it, a curious, nondescript, impertinent sort of fellow, that pretends to be a great chess-player, happened to call in, and so I thought I had a fair chance to slip out, and I hope to-day I may reckon upon a whole holiday, for when your uncle can get any one else to play with he never cares to have my company; and I make it a rule never to stay where I know that I am not wanted.

Caroline. And a very good rule too; but I am afraid you do not always follow it.

Squire. I do always follow it, miss, excepting when

I am in your company, and then I think myself privileged to stay, whether I am wanted or not.

Car. O, heigho!

Squire. Ah! You may well say *O-hi-o*, for that's the place we are going to take you to. My land lies in Ohio, and I hope that before many days we shall have the pleasure of eating our wedding dinner there, and then you may sing *O-hi-o* as long as you please. And now, Miss Caroline, since my good fortune has given me a reprieve from your uncle and the chess board, and thrown you, as it were, into my arms, grant me for the first time in your life the favour of one sweet kiss. (*As he approaches her, Lucy, her servant, enters, R. H., and places herself between them, saying :*)

Lucy. The queen's pawn covers the attack, and gives check, according to Philidor. Ha! ha! ha!

Squire. The devil take Philidor! What do you mean?

Lucy. I mean to give check, to be sure! (*Both girls laugh*).

Squire. This is the way they go on. That girl watches me as a cat watches a mouse.

Lucy. You must know sir, that I am learning to play at chess. Mr. Gambit has been giving me a few lessons, and he says I improve wonderfully in the game.

Squire. Play your game with Mr. Gambit as much as you please, miss. I have no wish to try your skill, I assure you.

Lucy. Nay sir, don't be angry. You must always preserve your temper, if you wish to become a chess-player; as Dr. Franklin observes——

Squire. Damn Dr. Franklin.

Lucy. Oh, for shame; don't talk so! You should read his *Morals of Chess*, and then you would never

express yourself in that manner. Mr. Gambit advised me to read it, and I declare it's as good as a sermon.

Squire. Yes, and as dull as a sermon, too, I have no doubt.

Lucy. Good things are always dull to some folks ; but I'll fetch you the book, and you shall hear what he says, for I see you know nothing about it.

(Exit, R. H.)

Squire. So, miss, it appears you are determined that I shall never be indulged with your company in private before marriage, whatever you may be inclined to allow after it.

Car. We are private enough now sir, if you have anything to say.

Squire. Why, I was going to say, miss, that—that I think I, ah ! ought to be allowed just to—oh ! damn it—it's of no use, I see ! *(Looking fiercely at Lucy, who returns with book).*

Lucy. But it *is* of use, sir ; for it says here in the book, that the game of chess is not merely an idle amusement, for several valuable qualities of the mind are to be acquired by it, and, if you will please to sit down and make yourself agreeable, I will soon convince you of your mistake. And now, sir, shall I begin at the beginning ?

Squire. No ; begin at the end, and then you'll get done the sooner.

Car. No, no ; it's a favourite book with my uncle, and I think if it were only to show our respect for him we ought to hear the whole of it *(smiling at Lucy).*

Squire (aside). How damned respectful they are, just now !

Lucy. The whole of it ? Very well, if you say so. *Hem, hem ! (reads).* "Morals of Chess, by the ingenious

and learned Doctor Franklin, with remarks on that noble scientific game, by various authors. Second edition, price two shillings—”

Squire. What the devil! Are you going to read through the whole book, title and all?

Lucy. Now, pray do hold your tongue and make yourself agreeable (*reads*). “The game of chess is not merely an idle amusement; several valuable qualities of the mind are to be acquired by it. For life is a kind of chess, in which we have points to gain, and adversaries to contend with——”

Squire. Your tongue is the worst adversary that I have to contend with; I wish Dr. Franklin would tell me how to stop that.

Lucy. Now do, pray sir, attend (*reads*). “By playing at chess we may learn, first, Foresight, which looks a little into futurity——”

Squire. To look into futurity! And what do you call that but fortune-telling, I should like to know?

Lucy. Do, pray sir, hold your tongue (*reads*). “Secondly, Circumspection, which surveys the whole chess board, or scene of action, the relation of the pieces, and the dangers to which they are exposed, and points out the different modes of annoying our adversary——”

Squire. You want no teaching in that, for you are quite annoying enough already.

Lucy (still reading). “Thirdly, *Caution*; not to make our moves too hastily; for, if we place ourselves in a bad situation, we must abide the consequences of our rashness——”

Squire. This is very amusing, upon my soul. (*Walks about impatiently, whistling and making a noise with his feet.*)

Lucy (reading). “Fourthly, it teaches us *patience*; for

we must not hurry our adversary, or express any impatience, or *sing* or *whistle*, or *make a noise with our feet* ; for all those things displease, and only show our rudeness and ill-breeding——”

Squire. Damn it—hold your tongue ! (*snatches the book and throws it away*). Let us have something worth listening to, and not such old woman’s twaddle as that. (*Takes a newspaper from his pocket.*) Here is news from Europe this morning ; a great battle has been fought, I am told.

Lucy. Then pray read it to us, for I like to hear about fighting ; because, as Mr. Gambit says, war is a kind of chess.

Squire. What do you say, Miss Caroline ; shall I read it, or not ?

Car. Read, sir, by all means.

Squire. Very well, then, so I will, if you say so. This is it, I suppose (*reads*). “From the theatre of war——”

Lucy. Yes, that is it ; *from the theatre of war*.

Squire. Hem, hem ! (*reads*). “In directing our attention to the situation of the two belligerent powers at the present awful and alarming crisis——”

Lucy. Yes ; the present awful and alarming crisis !

Squire. “And taking into consideration the insolent pretensions on the one side——”

Lucy. Yes ; the *insolent pretensions on the one side*.

Squire. Confound you ! Hold your tongue. Why don’t you mind what Dr. Franklin says, and be silent when any one is reading ! (*continues to read*)——“the insolent pretension on the one side and the determined resistance on the other——”

Lucy. Ay ; *determined resistance on the other*.

Squire (*reading*)——“we anticipate from the present

arduous struggle results of more than ordinary magnitude and importance.

(Here, unperceived by the Squire, the girls steal away from him, while he continues to read on.)

The combatants are now in the field, the game has begun, and the pieces are in motion on the board. The attack has been made with stupid confidence on one side, and met with equal caution on the other." Why this fellow writes like a chess-player.

(The girls continue to retire, he still reading on.)

"In the present instance we behold one party gradually withdrawing from the contest, *cautiously retiring, step by step, till they finally escape from their insolent and deluded enemy, leaving him for his only trophy of victory the solitary possession of the field.*"

(Here Caroline and Lucy run off at R. H. He looks round and perceives they are gone.)

What! They are gone! Vanished! Confound them! Sneaked off without saying a word to me! I don't know what they may think of it, but I call it damned ill manners. However, I suppose it's all according to Philidor. Well, let her run, if she will, for I am almost tired of the chase. I begin to think a woman is the worst game a man can pursue; I don't know what to compare her to, for she is neither bird nor beast, but a sort of she-devil, let loose into the world to plague mankind. She is a winged-serpent—a sort of flying-dragon, so wild there is no taking an aim at her; and if by chance you do bring her down, damn me if she'll pay you for powder and shot. *(Exit.)*

SCENE IV.

A Hall or Exhibition Room ; the Automaton at back, covered with a green cloth. CAPTAIN CHECK and PROPRIETOR come forward.

Cap. I begin to be impatient for the return of this fellow ; I am anxious to learn the result of his visit to my old friend Gambit.

Prop. Yes ; and I am a little anxious about it myself. I have removed a great part of the machinery from the chest to make room for you, and have given you sufficient instruction for your purpose, and I hope I shall not have all my trouble for nothing.

Cap. Trouble for nothing ! Why, I have paid you fifty dollars already, and I think fifty dollars more, in case of my using it only for a few hours, ought to content you.

Prop. A bargain's a bargain, Captain Check, and I told you what would be my price. Why sir, if I had not given up exhibiting this automaton, I would not consent to such an arrangement with you if you paid me ten times the sum.

Cap. Why, my good sir, after what has appeared in books and newspapers, your automaton cannot suffer very much by any use that I shall make of it.

Prop. Books and newspapers be hanged ! The reason why I lay it aside is, *it does not pay*. The chess-players have all seen it, and it is too dull an exhibition for the crowd. As for saying that a man, a dwarf, or a child is concealed in it, why, let them say it ; all the better—*that* only increases curiosity. The beauty of it is, after all, they can never find him.

Cap. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Well, if I have to get into

it, I hope they wont find me—and that's all I care about it. But here comes Master Pat, at last.

Enter PAT, riding on a handbarrow, carried by two rough and ragged-looking fellows.

Why, what does all this mean? Is the man mad?

Pat. No; but I am *transported*, you see.

Cap. Transportation's too good for you; you deserve hanging, for making such an ass of yourself.

Pat. Do you hear that you rascals? (*to the two fellows*). I am an ass, now, only because I go on your four legs. Let me get on my own two feet again, and make a man of myself (*they set him down*). There now, get out with you, and see that you wait in the hall till I call for you.

(Exeunt the two men.)

Cap. Well, now Pat, do for once in your life be serious, if you can, and tell me what success. Have you seen Mr. Gambit?

Pat. Can you ask me that question, when you see me come back in triumph, and have the handbarrow standing before your eyes?

Cap. Then you have seen him, I suppose?

Pat. Seen him; to be sure I have seen him, and have promised to take the automaton to him immediately; so you may prepare yourself to go, for the carriage is waiting there, you see (*pointing to the handbarrow*).

Cap. But does he suspect nothing, think you?

Pat. No, sir; my appearance is proof against suspicion; and as for your own, if you keep out of sight it will never betray you.

Cap. Then, the sooner we go to work at it the better (*crosses to PROPRIETOR*). There, sir (*giving money*), that, I believe, makes it all right between us.

But, remember, you must accompany us to the house, and assist my friend Pat in the management of the automaton.

Prop. Certainly I must; for I would as soon trust a candle with a barrel of gunpowder as my automaton with that Irishman of yours. And, to ensure its safety, I must submit to be your servant's servant, and slip on another coat to fit me for the character.

(Retires, and changes his coat.)

Cap. Now, if by means of this automaton I can obtain an interview with my dear Caroline, and give checkmate to my old friend Gambit, I shall think my money well bestowed. Come, now, Pat, call in your men, and let us set the automaton on the barrow.

Pat (calling off to L.) Hallo! Where are you, you rascals? Come in here, and don't keep me waiting all day for you.

Enter the men hastily. .

1st Man. Here we are—all ready, your honour.

Pat. Now, then, my lads, help us to lift this forty-piano of mine on to the handbarrow.

(The two men, assisted by PAT and the PROPRIETOR, set the automaton on the barrow; the CAPTAIN, in the meantime, takes pencil and paper from his pocket, and writes a note.)

Cap. (folding up the note.) There, Mr. Gambit, just a few lines addressed to your niece. Now, if this business should succeed, the lady will be in my possession and the automaton in yours; and when this note is found in the chest the *modus operandi* will be explained, and you will see that the automaton has played you a game that you little expected.

Pat (to the two men). There, now, that's enough; I have done with you for the present, so get out of the room again, and wait till I call for you.

(*Exeunt the two men.*)

Cap. Now then, open the chest, and let me get in and try my fortune.

(*The PROPRIETOR places a chair by the automaton, and removes the panel at the end of chest, and CAPTAIN CHECK prepares to get in.*)

Pat. This, now, is what I call making love by machinery.

Cap. Machinery!—treachery, lying, cheating—no matter what; anything, they say, is fair in love—

Troy, that a siege of ten long years sustained,
By troops within a wooden horse was gain'd,
So I, to gain my ends, in ambush lurk,
Hid in the bowels of a wooden Turk.

(*Gets in chest.*)

Pat. Faith, and I'd as soon be hid in the whale's belly. But, now, wont you take a bottle of something to drink with you?

Capt Shut me up, sir; call in the men, and start off immediately. (*The PROPRIETOR closes chest.*)

Pat. Now, this puts me in mind of the forty thieves that hid themselves in the oil bottles; only in *this case* there is *but one of them*. Hallo! you lazy dogs, come in here!

The two men enter.

Now, be careful what you are about, and take that grand fortypiano of mine, carry it where I bid you, and set it down when I tell you to stop.

(*The men lift the barrow.*)

1st Man. Then tell us to stop as soon as you can your honour, for it's hard work to carry a *dead weight*, you know.

Pat. Is it a dead weight you call it ! What, then, I suppose you want me to ride on the top and make a *live weight* of it ? But I can't oblige you this time, for I shall walk beside you all the way on my own feet, and be what they call an *outside passenger*.

(Exeunt, the men carrying the barrow, and PAT flourishing his cane pompously by their side.)

End of Act I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Room at GAMBIT'S lodgings. Enter the two men carrying the automaton, PAT walking pompously by their side, the PROPRIETOR guiding the automaton ; GAMBIT, SQUIRE, CAROLINE, and LUCY, looking on in surprise.

Pat. Whoa, whoa ! Gently, my boys, steady, my lads ; there's good fellows. You are at your journey's end now, so *set down your honourable load*, and get wind a bit *(the men set down the barrow)*. This is my servant, your honour *(introducing the PROPRIETOR who throughout the scene attends on the automaton)*. Well, sir *(to the SQUIRE)*, and how do you do by this time ? I don't bear malice, you see.

Squire. Malice, sir! No, nor I either, if you mean that.

Pat. Then give us your *fist* my boy, and let us shake away all animosity! (*shaking him by the hand*). Now, that is better than fighting and quarreling, I think (*to GAMBIT*).

Gam. Certainly, Doctor, certainly.

Pat. Come, now, help us down with this *dead weight*, as you call it (*they all lift the automaton from the barrow*). And, now, my good sir, (*turning to GAMBIT*) wont you pay thim poor devils ten dollars, and place it to my *credit* till I get my drafts exchanged into specie.?

Gam. Why, yes, I suppose so, if you desire it.

Pat. And that is what I do, sir; because, you see, it looks gentile and gentlemanlike to pay them vagabonds that work for us.

Gam. As you please, Doctor. There is a ten dollar bill for you (*giving money*), but I think half the money would have been sufficient.

Pat. Oh, let them *halve* it when they get home, poor fellows. Here, boys, hold it fast in your hand, and then you wont lose it out of your pockets (*gives money*).

1st Man. Long life to your honour. May you never be the poorer for doing a good action.

Pat. Well, get you gone now, and conduct yourselves with *propriety and discretion*, and don't spend your money at the ale-house, but buy something good to comfort your wives and your families.

1st Man. Thank your honour. Long life to your honour. (*Exeunt the two men, bowing.*)

Pat. Poor devils! my heart blades for them! Now, take a sate, sir, and make yourself at home (*hands GAMBIT a chair*). Ladies, I don't like to see you

standing in my presence when I ought to be on my knees before you (*hands chairs*). Will you please to sit down, sir (*to the SQUIRE*), if you don't wish to be standing.

Squire. It seems that I must wait upon myself if I do. (*The SQUIRE gets a chair, and the company seat themselves on R. to L. of stage.*)

Pat (*to PROPRIETOR*). Now, sir, let the ladies have a peep at him. (*To GAMBIT*) ; I keep him well wrapped up, because of the climate, you see.

(*PROPRIETOR removes the green cloth, and discovers the figure of a Turk, with a large black beard, sitting at the chest.*)

Caroline and Lucy (*together*). Oh, mercy ! What a frightful creature !

Pat. If you were to see him *in the dark*, my darlings, you might say so !

Gam. Well, now, I think him quite a fine-looking fellow. What say you, Squire ?

Squire. Why, I think he looks devilish surly, but I see nothing in him to be afraid of.

Pat. No ; I know you don't, but you can't tell what's within side a man by his looks, there's so much *desate* in the world.

Gam. I have been told, Doctor, that there's a little deception about these automatons, but I have never been so fortunate as to see one before.

Pat. De Kemplin was a great man, sir, and scorned deception as much as I do. But people must say something, you know, or they couldn't talk. His automaton was a great piece of work, sir ; a natural curiosity.

Gam. A natural curiosity.

Pat. Yes, sir, as natural as life. But you have an opportunity at this moment of seeing something quite

superior to that. We keep improving in the arts and sciences every day, you know, and in proportion as we learn more we grow wiser.

Car. But some persons say, Doctor, that there's a dwarf inside that pulls the strings.

Pat. How it may be in other *cases*, my darling, I wont pretend to decide; I can only tell you there's no dwarf in this *case*, and you would say so yourself if you could see him.

Squire. What, then, you mean to say that he is full grown?

Pat. No, sir, I mean to say nothing, but to leave your own eyes to judge for themselves. And now, if you keep yourselves at a *respectable* distance, you shall see the machinery that has confounded the two hemispheres, and if you see anything that you shouldn't see, I'll give you leave to blame me for showing it. Now, sir (*to PROPRIETOR*), begin, if you please, and unlock the doors for me. My servant does all the work, you see, while I explain the machinery. (*The PROPRIETOR opens all the front doors and the drawer, then stands behind the chest, moving it to the right and left that the company may see inside.*) There now, look at that! Is there any deception there? Now, you may see the little man that pulls the strings. It is a great leaden weight, my darling, that descends by its own gravity (*to CAROLINE*), and it weighs a quarter of a hundred, or twenty-eight pounds; so we give you good weight, you see, because the real quarter of a hundred is but twenty-five, so there's no *chaiting* about that. There now, my servant is winding it up, you see. He does it with what they call a crank, the same as they use for turning a grindstone, but when I wind up my own gold watch, I do it with what we call a *kay*.

(*The PROPRIETOR winds it up, and takes from the drawer a chess board and two sets of men, and puts them on a small table.*) There now, you see, that is the chess board, and them is the *paces*, and every essential for his convenience, and the drawer is not *half a drawer* as some of them blackguard publications have declared, for when my servant measures it with that gold-headed cane which I keep for the purpose, you see the drawer is as wide as the chest which receives it. (*Gives cane to PROPRIETOR, who measures the drawer.*)

Gam. All very fair, Doctor.

Squire. Yes, there's no dwarf there, I'll be sworn.

Car. No, no ; there's no dwarf there.

Lucy. No, no ; no dwarf there.

Pat. And when he takes up his cloak and holds the candle behind, you see the fire shine through his ribs the same as through the bars of a gridiron. (*PROPRIETOR sets the candle on the chest after having held it behind the figure, and turns the back towards the company, and opens the remaining back doors.*) There now, is there any chaiting in that? Bad luck to them publications, I say ! That, now, is more than the book itself could do, to have all the *laives* open at once. (*The back doors are now closed, and the chest is wheeled slowly round again.*)

Gam. Well, there certainly is no dwarf concealed there.

All. No, no, impossible, impossible.

Pat. Then, we'll lock up the doors for your security, and keep him out now he is out, and then there can be no chaiting, you know. Now sir, wind him up, if you please, and regulate his stomach and bowels a little. (*PROPRIETOR winds up the breast of the figure, then places the table in front, and GAMBIT takes his seat.*)

Now, ladies and gentlemen, the automaton is ready for play ; but it must be understood that, according to the rules established by my illustrious predecessor, the Baron, no man can have the honour of playing on the same board with the automaton.

Gam. As you please, Doctor.

Pat. We must observe *dacency* and decorum to our *supariors*, you know ; besides, when I am invited to dine out, I always like to have a plate to myself, and not have everybody dipping their fingers in the same dish. Now, help yourself, sir, if you please, and set your own pieces, and the automaton shall play *black* or *white*, which the company pleases.

Gam. Then let him take the *black*, Doctor, if you will.

Pat. Now, sir, by your *lave*, I'll *tache* you a little politeness ; when a lady is present, always keep in mind where the preference is due. Condescend, my darling (*to CAROLINE*), to make a choice for yourself, and the company will be obliged to you.

Car. Which you please, sir ; I have no choice.

Pat. Which *I* please, she says, faith ! and that's extramely polite. The young lady's been well brought up, I see ; but we insist, my dear, upon your making a choice for us.

Car. If I *must* choose, sir, let it be as my uncle has said.

Pat. Faith ! And that's politeness again. I wonder if you would say so, my darling, if you were choosing a husband.

Squire (aside). An impertinent scoundrel !

Gam. By your leave, Doctor, let him go on with the game.

Pat. But he is mighty polite, sir, for he never plays

without first saluting his company. (*The automaton moves his head to the right and left, saluting them.*)

Car. Surprising !

Lucy. Astonishing !

Squire. Wonderful !

Gam. Truly wonderful !

Pat (to GAM.) And now, sir, if you have any conceit in yourself,—that is, if you wish to display your talents a little,—just do yourself the honour to try a game with him.

Gam. I shall be very happy, sir—much gratified, I assure you ; and if he should beat me, I'll forgive him with all my heart.

Pat. Then, sir, you will take black, and you may take the *first move*, if you will, for I know you won't take the last.

Gam. May be not ; but I'll do my best with him.
(*Plays.*)

Pat. Faith ! and that's a good move, now ; you're an old hand at it, I see. (*The PROPRIETOR passes from GAMBIT'S board to that of the automaton, and transfers the moves. The automaton, after two or three moves, takes a piece, and pronounces check !*) What do you think of that, my darling ?

Car. Wonderful, sir, indeed.

Lucy. Oh, it's quite astonishing.

Pat. That's the beauty of science, you see.

(*The automaton gives check.*)

Squire. Why, he beats you as easily as you do me.

Pat. No reflection, sir, if you please. Now make a false move, and see if you can *chait* him, or not. (*GAMBIT makes a move, the PROPRIETOR transfers it, and the automaton immediately shakes his head, and raps upon the chest with his hand.*) You see, he tells you

that move wont do, so you'll just have to make another, if you please.

Gam. The more I see of it, the more I admire it. I am lost in wonder and astonishment.

(After a few moves the automaton gives check, and bows his head to the company as a sign that he has won the game.)

Pat. There! I told you he would beat you, you know, so don't be angry with him for that.

Gam. Angry! No sir, I like him the better for it. *(Aside and rising from the table.)* I would rather have beaten him, though!

Squire. Ha! ha! ha! And so you have met your match at last!

Gam. His skill, Doctor, exceeds anything I had any idea of. Philidor himself——

Pat. Was not fit to hold a candle to him!

Gam. I believe it, Doctor, from the specimen he has given me. It certainly is the masterpiece of all machinery.

Pat. There is no machinery on earth, sir, to be compared to it. Not the steam-engine, the railroads, the gaslights, the water-works, nor the *stame*-boat, nor the threshing-machine (*bad luck* to it for taking poor men's bread away), no, nor the boot-jack (the smoke-jack, I mane), nor any of them modern inventions.

Squire. Well, I've seen enough of it, so I'll go. Ladies and gentlemen, you will excuse me for the present. *(Exit R. H.)*

Pat (looking after him). Oh! By all manner of manes, sir.

(GAMBIT and PAT come forward, CAROLINE and LUCY retire towards the automaton, walking round and examining it; the PROPRIETOR goes out.)

Gam. Well, Doctor, suppose I had a mind to purchase this automaton,—though, mind you, I don't say that I have.

Pat. Oh, no ; only suppose.

Gam. That's all ; only suppose. Then, I say, in that case, what is the lowest price you would take for it ?

Pat (*looking round as if afraid that any one should be listening, and whispering into GAMBIT'S ear*). What think you of ten thousand pounds for it ?

Gam. Ten thousand ! Why Doctor, you asked me only five thousand in the morning !

Pat. That was just to show you that I meant to deal honestly with you. I am not like some people, who ask twice as much for a thing as they mean to take for it ; I would sooner take twice as much as I ask.

Gam. Really, Doctor, you are so full of your jokes that I don't know how to understand you. The truth is, I have taken a great fancy to this automaton, and if I had it in my own room, it would be a constant source of amusement to me.

Pat. To be sure it would ; you could wind him up and have a game with him at any time, and you wouldn't have to *bore* your friends and acquaintance to play with you.

Gam. *Bore !* Zounds, sir, what do you mean ?
Bore !

Pat. Faith, and I mean what I say, sir, for we always *bore* our friends when we ask them to do what they are not inclined to.

Gam. That is rather a harsh expression, Doctor, though I must confess there is some truth in it. I have given a few lessons to my niece and her maid, and they are both good girls and very kind to me, but I find they have no great fancy to the game, and

when they play it's merely to oblige me, and as for the Squire——

Pat. The Squire ! Never mention him ! Why, he hasn't brains enough in his head to make a chess-player !

Gam. Well Doctor, let that pass ; never mind him. The truth is, chess has been my chief, and I may say my only amusement for years, and my great trouble is to get over my time, unless I have somebody at hand to play with me. I daresay, Doctor, you have heard the anecdote of the gouty old gentleman who was so fond of angling that he had a large tub of water placed in his room, so that he might fish in it when he was unable to go out. Perhaps that was never actually done, but it illustrates the human character and the force of habit.

Pat. But it *was* done, sir, for I knew the old gentleman my own self, and many is the sixpence I had from him when I was a boy, for filling the tub for him.

Gam. Well ! *Be that as it may*, I merely mention this in reference to my own love of chess, and I wish you now to tell me, seriously, what is the lowest price you will take for this automaton.

Pat. Then sir, to be plain with you, and to come to the point at once, as I wish to oblige you, I will say fifteen hundred dollars, *cash down on the nail*. I won't stand upon trifles with you, because I should like to see him made one of your family, if it was only for the sake of the ladies.

Gam. We should be very proud of the alliance ; and depend upon it he would be well taken care of.

Pat. Then sir, he is yours ! Promise me that, and I'll consent to part with him. But it is a hard trial,

and the thought of it brings tears into my eyes. He has been a good friend to me, he has supported me like a gentleman, travelled over sea and land with me. He has put money into my pocket, and victuals into my mouth, even *these clothes* you see upon my back are of his providing; in short, he has been a father to me (*kneels and presses GAMBIT'S hand*), and I hope you will be the same to him when you become better acquainted.

Gam. Rise Doctor, this weakness is unmanly.

Pat. Then, I'll be myself again. (*Crosses to R. H.*) I feel, just now, like a mother parting with her own child; so if you wish to get a good bargain out of me, remove me from his sight as soon as possible.

Gam. Then let us walk into the next room, and talk the matter over in private (*taking his arm*).

Pat. Well, well, I'll submit; for nothing can be done if we stay here. But, before we go, let us remove it to the back of the room, for fear these ladies might be playing their tricks with it. (*PAT wheels the automaton to the back scene.*) Now, farewell, my dear boy, farewell, I leave you now to your own fate, you are no longer under my protection. (*Aside to CAROLINE.*) Now, my darling, don't be afraid of him. Go close up to him, and try a game with him yourself—he wont hurt you my jewels.

Gam. Come, come, Doctor, let us get through this business at once.

Pat. The sooner the better. Remove me from the sight of him immediately, do not let me look upon his face again; for, if you do, I shall never be able to part with him. (*Exeunt GAMBIT, taking PAT'S arm.*)

Car. What does he mean by his noddling and

winking and making signs to us? I don't know what to think of him.

Lucy. Think of him! Why, he's an impostor, I'll lay my life on it, and it's well if your uncle do not find him so before he has done with him.

Car. I believe there is more mystery in this automaton than he is aware of, though what it is I cannot discover.

Lucy. That has puzzled wiser heads than ours. But, suppose we take the Doctor's advice, there can be no harm in it.

Car. If there is he may blame himself for it. Come, let us bring it forward, and I'll give you an exhibition. *(They run it down the stage.)*

Lucy. Will he play, think you, without his master?

Car. Yes; if his master has taught him, as he says, "*where the preference is due.*" Now, Mr. Turk, play away when I bid you!

Lucy. Stop, stop! you are in too great a hurry; you should first exhibit the machinery, then wind it up, and say, "Ladies and gentlemen, the automaton is now ready to play."

Car. But, the key? O, here it is, in the door. Now, place yourself at a "*respectable distance,*" and I'll show you the machinery that has "*confounded the two hemispheres.*" *(Opens the chest, screams, and falls back into a chair.)*

Enter PAT hastily, R. H.

Pat. What is the matter, my darling?

Lucy. Help, help!

Pat. Don't be alarmed, now. *(Closes the door as GAMBIT enters, R. H.)*

Gam. What have you been about here? How did this happen?

Pat. Don't be asking your questions, when the lady is dying, you see!

Lucy. O, mercy on us, what shall we do?

Pat. Run and get me some water directly.

Gam. Ay, run as quick as you can.

Pat. Run yourself, if you please, and let one lady stay to assist the other.

Gam. I wish you would send some one who could move a little faster than I can, for she might be dead before I could get back again. *(Exit.)*

Pat. My dear creature, now, don't be alarmed; it's only your lady's lover that's hid himself in the box.

Lucy. What lover do you mean, sir?

Pat. Why, her old sweetheart, to be sure; so don't you be frightened, my jewel.

Lucy. Then I was right, for I said you were an impostor.

Pat. Did you say so, my darling?

Lucy. And pray what is to be done?

Pat. Just whisper into the lady's ear, and explain it to her, that's all; and, when we're gone again, open this sliding door here, and the gentleman can spake for himself. *(Shows her the private door.)*

Lucy. O, you impostor! You impudent impostor!

Pat. Hush, hush, hush!

Lucy. Suppose, now, I were to——

Pat. Ah! But you wont, my darling, I know you wont, my jewel *(enter GAMBIT with water)*. There, give me the glass, and let her take a glass of cold water to comfort her.

Gam. Why, Caroline, my dear, what have you been about? *(LUCY whispers to CAROLINE.)*

Pat. Stand back, now, and give her a little air.

Lucy. Get about your business, sir, and don't bring your automatons here, to frighten us all into fits.

Pat. Why, my dear, the young lady was only electrified, that's all.

Gam. Electrified, Doctor?

Pat. Sure enough she was, sir; and a severe shock she experienced, too. The machine was well *charged*, you see, it was as full as it could hold, and I would not have been at all surprised if it had all been exploded together.

Lucy. It was a shock she little expected.

Gam. Ha, ha, ha! These Turks are dangerous fellows, you see. He gave you a checkmate the first move, I suppose? Come, Doctor, there is no danger of her meddling with it again. She will remember automaton chess-players, I warrant her.

Pat. As long as she lives, I'll engage for it. But, I give the young lady credit for her ingenuity, for she has discovered more by accident than the greatest philosophers of the age have with all their study. The dear creatures have so much curiosity, you see, that when there's a secret in the way they can never rest until they get hold of it. (*Exeunt PAT and GAMBIT, R. H.*)

Lucy. Well! Now it's my turn to be exhibitor. Come out, sir, and show yourself (*opens a panel at one end of the chest, and the CAPTAIN comes out*). Oh, you Turk!

Cap. My dear, dear Caroline! Do I once more behold you? After so long a separation, do I again enfold you in my arms? (*approaches her.*)

Car. Is it possible it can be you?

Cap. Forgive my indiscretion, forgive the alarm it caused you, but my desire to see you hurried me on to this rash enterprise.

Car. Pray leave me; my uncle will be here in a few moments, and I would not for the world

have him see you. I am so agitated, so alarmed, that——

Cap. Then, let us fly from the danger as quickly as possible. I have a coach in waiting close by, and——

Car. A coach, sir !

Lucy. O, you mameluke !

Cap. Yes, my dear, and if you will only jump in and take a short ride——

Car. Ride to where, sir ?

Cap. To the first church, or the first minister we can find, my angel (*takes her hand*).

Lucy. So I would, Miss Caroline, and that will make an end of the business at once, and let the Squire go to Ohio by himself, if he will.

Cap. Come, my love, place yourself under my protection ; consent to be ruled by me this time, and I'll be ruled by you all my life after (*taking a girl on each arm*). And don't be alarmed about your uncle, for I am a greater man than he now, for he is only a Bashaw, but I am the king of Turks, the Emperor, the mighty Sultan. (*Exeunt, L. H.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter SQUIRE, R. H.

Squire. Oh, ho ! Mr. Turk, what, you are all alone, are you ? Come, old fellow, let us hear you say "Check !" What ! You are sulky, I suppose, and wont speak to me ! (*approaching the automaton.*) So ! the box is open, is it ? I must take another peep at it, then ! (*looking in*). Here are plenty of flaps and folding

doors, I see. A pocket-handkerchief and a pair of gloves, too! So, then, the cat is out of the bag at last.

Enter GAMBIT and PAT.

Pat. I have given you a receipt for your money, and so there can be no *chaiting* in that.

Gam. Being on the travel, I have not the means of advancing the whole sum, but the balance will be paid on my return to England.

Pat. I don't doubt it, sir; in the least. Your name at the bottom of a piece of paper is as good as the king's picture in gold (*looking into the chest, and closing the panel*). (*Aside.*) So the bird is flown, I see (*closes the chest*). Well, now, sir, for a short time, I believe I'll take my lave of you.

Squire. Pray, Doctor, before you go, permit me to try a game myself with your automaton.

Pat. What, you think you can beat him, I suppose? Well, sir, I'll appeal to your friend here, and if he says you are a man of science, the automaton shall have a *smack* at you.

Gam. Ha, ha, ha! A man of science, indeed! Why, he hardly knows the rudiments of the game.

Pat. Do you hear that, now?

Gam. (*to SQUIRE.*) You must read Philidor, my dear fellow, and qualify yourself for the undertaking, and then, I daresay, the Doctor would have no objection to let you try a game with him.

Pat. None in the least; provided, as you say, that the gentleman is well qualified.

Squire. I only wish to see him make a few moves, and to hear him say Check.

Pat. What, to gratify *idle curiosity*? No! sir, I am sorry to say that I cannot degrade myself so far

as to oblige you. Come (*to GAMBIT*), give us your *fist* before I go. I love a man of science as I love my life, and I would do anything in the world for him, but (*looking at the SQUIRE*) ignorance I despise as the dirt under my feet.

Squire (aside). I'll be revenged on the scoundrel before I have done with him.

Gam. But you are not going, Doctor?

Squire (aside). No, I'll be hanged if he is.

Gam. I hope you'll do me the honour to stay and dine with me.

Pat. Dine with you, did you say? Faith, and I'll do that thing, for devil a bit of breakfast have I tasted all day. At what o'clock, think you, the cloth will be on the table?

Gam. In about an hour, I believe; and, in the meantime, suppose you and I try a game together?

Pat. No, no; excuse me, if you please. I have beaten so many in my time that I feel quite ashamed to contend with you. I have so much science, you see.

Gam. Nay; but indulge me in one game, my dear Doctor.

Pat (aside). What excuse shall I make now? (*Aloud*). By your lave, then, I'll just step out and get a bit of something to eat, for there is no game I like better than playing with the knife and fork, and giving checkmate to an empty stomach. (*Aside, going to R. H.*) Now I have pocketed the money, I'll just borrow the loan of the back door, and make my escape. (*Exit.*)

Gam. (approaching the automaton.) Come, sir, suppose you and I try another game together, and see which is the better man this time! The Doctor is such an *odd fish* I don't know what to make of him.

Here, Squire, you may see learning without pedantry, and talent without conceit, and, whether he wins or loses, he'll never get out of temper, and that is what you can say of but very few chess-players (*winds up the automaton*). There, the Doctor tells me that is all I have to do, so play away as soon as you please.

Squire. Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing, upon my soul, I can't.

Gam. (*addressing the automaton.*) Well, if you wont move, I will. (*Moves a piece.*) There, now go on, sir. Why, what's the matter, I wonder? Damme, sir, why don't you go on? Something *sticks*, I suppose.

Squire. Ha, ha, ha! *Sticks*, indeed! Here, just put your head into the box, and then tell me what you think of it. (*Opens the panel and GAMBIT looks in.*)

Enter LUCY, listening.

Gam. Why! What have we here? A pocket-handkerchief!

Squire. And gloves, too!

Gam. And a letter (*taking it out*).

Squire. What do you say now?

Gam. Why, it looks a little suspicious, I must confess. Ha! What! The letter is directed to my niece Caroline!

Squire. Sure enough, it is! Now I see through the whole of it.

Lucy (*aside*). How unfortunate! Something must be done immediately to prevent their pursuit.

Gam. (*reading the letter.*) "I have undertaken by means of the automaton to put a trick upon your uncle." You have? Ha! (*reads*). "He likes a good joke, and I know he'll laugh heartily when he finds

how completely I've checkmated him."—The villain! the scoundrel! the impostor!—"The old boy thinks himself a great chess-player, and so he is—I'll give the devil his due—but you know, my love, I was always too much for him." Damn his impudence! A boasting, conceited puppy! (*throwing down the letter*). I can beat him, and give him a castle!

Squire. Well! give no alarm; while this rascal remains out, I'll run for a constable, and secure him, and go you directly and see after Caroline, and if the other scoundrel's in the city I'll have him.

Lucy. Now, impudence assist me! (*rushes forward and throws herself at GAMBIT'S feet.*) Oh! sir, forgive me! Will you forgive, if I tell all I know?

Squire. To be sure he will; so be quick and let us have it.

Lucy. Then, sir, I saw a man get out of that automaton and run into the street.

Gam. You did, eh?

Lucy. Yes sir, indeed I did (*sobbing and crying*), and he says he's coming again by and bye.

Gam. Coming again! A rascal!

Lucy. Yes sir, I told him not, but he said he would; and then he gave me a kiss, and spoke so kind and good-natured to me that I at last consented to let him into the house at three o'clock.

Gam. Oh! you treacherous hussy!

Squire. Ay! Where there's any mischief in the way, a woman is sure to be concerned in it.

Gam. Well, well; since you have made a voluntary confession, I forgive you, so leave your crying and let the gentleman come as you promised him.

Lucy (*wiping her eyes*). Yes sir, I will. But, pray sir, don't be uncivil to him; he is such a polite well-behaved gentleman!

Gam. He is very polite indeed, as you say ! I have just received a letter from the gentleman ; as polite a thing as ever I set my eyes on. But I like a good joke, he says, so let him come in, and I'll give him checkmate, then, I warrant him. (*Exeunt GAMBIT and SQUIRE.*)

Enter PAT.

Lucy. So, Mr. Impudence, you are not gone yet?

Pat. Faith, and that's no fault of mine ; I think the back door must be in the front of the house, for the devil a bit can I find it behind.

Lucy. (*pointing R.*) Yonder, sir, is the street door, and the sooner you get on the other side of it the better.

Pat. Why, what is the matter, my darling?

Lucy. The matter is that you are discovered. The automaton was left open, and your master's gloves and a letter have been found in it.

Pat. Then we are ruined beyond redemption.

Lucy. No, I hope not ; for Miss Caroline, with much ado, has been prevailed upon to run off and get married to the Captain, and, fortunately, has not yet been missed from the house, and to prevent pursuit being made after them, I confessed myself to be concerned in the plot, and told them that your master is coming to perform again in the automaton, and they are making preparations to take you both into custody.

Pat. And do you think my master *is* coming back, my jewel?

Lucy. After the ceremony is performed they intend to return and ask the old gentleman's forgiveness.

Pat. Then I'll stand my ground to the last, and when they come back, I'll intersade for them. And, in case a knock-down argument should be necessary,

it's as well to provide myself. (*Breaks the handle out of a broom which he sees in the corner.*)

Lucy. What does the man mean? There will be no fighting, I hope.

Pat. Not if they behave themselves *dacently*, and act with propriety and discretion. But, in case an opportunity offers, it is as well to be ready, you know.

Lucy. You had better leave the house, as quickly as possible, if you have any regard for yourself.

Pat. I'll stay as long as I can, my jewel, if it's only for the sake of your own sweet company. And now, as my appearance begins to be a little suspicious, I believe I'll disguise myself.

Lucy. Disguise yourself, indeed! I should like to know how you can be more disguised than you are already!

Pat. Jist by being my own self again, my darling. Yes, yes; Doctor Philidorus, I have done with you; I renounce my hat and wig, and am now nothing but plain Patrick, at your service. (*Throws off coat, hat, and wig, and makes them into a bundle, and swings it on a stick over his shoulder.*)

Lucy. You look so much at home in that character, that I advise you never to be Doctor again.

Pat. I was the Doctor to please my master, and now I'll be anything to please you, and if you will condescend to take me into *your* service, I'll bind the bargain with you now here on the spot. (*Kisses her.*)

Enter SQUIRE.

Lucy. Oh! mercy, here's the Squire!

Pat. Howld your tongue now, and I'll talk to him.

Squire. How now? Who are you, sir?

Pat. I am a poor man, and want employment, your honour.

Squire. Yes, I see you do ; but we have no need of your services, if kissing the girls is all you are good for.

Pat. Oh ! by no *manes*, your honour ; I take work as it falls in my way, you see, sometimes one job, and sometimes another.

Squire. Well, if you are not confined to one line of business, perhaps you would have no objection to turn thief-catcher, and assist us in taking two swindlers into custody.

Pat. A thaife-catcher would suit *me* exactly, your honour, for it's employment any honest man would be glad of.

Squire. Then, walk into the next room, and offer your services to the gentleman of the house.

Pat. And *have* I been talking to *somebody else*, all this time, instead of going to the head-quarters at once ? I must have been *draiming*, to be sure, to do that ! Nothing makes a man look so much like a fool, I think, as mistaking one person for another. (*Exit.*)

Squire. This fellow may be of use to us.

Lucy (*aside*). Oh ! If I could but contrive some way to get that booby into the box, how delighted I should be ! I'll try at it, I am determined. (*Approaching the SQUIRE wiping her eyes*). Oh, sir, you don't know how unhappy I am !

Squire. Unhappy ! About what ?

Lucy. That this poor young man should be so foolish as to think of coming back again ! For, if Mr. Gambit knew all, I am sure he would be the death of him.

Squire. Why, I thought you confessed the whole to us ?

Lucy. Oh, no, sir ; not half of it. I dare not for the world tell the old gentleman ; but, if you will promise you wont mention it——

Squire. Not a word, not a word; you may rely upon that.

Lucy. Then, sir, that Doctor is an Irish priest in disguise, and, when the gentleman had taken his place in the automaton, Caroline was to come into the room and be married, and I was to be bridesmaid and witness. But if such a thing had been done, I might have been blamed for it; and so my heart failed me, you see.

Squire. And did she consent to all this?

Lucy. She consent, indeed! Why, sir, she is always talking against you, and saying how she should like to put some trick upon you.

Squire. She must take care I don't put a trick upon her before I have done with her.

Lucy. I'll tell you what you might do, sir. Get into the automaton and be married to her yourself.

Squire. I'll do it, by jingo! Not to be married to her, but I'll do it for the fun of the thing, and to expose her tricks to her uncle; and when that impostor gets to the place where he asks me if I'll have her, I'll roar out No; I'll be damned if I do!

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! That will be a good joke, I declare.

Squire. Come, then, open the chest and let me try it before this *chap* of hers comes back, and see if there is room enough for me. (*Crowding himself into the chest.*)

Lucy (aside). I hope there is with all my heart; how is it, sir? Do you think you can manage it?

Squire. Yes, I believe I can do it; but it's confounded hard squeezing. It's as hot here as a baker's oven.

Lucy. There, there now; hush! hush!—hold your tongue, hold your tongue, and sit still, for I hear somebody coming. (*Closes the automaton and retires to back of stage.*)

Enter GAMBIT, PAT, and two rough-looking fellows with sticks.

Pat. Faith, and I have soon got into employment again; an industrious man never wants for work in this country.

Gam. Now my lads, this room is to be the scene of action, the battle field, the board on which we are to play the game; so retire every man of you, and wait for the signal. And when the scoundrel has concealed himself in that box, we must all enter together and take up our positions. Now, *I* shall commence the attack, therefore, remember to place yourself *there* (*twisting round one of the fellows*), and consider yourself a knight, or a squire, ready to second me. And you (*to the second rough fellow*) must place yourself diagonally here—so we'll call you a bishop. And you (*to PAT*) must stand here (*placing him*). You are a stout good looking fellow, so we will call you a castle. Now, you must defend this line, and knock down the Doctor, that is the villain in the wig, to prevent him assisting his master.

Pat. But suppose I should kill the rascal? Perhaps they might hang me for suicide?

Gam. Ha! ha! ha! No, no, my good fellow; it can never be suicide unless it can be proved that you and he were the same person.

Pat. And you know better than that, for you have seen both of us.

Gam. Justifiable homicide or manslaughter is the most that could be made of it.

LUCY runs forward.

Lucy. Manslaughter, did you say? Oh, sir, for heaven's sake don't *kill* the gentleman, let him get out.

Gam. What! is the villain in now?

Lucy (in a low tone). Yes sir, he is now in the box.

Gam. (flourishing his cane.) Stand firm to your posts, my lads, and don't be afraid of him.

Lucy. But the Squire, sir, stay for the Squire.

Gam. I'll stay for nobody, we are all ready for play, and we'll go on with the game. Just wait one moment, my lads. (*Goes to door and returns with a small pan of fire.*) Here, you see I have a hot dish prepared for him.

Pat (aside). My master is not there; that's one comfort.

Lucy. Stop, stop, sir, and wait for the Squire.

Gam. Damn the Squire! I don't care for the Squire. I can smoke an old fox out of his hole without the Squire, though he fancies I am no sportsman. (*Opens one of the front doors, and prepares to set in the pan of fire.*)

Pat. That is what I call a burning shame now.

Gam. This automaton chess-player is a very wonderful machine, and the mode of its operation has puzzled the most learned men of the age. Some believe that it plays by machinery, and others say that some *intelligent* agent is concealed in it; but I think nothing very intelligent would crowd itself into a place like this. (*Puts in the brazier, closes the door, and opens the panel.*) However, if there's animation

of any kind in it, this will bring it out, I warrant you. (*The Squire is heard coughing and shouting in the automaton.*)

Pat (aside). Sure and my master is there, after all. Stand back you vagabones and give him fair play. (*Attacks one of the fellows while GAMBIT and the other beat the SQUIRE as he creeps from the chest.*)

Squire. Murder! murder! Fire and brimstone! What are you about?

Lucy. Oh, gentlemen, gentlemen, what are you about?

Gam. Stop, stop; by Jove, we have mistaken the man!

Pat. Yes, sure enough we have.

Squire (getting on his feet). Rascals, what do you mean? Do you want to murder me? (*Coughing and sneezing violently*).

Gam. Why, Squire, who the devil could have thought of your getting in there?

Squire. You knew I was there, sir, for you called me an old fox, and said you'd smoke me out of my hole.

Gam. No, no, by the immortal Philidor.

Squire. Damn your Philidors! I'll have satisfaction from you, sir, for this, but as for these scoundrels I'll pay them in their coin! (*Snatches GAMBIT's stick and approaches them.*)

1st Fellow. We did not mean to hurt you, it's the man in the wig we want to get hold of.

Pat. The man in the wig, is it? Then be off about your business and look for him, and don't abuse an honest gentleman that wears his own hair. (*PAT and the SQUIRE attack the two fellows and drive them off.*) There, take the Doctor's casts-offs, you dogs, they'll make a suit of Sunday clothes for you. (*Throwing*

the bundle after them.) A little fair fighting I have no objection to; but *two or three to one I don't like!*

Gam. Now, my dear Squire, allow me to give you an explanation.

Squire. Damn your explanation, sir; it was a wilful, premeditated assault.

Pat. The gentleman can't take a joke, you see!

Gam. No, no; it was no joke.

Squire. You may think it a joke, sir, but if I could take satisfaction without disgracing myself by beating an old man, I would thrash you till you were spotted from head to foot, like your own chess board. *(Shaking his stick at GAMBIT.)*

Gam. Zounds! sir, what do you mean?

Enter CAPTAIN CHECK.

Cap. C. (interposing.) I also can play at that game; and you, sir *(to the SQUIRE)*, must give me checkmate before I allow you to try your strength with that gentleman, *(pointing to GAMBIT.)*

Squire. As you please, about that; I always like to make myself agreeable, and perhaps, sir, *you* may hear from me again. But for *you*, sir *(turning to GAMBIT)*, a gouty old chess-player, I consider you too contemptible for my resentment. And now, having escaped murder on one side, and matrimony on the other, our connexion ends as it began. You and your *amiable* niece may now follow your own course. I, whom you dignify by the honourable title of the *Old Fox*, have fortunately escaped your snares, and I shall now pursue my journey to the West, deeming myself happy to escape without leaving my tail behind me.

(Exit.)

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Gam. If I am an old chess-player, and fight sham battles with pieces of ivory, I am not afraid to fight real battles when there is occasion for them.

Cap. (to GAM.) The gentleman knows that, sir, and, not wishing to renew the contest, he has left you in possession of the field.

Enter CAROLINE.

Gam. Then the spoil is at my disposal. Come hither, Caroline. I believe yours was the best choice after all, and, having lost your Squire, you have now but one piece left upon the board, so I believe you had better make a sure game of it, for in matrimony there is no such thing as winning by a stalemate.

Cap. The game is decided already, sir, your fair niece has checkmated me by my own consent.

Car. Yes, uncle, I was prevailed upon to——

Gam. Prevailed upon, indeed! What! I suppose, then, that you mean to say that you are married already?

Pat. To be sure she is; while you were here, murdering one of her lovers, she was in church marrying the other.

Gam. And pray, sir, who are you who know so much about the matter?

Pat. Who am I did you say? You have heard of one Philidorus, I believe? the greatest player in the world, that can *bate tin* men at once.

Gam. So you were the Doctor, then, it seems?

Pat (bowing). The same, at your service, and proprietor of that celebrated and wonderful machine, the Automaton Chess-player.

Gam. You are an impudent scoundrel, and I have a great mind to——

Pat. What! You think I am an impostor, I sup-

pose? Well, now, sir, since you have been so generous as to bestow Miss Caroline upon my master, just by way of rewarding your politeness, the automaton shall try another game with you after dinner, and then you'll see if I am an impostor, or not.

Cap. All, sir, shall be explained to your entire satisfaction, and the whole of the machinery shall be submitted to your inspection whenever you feel disposed to examine it.

Pat. And when you have seen every part of him dissected you will say he's as dacent looking a gentleman as ever you set your eyes on. And now, my dear boy (*turning to the automaton*), once more, farewell; you must be turned over to other hands, for I have done with you. But, ladies and gentlemen (*to the audience*), if the Automaton Chess-player, which, during a long course of years, has never failed to amuse the spectators, and to receive marks of *public* approbation, shall, in playing his game upon a *new board*, be so fortunate as to obtain *yours*, my servant shall wind him up for another exhibition, as often as you will condescend to honour him with your presence.

THE END.