


**KING ARTHUR: OR,
THE BRITISH
WORTHY**

A dramatic opera.

Text by

John Dryden

Music by

Henry Purcell

First performance: May 1691, London.



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Infine ringrazio la mia famiglia, per il tempo rubatole e dedicato a questa attività.

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Quindi viene eseguita una revisione del testo tramite rilettura, e con un sistema automatico di rilevazione sia delle anomalie strutturali, sia della validità dei lemmi.

Vengono integrati se disponibili i numeri musicali, e individuati i brani più significativi secondo la critica.

Viene quindi eseguita una conversione in formato stampabile, che state leggendo.

Grazie ancora.

Dario Zanotti

Libretto n. 40, prima stesura per **www.librettidopera.it**: agosto 2014.

Ultimo aggiornamento: 18/12/2017.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Men

King ARTHUR	OTHER
OSWALD , king of Kent, a Saxon and a heathen	OTHER
CONON , duke of Cornwall, tributary to king Arthur	OTHER
MERLIN , a famous inchanter	OTHER
OSMOND , a Saxon magician and a heathen	OTHER
AURELIUS , friend to Arthur	OTHER
ALBANACT , captain of Arthur's guards	OTHER
GULLAMAR , friend of Oswald	OTHER

Women

EMMELINE , daughter of Conon	OTHER
MATILDA , her attendant	OTHER

Deities, Spirits, etc. etc.

AEOLUS	BASS
HONOUR	SOPRANO
VENUS	SOPRANO
PHILIDEL , an aery spirit	SOPRANO
GRIMBALD , an earthy spirit	BASS
CUPID	SOPRANO
COLD GENIUS	BASS
COMUS	BASS
PAN	BASS
NEREID	SOPRANO

Officers and Soldiers, Singers and Dancers, Airy spirits, Priests, Two syrens,
Shepherds, Nymphs, Peasants, He (bass), She (soprano).

In Kent.

To the marquis of Halifax

My lord,

this poem was the last piece of service which I had the honour to do for my gracious master king Charles the second; and though he lived not to see the performance of it on the stage, yet the Prologue to it, which was the opera of Albion and Albanus, was often practised before him at Whitehall, and encouraged by his royal approbation. It was, indeed, a time which was proper for triumph, when he had overcome all those difficulties which for some years had perplexed his peaceful reign: but when he had just restored his people to their senses, and made the latter end of his government of a piece with the happy beginning of it, he was on the sudden snatched away from the blessings and acclamations of his subjects, who arrived so late to the knowledge of him that they had but just time enough to desire him longer before they were to part with him for ever. Peace be with the ashes of so good a king! Let his human frailties be forgotten, and his clemency and moderation (the inherent virtues of his family) be remembered with a grateful veneration by three kingdoms, through which he spread the blessings of them: and as your lordship held a principal place in his esteem, and perhaps the first in his affection, during his latter troubles, the success which accompanied those prudent counsels cannot but reflect an honour on those few who managed them, and wrought out by their faithfulness and diligence the public safety. I might dilate on the difficulties which attended that undertaking, - the temper of the people, the power, arts and interest of the contrary party; but those are all of them invidious topics; they are too green in our remembrance; and he who touches on them, *incedit per ignes suppositos cineri doloso*. But without reproaching one side to praise another, I may justly recommend to both those wholesome counsels, which, wisely administered and as well executed, were the means of preventing a civil war and of extinguishing a growing fire which was just ready to have broken forth among us. So many wives who have yet their husbands in their arms, so many parents who have not the number of their children lessened, so many villages, towns and cities whose inhabitants are not decreased, their property violated, or their wealth diminished, are yet owing to the sober conduct and happy results of your advice. If a true account may be expected by future ages from the present, your lordship will be delivered over to posterity in a fairer character than I have given, and be read, not in the preface of a play (whose author is not vain enough to promise immortality to others or to hope it for himself), but in many pages of a chronicle filled with praises of your administration. For if writers be just to the memory of king Charles the second, they cannot deny him to have been an exact knower of mankind, and a perfect distinguisher of their talents. It is true his necessities often forced him to vary his counsellors and counsels, and sometimes to employ such persons in the management of his affairs who were rather fit for his present purpose than satisfactory to his judgement; but where it was choice in him, not compulsion, he was master of too much good sense to delight in heavy conversation, and whatever his favourites of state might be, yet those of his affection were men of wit. He was easy with these, and complied only with the former. But in the latter part of his life, which certainly required to be most cautiously managed, his secret thoughts were communicated but to few; and those selected of that sort who were *amici omnium horarum*, able to

advise him in a serious consult where his honour and safety were concerned, and afterwards capable of entertaining him with pleasant discourse as well as profitable. In this maturest part of his age, when he had been long seasoned with difficulties and dangers and was grown to a niceness in his choice, as being satisfied how few could be trusted, and of those who could be trusted how few could serve him, he confined himself to a small number of bosom friends, amongst whom the world is much mistaken if your lordship was not first.

If the rewards which you received for those services were only honours, it rather showed the necessities of the times than any want of kindness in your royal master; and as the splendour of your fortune stood not in need of being supported by the crown, so likewise in being satisfied without other recompense you showed yourself to be above mercenary interest, and strengthened that power which bestowed those titles on you, which, truly speaking, were marks of acknowledgement more than favour.

But as a skilful pilot will not be tempted out to sea in suspected weather, so have you wisely chosen to withdraw yourself from public business when the face of heaven grew troubled and the frequent shifting of the winds fore-showed a storm. There are times and seasons when the best patriots are willing to withdraw their hands from the Commonwealth, as Phocion in his latter days was observed to decline the management of affairs; or as Cicero (to draw the similitude more home) left the pulpit for Tusculum, and the praise of oratory for the sweet enjoyments of a private life, and, in the happiness of those retirements, has more obliged posterity by his moral precepts than he did the republic in quelling the conspiracy of Catiline. What prudent man would not rather follow the example of his retreat, than stay, like Cato, with a stubborn unseasonable virtue to oppose the torrent of the people, and at last be driven from the market-place by a riot of a multitude incapable of counsel and deaf to eloquence? There is, likewise, a portion of our lives which every wise man may justly reserve to his own peculiar use, and that without defrauding his native country. A Roman soldier was allowed to plead the merit of his services for his dismissal at such an age; and there was but one exception to that rule, which was an invasion from the Gauls. How far that may work with your lordship I am not certain, but I hope it is not coming to the trial.

In the mean time, while the nation is secured from foreign attempts by so powerful a fleet, and we enjoy not only the happiness but even the ornaments of peace in the divertisement of the town, I humbly offer you this trifle, which, if it succeed upon the stage, is like to be the chiefest entertainment of our ladies and gentlemen this summer. When I wrote it, seven years ago, I employed some reading about it, to inform myself out of Beda, Bochartus and other authors, concerning the rites and customs of the heathen Saxons, as I also used the little skill I have in poetry to adorn it. But not to offend the present times nor a government which has hitherto protected me, I have been obliged so much to alter the first design, and take away so many beauties from the writing, that it is now no more what it was formerly, than the present ship of the royal sovereign, after so often taking down and altering, is the vessel it was at the first building. There is nothing better than what I intended but the musick, which has since arrived to a greater perfection in England than ever formerly, especially passing through the artful hands of mr. Purcel, who has composed it with so great a genius that he has nothing to fear but an ignorant, ill-judging audience. But the numbers of poetry and vocal musick are sometimes so contrary, that in many places I have been

obliged to cramp my verses, and make them rugged to the reader that they may be harmonious to the hearer, of which I have no reason to repent me, because these sorts of entertainments are principally designed for the ear and eye, and therefore, in reason, my art on this occasion ought to be subservient to his; and besides, I flatter myself with an imagination, that a judicious audience will easily distinguish betwixt the songs wherein I have complied with him, and those in which I have followed the rules of poetry in the sound and cadence of the words. Notwithstanding all these disadvantages, there is somewhat still remaining of the first spirit with which I wrote it; and though I can only speak by guess of what pleased my first and best patroness, the duchess of Monmouth, in the reading, yet I will venture my opinion, by the knowledge I have long had of her grace's excellent judgement and true taste of poetry, that the parts of the airy and earthy spirits, and that fairy kind of writing which depends only upon the force of imagination, where the grounds of her liking the poem and afterwards of her recommending it to the queen. I have likewise had the satisfaction to hear that her majesty has graciously been pleased to peruse the manuscript of this opera, and given it her royal approbation. Poets, who subsist not but on the favour of sovereign princes and of great persons, may have leave to be a little vain, and boast of their patronage who encourage the genius that animates them. And therefore I will again presume to guess, that her majesty was not displeased to find in this poem the praises of her native country, and the heroic actions of so famous a predecessor in the government of Great Britain as King Arthur.

All this, my lord, I must confess, looks with a kind of insinuation that I present you with somewhat not unworthy your protection; but I may easily mistake the favour of her majesty for her judgement: I think I cannot be deceived in thus addressing to your lordship, whom I have had the honour to know, at that distance which becomes me, for so many years. It is true that formerly I have shadowed some part of your virtues under another name; but the character, though short and imperfect, was so true, that it broke through the fable and was discovered by its native light. What I pretend by this dedication is, an honour which I do myself to posterity, by acquainting them that I have been conversant with the first persons of the age in which I lived, and thereby perpetuate my prose when my verses may possibly be forgotten or obscured by the fame of future poets; which ambition, amongst my other faults and imperfections, be pleased to pardon in,

my lord,
your lordship's most obedient servant,
John Dryden

Prologue to the opera spoken by mr. Betterton

Sure there's a dearth of wit in this dull town,
when silly plays so savourily go down;
as, when clipp'd money passes, 'tis a sign
a nation is not over-stock'd with coin.
Happy is he, who in his own defence,
can write just level to your humble sence;
who higher than your pitch can never go;
and doubtless, he must creep, who writes below.
So have I seen in hall of knight or lord
a weak arm throw on a long shovel-board;
he barely lays his piece, bar rubs and knocks,
secur'd by weakness not to reach the box.
A feeble poet will his bus'ness do,
who, straining all he can, comes up to you:
for, if you like your Selves, you like him too.
An ape his own dear image will embrace;
an ugly beau adores a hatchet face:
so, some of you, on pure instinct of nature,
are led, by kind, t' admire your fellow creature.
In fear of which, our house has sent this day,
t' insure our new-built-Vessel, call'd a play;
no sooner nam'd, than one crys out, these stagers
come in good time, to make more work for wagers.
the town divides, if it will take or no;
the courtiers bet, the cits, the merchants too;
a sign they have but little else to do.
Betts at the first were fool-traps; where the wise
like spiders, lay in ambush for the flies;
but now they're grown a common trade for all,
and actions by the news-book rise and fall;
wits, cheats, and fops are free of wager-hall.
One policy as far as Lyons carries;
another, nearer home sets up for Paris.
Our betts, at last, wou'd ev'n to Rome extend,
but that the pope has proved our trusty friend.
Indeed, it were a bargain, worth our money,
cou'd we insure another Ottobuoni.
Among the rest there are a sharpening sett,
that pray for us, and yet against us bett:
sure heav'n it self is at a loss to know
if these wou'd have their pray'rs be heard, or no:
for, in great stakes, we piously suppose,
men pray but very faintly they may lose.
Leave off these wagers; for, in conscience speaking,
the city needs not your new tricks for breaking:
and if you gallants lose, to all appearing
you'll want an equipage for volunteering;
while thus, no spark of honour left within ye,
when you shou'd draw the sword, you draw the Guinea.

ACT THE FIRST

[N. 1 - Overture]

[N. 2 - Air]

[N. 3 - Overture]

Scene the first

Represents a gothic temple, being a place of heathen worship; the three Saxon gods, Woden, Thor, and Freya, placed on pedestals.

Enter Oswald and Osmond.

OSMOND 'Tis time to hasten our mysterious rites;
because your army waits you.

OSWALD *(making three bows before the three images)*
Thor, Freya, Woden, all ye Saxon powers,
hear, and revenge my father Hengist's death.

OSMOND Father of gods and men, great Woden, hear:
mount thy hot courser, drive amidst thy foes;
lift high thy thund'ring arm, let every blow hear:
dash out a misbelieving Briton's brains.

OSWALD Father of gods and men, great Woden,
give conquest to the Saxon race, and me.

OSMOND Thor, Freya, Woden, hear, and spell your Saxons,
with sacred runic rhymes, from death in battle;
edge their bright swords, and blunt the Britons darts.
No more, great prince, for see my trusty friend,
who all the night has wing'd the dusky air.

Grimbald, a fierce earthy spirit, erises.

OSMOND What news, my Grimbald?

GRIMBALD I have play'd my part;
for I have steel'd the fools that are to die;
six fools, so prodigal of life and fool,
that for their country, they devote their lives
a sacrifice to mother Earth, and Woden.

OSMOND 'Tis well; but are we sure of victory?

GRIMBALD Why ask'st thou me?
Inspect their intrails, draw from thence thy guess:
blood we must have, without it we are dumb.

OSMOND Say, where's thy fellow-servant, Philidel?
Why comes not he?

- GRIMBALD** For he's a puleing sprite:
 why didst thou chuse a tender airy form,
 unequal to the mighty work of mischief?
 His make is flitting, soft, and yielding atoms;
 he trembles at the yawning golph of hell,
 nor dares approach the flame, lest he should singe
 his gaudy silken wings.
 He sighs when he should plunge a soul in sulphur,
 as with compassion touch'd of foolish man.
- OSMOND** What a half devil's he?
 His errand was, to draw the low-land damp,
 and noisom vapours from the foggy fens:
 then, breathe the baleful stench, with all his force,
 full on the faces of our christen'd foes.
- GRIMBALD** Accordingly he drain'd those marshy grounds;
 and bagg'd 'em in a blue pestiferous cloud;
 which when he shou'd have blown, the frighted elf
 espy'd the red-cross banners of their host;
 and said he durst not add to his damnation.
- OSMOND** I'll punish him at leisure.
 Call in the victims to propitiate hell.
- GRIMBALD** That's my kind master, I shall breakfast on 'em.
 (exit Grimbold)
- OSWALD** Ambitious fools we are,
 and yet ambition is a godlike fault:
 or rather, 'tis no fault in souls born great,
 who dare extend their glory by their deeds.
 Now Brittany prepare to change thy state,
 and from this day begin thy Saxon date.

*Grimbold goes to the door, and re-enters with six Saxons in white, with
 swords in their hands, priests and singers.*

Sacrifice song.

[N. 4 - Woden, first to thee]

Recitative the first.

AEOLUS Woden, first to thee,
 a milk-white steed, in battle won,
 we have sacrific'd.

CHORUS We have sacrific'd.

Recitative the second.

HONOUR Let our next oblation be
 to Thor, thy thundering son,
 of such another.

CHORUS We have sacrific'd.

Recitative the third.

AEOLUS A third (of Friezeland breed was he)
to Woden's wife, and to Thor's mother:
and now we have aton'd all three.
We have sacrific'd.

CHORUS We have sacrific'd.

[N. 5 - The white horse neigh'd aloud]

Recitative the fourth.

HONOUR The white horse neigh'd aloud.

CHORUS To Woden thanks we render;
to Woden we have vow'd;
to Woden our defender.

[N. 6 - The lot is cast, and Tanfan pleas'd]

Recitative the fifth.

VENUS The lot is cast, and Tanfan pleas'd:
of mortal cares you shall be eas'd.

[N. 7 - Brave soul to be renown'd in story]

CHORUS

Brave souls to be renown'd in story,
honour prizing,
death despising,
fame acquiring,
by expiring,
die and reap the fruit of glory.

[N. 8 - I call ye all to Woden's hall]

Air the second.

HONOUR

I call ye all
to Woden's hall;
your temples round,
with ivy bound,
in goblets crown'd,
and plenteous bowls of burnish'd gold.
Where you shall laugh,
and dance, and quaff
the juice, that makes the Britons bold.

CHORUS Brave souls *etc.*

All retire, and the scene closes upon them.

Scene the second

A landskip.

Enter Aurelius, Albanact, and Conon.

CONON Then this is the deciding day, to fix
Great-Britain's scepter in great Arthur's hand.

AURELIUS Or put it in the bold invader's gripe.
Arthur and Oswald, and their different fates,
are weighing now within the scales of heaven.

CONON In ten set battles have we driven back
these heathen Saxons, and regain'd our earth.
As earth recovers from an ebbing tide
her half-drown'd face, and lifts it o'er the waves,
from Severn's bank, e'en to this barren down
our foremost men have press'd their fainty rear,
and not one Saxon face has been beheld;
but all their backs and shoulders have been stuck
with foul dishonest wounds; now here, indeed,
because they have no farther ground, they stand.

AURELIUS Well have we chose a happy day for fight;
for every man, in course of time, has found
some days are lucky, some unfortunate.

ALBANACT But why this day more lucky than the rest?

CONON Because this day
is sacred to the patron of our isle;
a christian, and a soldier's annual feast.

ALBANACT Oh, now I understand you. This is saint George of Cappadocia's
day. Well, it may be so, but faith I was ignorant; we soldiers
seldom examine the rubrick; and now and then a saint may
happen to slip by us: but if he be a gentleman saint, he will
forgive us.

CONON Oswald undoubtedly will fight it bravely.

AURELIUS And it behoves him well, 'tis his last stake. But what manner of
man is this Oswald? Have ye ever seen him?

(to Albanact)

Ne'er but once; and that was to my cost too; I follow'd him too
close, and, to say truth, somewhat uncivilly, upon a rout: but he
turned upon me, as quick and as round, as a chaff'd boar; and
gave me two licks a-cross the face, to put me in mind of my
christianity.

CONON I know him well; he's free and open-hearted.

AURELIUS His countries character: that speaks a German.

CONON Revengeful, rugged, violently brave;
and once resolv'd, is never to be mov'd.

ALBANACT Yes, he's a valiant dog; pox on him.

CONON This was the character he then maintain'd,
when in my court he sought my daughter's love;
my fair, blind Emmeline.

ALBANACT I cannot blame him for courting the heiress of Cornwall: all
heiresses are beautiful; and as blind as she is, he would have had
no blind bargain of her.

AURELIUS For that defeat in love he rais'd this war.
For royal Arthur reign'd within her heart,
ere Oswald mov'd the suit.

CONON Ay, now Aurelius, you have nam'd a man;
one, whom besides the homage that I owe,
as Cornwall's duke, to his imperial crown,
I wou'd have chosen out from all mankind,
to be my sovereign lord.

AURELIUS His worth divides him from the croud of kings.

CONON Arthur is all that's excellent in Oswald;
and void of all his faults: in battle brave,
but still serene in all the stormy war,
like heaven above the clouds; and after fight,
as merciful and kind to vanquish'd foes,
as a forgiving god. But see, he's here,
and praise is dumb before him.

Enter king Arthur, reading a letter, with attendants.

ARTHUR (reading)
"Go on, auspicious prince, the stars are kind.
Unfold thy banners to the willing wind;
while I, with airy legions, help thy arms;
confronting art with art, and charms with charms."

(to Conon)

So Merlin writes; nor can we doubt th' event,
with heaven and you, our friends. Oh noble Conon,
you taught my tender hands the trade of war:
and now again you helm your hoary head,
and under double weight of age and arms,
assert your country's freedom and my crown.

CONON No more, my son.

ARTHUR Most happy in that name!
Your Emmeline, to Oswald's vows refus'd,
you made my plighted bride:

Continued on next page.

ARTHUR your charming daughter, who like love, born blind,
un-aiming hits, with surest archery,
and innocently kills.

CONON Remember, son,
you are a general; other wars require you,
for see the Saxon gross begins to move.

ARTHUR Their infantry embattel'd, square and close,
march firmly on, to fill the middle space:
cover'd by their advancing cavalry.
By heav'n 'tis beauteous horror!
The noble Oswald has provok'd my envy.

Enter Emmeline, led by Matilda.

ARTHUR Ha! now my beauteous Emmeline appears,
a new, but oh, a softer flame inspires me:
even rage and vengeance slumber at her sight.

CONON Haste your farewell; I'll cheer my troops, and wait ye.
(exit Conon)

EMMELINE O father, father, I am sure you're here;
because I see your voice.

ARTHUR No, thou mistak'st thy hearing for thy sight:
he's gone, my Emmeline;
and I but stay to gaze on those fair eyes,
which cannot view the conquest they have made.
Oh star-like night, dark only to thyself,
but full of glory, as those lamps of heaven
that see not, when they shine.

EMMELINE What is this heav'n, and stars, and night, and day,
to which you thus compare my eyes and me?
I understand you, when you say you love:
for, when my father clasps my hand in his,
that's cold, and I can feel it hard and wrinkled;
but when you grasp it, then I sigh, and pant,
and something presses to my heart.

ARTHUR Oh artless love! where the soul moves the tongue.
And only nature speaks what nature thinks!
Had she but eyes!

EMMELINE Just now you said I had.
I see 'hem, I have two.

ARTHUR But neither see.

EMMELINE I'm sure they hear you then:
what can your eyes do more?

ARTHUR They view your beauties.

EMMELINE Do not I see? you have a face, like mine.

ARTHUR It is not sight, but touching with your hands.

EMMELINE Then 'tis my hand that sees, and that's all one:
for is not seeing, touching with your eyes?

ARTHUR No, for I see at distance, where I touch not.

EMMELINE If you can see so far, and yet not touch,
I fear you see my naked legs and feet
quite through my clothes; pray do not see so well.

ARTHUR Fear not, sweet innocence;
I view the lovely features of your face;
your lips carnation, your dark-shaded eye-brows,
black eyes, and snow-white forehead; all the colours
that make your beauty, and produce my love.

EMMELINE Nay, then, you do not love on equal terms:
I love you dearly, without all these helps:
I cannot see your lip's carnation,
your shaded eye-brows, nor your milk-white eyes.

ARTHUR Alas 'tis vain t' instruct your innocence.
You have no notion of light or colours

Trumpet sounds within.

EMMELINE Why, is not that a trumpet?

ARTHUR Yes.

EMMELINE I know it.
And I can-tell you how the sound on't looks;
it looks as if it had an angry fighting face.

ARTHUR 'Tis now indeed a sharp unpleasant sound,
because it calls me hence, from her I love,
to meet ten thousand foes.

EMMELINE How does so many men e'er come to meet?
This devil trumpet vexes 'em, and then
they feel about for one another's faces;
and so they meet, and kill.

ARTHUR I'll tell ye all, when we have gain'd the field;
one kiss of your fair hand, the pledge of conquest.
And so short a farewell.

(kisses her hand, and exit with Aurelius, Albanact and attendants)

EMMELINE My heart and vows go with him to the fight;
may every foe be that, which they call blind,
and none of all their swords have eyes to find him.
But lead me nearer to the trumpet's face;
for that brave sound upholds my fainting heart;
and while I hear, methinks I fight my part.

(exit led by Matilda)

Scene the third

A camp, drums, trumpets, and military shouts.

[N. 9 - Military symphony]

[N. 10 - Come if you dare, our trumpets sound]

Martial song.

HONOUR

Come if you dare, our trumpets sound;
come if you dare, the foes rebound:
we come, we come, we come, we come,
says the double, double, double beat of
the thund'ring drum.

CHORUS Come if you dare, our trumpets sound
etc.

HONOUR

Now they charge on amain,
now they rally again:
the gods from above the mad labour behold,
and pity mankind that will perish for gold.

CHORUS Now they charge on amain
etc.

HONOUR

The fainting Saxons quit their ground,
their trumpet languish in their sound,
they fly, they fly, they fly, they fly,
"Victoria", the bold Britons cry.

CHORUS The fainting Saxons quit their ground
etc.

HONOUR

Now the victory's won,
to the plunder we run,
we return to our lasses like fortunate traders,
triumphant with spoils of the vainquishe'd invaders.

CHORUS Now the victory's won
etc.

(exeunt drums and trumpets, a march)

End of the first act.

ACT THE SECOND

[N. 11 - Introduction]

[N. 12 - Symphony]

Scene the first

A general engagement between the Britons and Saxons, in which the Britons are conquerors.

Scene the second

*Scene, a rural prospect.
Enter Philidel.*

PHILIDEL Alas, for pity, of this bloody field!
Piteous it needs must be, when I, a spirit,
can have so soft a sense of human woes!
Ah! for so many souls, as but this morn
were cloath'd with flesh, and warm'd with vital blood,
but naked now, or shirted but with air.

Merlin, with spirits, descends to Philidel on a chariot drawn by dragons.

MERLIN What art thou, spirit? of what name or order?
(For I have view'd thee in my magic glass.)
Making thy moan among the midnight wolves,
that bay the silent moon: speak, I conjure thee.
'Tis Merlin bids thee, at whose awful wand,
the pale ghost quivers, and the grim fiend gasps.

PHILIDEL An airy shape, the tend'rest of my kind,
the last seduc'd, and least deform'd of hell;
half white, and shuffl'd in the crowd, I fell,
desirous to repent, and loth to sin;
aukward in mischief, piteous of mankind.
My name is Philidel, my lot in air,
where next beneath the moon and nearest heav'n,
I soar and have a glimpse to be receiv'd,
for which the swarthy daemons envy me.

MERLIN Thy business here?

- PHILIDEL** To shun the Saxon wizard's dire commands.
Osmond, the awfull'st name next thine below.
'Cause I refuse to hurl a noisom fog
on christen'd heads, the hue-and-cry of hell
is rais'd against me for a fugitive sprite.
- MERLIN** Osmond shall know, a greater power protects thee;
but follow then the whispers of thy soul,
that draw thee nearer heav'n.
And as thy place is nearest to the sky,
the rays will reach thee first, and bleach thy soot.
- PHILIDEL** In hope of that, I spread my azure wings,
and wishing still, for yet I dare not pray,
I bask in day-light, and behold with joy
my scum work outward, and my rust wear off.
- MERLIN** Why, that's my hopeful spirit, now mark me, Philidel,
I will employ thee for thy future good:
thou know'st, in spite of valiant Oswald's arms,
or Osmond's powerful spells, the field is ours. ~
- PHILIDEL** Oh master! hasten
thy dread commands; for Grimbald is at hand,
Osmond's fierce fiend; I snuff his earthy scent:
the conquering Britons he misleads to rivers,
or dreadful downfalls of unheeded rocks;
where many fall, that ne'er shall rise again.
- MERLIN** Be that thy care, to stand by falls of brooks,
and trembling bogs, that bear a green-sward show.
Warn off the bold pursuers from the chace:
no more, they come, and we divide the task.
But lest fierce Grimbald's pond'rous bulk oppress
thy tender flitting air, I'll leave my band
of spirits with united strength to aid thee,
and force with force repel.

(exit Merlin on his chariot. Merlin's spirits stay with Philidel)

Scene the third

A wood.

Enter Grimbald in the habit of a shepherd, followed by king Arthur, Conon, Aurelius, Albanact, and Soldiers, who wonder at a distance in the scenes.

GRIMBALD Here, this way, Britons, follow Oswald's flight.
This evening as I whistled out my dog,
to drive my stragging flock, and pitch'd my fold,
I saw him dropping sweat, o'erlabour'd, stiff,
make faintly as he could, to yonder dell.
Tread in my steps: long neighbourhood by day
has made these fields familiar in the night.

ARTHUR I thank thee, shepherd;
expect reward, lead on, we follow thee.

As Arthur is going off, enter Philidel and his followers.

[N. 13 - Hither this way, this way bend]

PHILIDEL

Hither this way, this way bend,
trust not that malicious fiend:
those are false deluding lights,
wasted far and near by sprites,
trust'em not, for they'll deceive ye;
and in bogs and marshes leave you.

PHILIDEL'S SPIRITS

Hither this way, this way bend.

GRIMBALD'S SPIRITS

This way, this way bend.

PHILIDEL

If you step, no danger thinking,
down you fall, a furlong sinking:
'tis a fiend who has annoy'd ye;
name but heav'n, and he'll avoid ye.

PHILIDEL'S SPIRITS

Hither this way, this way bend.

GRIMBALD'S SPIRITS

This way, this way bend.

PHILIDEL'S SPIRITS

Trust not that malicious fiend.

GRIMBALD'S SPIRITS

Trust me, I am no malicious fiend.

PHILIDEL'S SPIRITS

Hither this way
etc.

CONON Some wicked phantom, foe to human kind,
misguides our steps.

ALBANACT I'll follow him no farther.

GRIMBALD By hell she sings them back, in my despite.
I had a voice in heav'n, ere sulph'rous steams
had damp'd it to a hoarseness: try it now.

[N. 14 - Let not a moon-born elf mislead ye]

I

Let not a moon-born elf mislead ye
from your prey, and from your glory.
Too far, alas, he has betray'd ye:
follow the flames, that wave before ye:
sometimes sev'n, and sometimes one;
hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry on.

II

See, see, the footsteps plain appearing,
that way Oswald chose for flying:
firm is the turf, and fit for bearing,
where yonder pearly dews are lying,
far be cannot bence be gone;
hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry on.

AURELIUS 'Tis true, he says; the footsteps yet are fresh
upon the sod, no falling dew-drops have
disturb'd the print.

(All are going to follow Grimbald.)

[N. 15 - Hither this way]

PHILIDEL Hither this way.

PHILIDEL'S SPIRITS Hither this way, this way bend.

GRIMBALD'S SPIRITS This way, this way bend.

PHILIDEL'S SPIRITS Trust not that malicious fiend.

GRIMBALD'S SPIRITS Trust me, I am no malicious fiend.

PHILIDEL'S SPIRITS Hither this way

etc.

(They all incline to Philidel.)

GRIMBALD Curse on her voice, I must my prey forego;
thou, Philidel, shalt answer this below.

Grimbald sinks with a flash.

ARTHUR At last the cheat is plain;
the cloven-footed fiend is vanish'd from us;
good angels be our guides, and bring us back.

[N. 16 - Come follow, follow, follow me]

PHILIDEL Come follow, follow, follow me.

CHORUS Come follow
etc.
And me. And me. And me.

2 VOICES And green-sward all your way shall be.

CHORUS Come follow
etc.
No goblin or elf shall dare to offend ye.
No, no, no
etc.
No goblin or elf shall dare to offend ye.

3 VOICES We brethren of air,
you heroes will bear
to the kind and the fair that attend ye.

CHORUS We brethren of air
etc.

Philidel, and the spirits go off singing, with king Arthur, and the rest in the middle of them.

Scene the fourth

*Scene, a camp and Emmeline's pavilion, with a bank.
Enter Emmeline led by Matilda.*

EMMELINE No news of my dear love, or of my father?

MATILDA None, madam, since the gaining of the battle:
great Arthur is a royal conqueror now;
and well deserves your love.

EMMELINE But now I fear
he'll be too great to love poor silly me.
If he be dead, or never come again,
I mean to die: but there's a greater doubt;
since I ne'er saw him here,
how shall I meet him in another world?

MATILDA Indeed I know not.

EMMELINE I should find him,
for surely I have seen him in my sleep;
and then methought he put his mouth to mine,
and eat a thousand kisses on my lips,
sure by his kissing I could find him out,
among a thousand angels in the sky.

- MATILDA** But what a kind of man do you suppose him?
- EMMELINE** He must be made of the most precious things,
and I believe his mouth, and eyes, and cheeks,
and nose, and all his face, are made of gold.
- MATILDA** Heav'n bless us, madam, what a face you make him!
If it be yellow he must have the jaundice,
and that's a bad disease.
- EMMELINE** Why then do lovers give a thing so bad
as gold, to women, whom so well they love?
- MATILDA** Because that bad thing, gold, buys all good things.
- EMMELINE** Yet I must know him better: of all colours,
tell me which is the purest, and the softest.
- MATILDA** They say 'tis black.
- EMMELINE** Why then, since gold is hard, and yet is precious,
his face must all be made of soft black gold.
- MATILDA** But, madam... ~
- EMMELINE** No more; I have learn'd enough for once.
- MATILDA** Here are a crew of Kentish lads and lasses,
wou'd entertain you, till your lord's return,
with songs and dances, to divert your cares.
- EMMELINE** O bring 'em in.
For tho' I cannot see the songs, I love 'em;
and love, they tell me, is a dance of hearts.

Enter shepherds and shepherdesses.

[N. 17 - How blest are shepherds, how happy their lasses]

1ST SHEPHERD

I

How blest are shepherds, how happy their lasses,
while drums and trumpets are sounding alarms!
Over our lowly sheds all the storm passes;
and when we die, 'tis in each others arms.
All the day on our herds, and flocks employing:
all the night on our flutes, and in enjoying.

CHORUS All the day
etc.

1ST SHEPHERD

II

Bright nymphs of Britain, with graces attended,
 let not your days without pleasure expire;
 honour's but empty, and when youth is ended,
 all men will praise you, but none will desire.
 Let not youth fly away without contenting;
 age will come time enough for your repenting.

CHORUS

Let not youth
etc.

Here the men offer their flutes to the women, which they refuse.

[N. 18 - Shepherds, shepherds, leave decoying]

2 SHEPHERDESSES

III

Shepherds, shepherds, leave decoying,
 pipes are sweet a summer's day;
 but a little after toying,
 women have the shot to pay.
 Here are marriage vows for signing,
 set their marks that cannot write:
 after that, without repining,
 play, and welcome, day and night.

Here the women give the men contracts, which they accept.

[N. 19 - Horpipe]

[N. 20 - Come, shepherds, lead up a lively measure]

CHORUS

Come, shepherds, lead up a lively measure;
 the cares of wedlock are cares of pleasure;
 but whether marriage bring joy or sorrow,
 make sure of this day, and hang to-morrow

They dance after the song; and exeunt shepherds and shepherdesses.

Enter, on the other side of the stage, Oswald and Guillamar.

OSWALD The night has wilder'd us; and we are fall'n
 among their formost tents.

GUILLAMAR Ha! what are these!
 They seem of more than vulgar quality.

EMMELINE What sounds are those? They cannot far be distant;
 where are we now, Matilda?

MATILDA Just before your tent.
 Fear not, they must be friends, and they approach.

EMMELINE My Arthur, speak, my love, are you return'd
to bless your Emmelice?

OSWALD I know that face:
(to Guillamar) 'tis the ungrateful fair, who, scorning mine,
accepts my rival's love: heaven, thou'rt bounteous,
thou ow'st me nothing now.

MATILDA Fear grows upon me:
speak what you are; speak, or I call for help.

OSWALD We are your guards.

MATILDA Ah me! we are betray'd; 'tis Oswald's voice.

EMMELINE Let them not see our voices, and then they cannot find us.

OSWALD Passions in men oppress'd are doubly strong,
I take her from king Arthur; there's revenge;
if she can love, she buoys my sinking fortunes:
good reasons both: I'll on. ~ Fear nothing ladies,
you shall be safe.

Oswald and Guillamar seize Emmeline and Matilda.

EMMELINE AND MATILDA Help, help! a rape, a rape!

OSWALD By heav'n ye injure me; tho' force is us'd,
your honour shall be sacred.

EMMELINE Help, help, oh, Britons, help.

OSWALD Your Britons cannot help you;
this arm, thro' all their troops, shall force my way:
yet neither quit my honour nor my prey.

(exeunt, the women still crying)

Scene the fifth

*An alarm within; some soldiers running over the stage: Follow, follow,
follow.*

Enter Albanact, Captain of the Guards, with soldiers.

ALBANACT Which way went th' alarm?

1ST SOLDIER Here, towards the castle.

ALBANACT Plague o' this victory, and stop your shouting;
the princess in the clutches of your foes
blasts all our laurels ~ a hundred victories
will not half pay the loss of Emmeline:
we are outwitted by the Saxons;
but 'tis no wonder, the whole camp's debauch'd,
all drunk or whoring: this way, follow, follow.

The alarm renew; clashing of swords within for a while.

Re-enter Albanact, Officer, Soldiers.

OFFICER How sits the conquest on great Arthur's brow?

ALBANACT As when the lover with the king is mixt,
he puts the gain of Britain in a scale,
which weighing with the loss of Emmeline,
he thinks he's scarce a saver.

Trumpet within.

OFFICER Hark! a trumpet!
It sounds a parley.

ALBANACT 'Tis from Oswald then,
an echo to king Arthur's friendly summons,
sent since he heard the rape of Emmeline,
to ask an interview.

Trumpet answering the other side.

OFFICER But hark! already
our trumpet makes reply; and see both present.

(exit)

Scene the sixth

Scene, a camp at a distance.

Enter Arthur on one side attended, Oswald on the other with attendants, and Guillamar. They meet and salute.

ARTHUR Brave Oswald! We have met on friendlier terms,
companions of a war, with common interest
against the bordering Picts: but times are chang'd.

OSWALD And I am sorry that those times are chang'd:
for else we now might meet on terms as friendly.

ARTHUR If so we meet not now, the fault's your own;
for you have wrong'd me much.

OSWALD Oh! you wou'd tell me,
I call'd more Saxons in, t'enlarge my bounds:
if those be wrongs, the war has well redress'd ye.

ARTHUR Mistake me not, I count not war a wrong:
war is the trade of kings that fight for empire:
and better be a lion than a sheep.

OSWALD In what then have I wrong'd ye?

ARTHUR In my love.

OSWALD Even love's an empire too: the noble soul,
like kings, is covetous of single sway.

- ARTHUR I blame ye not for loving Emmeline:
but since the soul is free, and love is choice,
you should have made a conquest of her mind,
and not have forc'd her person by a rape.
- OSWALD Whether by force, or stratagem, we gain,
still gaining is our end, in war or love.
Her mind's the jewel in her body lock'd;
if I would gain the gem, and want the key,
it follows I must seize the cabinet:
but to secure your fear, her honour is untouch'd.
- ARTHUR Was honour ever safe in brutal hands?
So safe are lambs within the lion's paw;
ungripp'd and play'd with till fierce hunger calls,
then nature shews itself; the close-hid nails
are stretch'd, and open, to the panting prey.
But if, indeed, you are so cold a lover. ~
- OSWALD Not cold, but honourable.
- ARTHUR Then restore her:
that done, I shall believe you honourable.
- OSWALD Think'st thou I will forgo a victor's right?
- ARTHUR Say rather, of an impious ravisher.
That castle, were it wall'd with adamant,
can hide thy head but till to-morrow's dawn.
- OSWALD And ere to-morrow I may be a god,
if Emmeline be kind: but kind or cruel,
I tell thee, Arthur, but to see this day,
that heavenly face, tho' not to have her mine,
I would give up a hundred years of life,
and bid fate cut to-morrow.
- ARTHUR It soon will come, and thou repent too late,
which to prevent, I'll bribe thee to be honest.
Thy noble head, accusom'd to a crown,
shall wear it still, nor shall thy hand forget
the scepter's use: from Medway's pleasing stream,
to Severn's roar, be thine;
in short, restore my love, and share my kingdom.
- OSWALD Not, tho' you spread my sway from Thames to Tiber:
such gifts might bribe a king, but not a lover.
- ARTHUR Then pr'ythee give me back my kingly word
pass'd for thy safe return; and let this hour,
in single combat, hand in hand, decide
the fate of empire and of Emmeline.

OSWALD Not that I fear do I decline this combat,
and not decline it neither, but defer:
when Emmeline has been my prize as long
as she was thine, I dare thee to the duel.

ARTHUR I nam'd your utmost term of life; tomorrow.

OSWALD You are not fate.

ARTHUR But fate is in this arm.
You might have made a merit of your theft.

OSWALD Ha! theft! your guards can tell I stole her not.

ARTHUR Had I been present. ~

OSWALD Had you been present, she had been mine more nobly.

ARTHUR There lies your way.

OSWALD My way lies where I please.
Expect (for Osmond's magic cannot fail)
a long to-morrow, ere your arms prevail:
or if I fall make room ye blest above,
for one who was undone, and dy'd for love.

(exeunt Oswald and his party)

ARTHUR There may be one black minute e'er tomorrow:
for who can tell, what power, and lust, and charms,
may do this night? To arms, with speed, to arms.

(exeunt)

[N. 21 - Second act tune: Air]

End of the second act.

ACT THE THIRD

Scene the first

Scene, rocks and water.

Enter Arthur, Conon, Aurelius, etc.

CONON Furl up our colours, and unbrace our drums;
dislodge betimes, and quit this fatal coast,

ARTHUR Have we forgot to conquer?

AURELIUS Cast off hope:
th' imbattl'd legions of fire, air, and earth,
are banded for our foes.
For going to discover, with the dawn,
yon southern hill, which promis'd to the sight
a rise more easy to attack the fort,
scarce had we stept on the forbidden ground,
when the woods shook, the trees stood bristling up;
a living trembling nodded thro' the leaves.

ARTHUR Poplars, and aspen-boughs, a panic fright!

CONON We thought so too, and doubled still our pace,
but strait a rumbling sound, like bellowing winds,
rose and grew loud; confus'd with howls of wolves,
and grunts of bears, and dreadful hiss of snakes;
shrieks more than human; globes of hail pour'd down
an armed winter, and inverted day.

ARTHUR Dreadful indeed!

AURELIUS Count then our labours lost:
for other way lies none, to mount the cliff,
unless we borrow wings, and sail thro' air.

ARTHUR Now I perceive a danger worthy me.
'Tis Osmond's work, a band of hell-hir'd slaves:
be mine the hazard, mine shall be the fame.

Arthur is going out, but is met by Merlin, who takes him by the hand and brings him back.

Enter Merlin.

MERLIN Hold, sir, and wait heav'n's time, th' attempt's too dangerous:
there's not a tree in that enchanted grove,
but number'd out, and giv'n by tale to fiends:
and under every leaf a spirit couch'd.
But by what method to dissolve these charms,
is yet unknown to me.

- ARTHUR Hadst thou been here, (for what can thwart thy skill?)
nor Emmeline had been the boast of Oswald;
nor I, forewarn'd, been wanting to her guard.
- CONON Her darken'd eyes had seen the light of Heav'n;
that was thy promise too, and this the time.
- MERLIN Nor has my aid been absent, tho' unseen,
with friendly guides in your benighted maze:
nor Emmeline shall longer want the sun.
- ARTHUR Is there an end of woes?
- MERLIN There is, and sudden.
I have employ'd a subtle airy sprite
t' explore the passage, and prepare thy way.
Myself, mean time, will view the magic wood,
to learn whereon depends its force.
- CONON But Emmeline... ~
- MERLIN Fear not: this vial shall restore her sight.
- ARTHUR Oh might I hope (and what's impossible
to Merlin's art?) to be myself the bearer,
that with the light of Heav'n she may discern
her lover first.
- MERLIN 'Tis wond'rous hazardous;
yet I foresee th' event, 'tis fortunate.
I'll bear ye safe, and bring ye back unharm'd:
then lose not precious time, but follow me.

(exeunt omnes, Merlin leading Arthur)

Scene the second

Scene, a deep wood.

Enter Philidel.

- PHILIDEL I left all safe behind;
for in the hindmost quarter of the wood,
my former lord, grim Osmond, walks the round:
calls o'er the names, and schools the tardy sprites.
His absence gives me more security.
At every walk I pass'd, I drew a spell:
so that if any fiend, abhorring heav'n,
there sets his foot, it roots him to the ground.
Now cou'd I but discover Emmeline,
my task was fairly done.

(walkin about and prying betwixt the trees)

Grimbald rushes out: he seizes Philidel, and binds him in a chain.

- GRIMBALD O rebel, have I caught thee!
- PHILIDEL Ah me! what hard mishap!
- GRIMBALD What just revenge!
Thou miscreant elf, thou renegado scout,
so clean, so furbish'd, so renew'd in white.
The livery of our foes; I see thee thro':
what mak'st thou here? Thou trim apostate, speak.
Thou shak'st for fear, I feel thy false heart pant.
- PHILIDEL Ah mighty Grimbald,
who would not fear, when seiz'd in thy strong gripe!
But hear me, oh renown'd, oh worthy fiend,
the favourite of our chief.
- GRIMBALD Away with fulsome flattery,
the fool of fools; thou know'st where last we met;
when, but for thee, the christians had been swallow'd
in quaking bogs, and living sent to hell.
- PHILIDEL Ay, then I was seduc'd by Merlin's art,
and half persuaded by his soothing tales,
to hope for heav'n; as if eternal doom
cou'd be revers'd, and undecreed for me;
but I am now set right.
- GRIMBALD Oh still thou think'st to fly a fool to mark.
- PHILIDEL I fled from Merlin, free as air that bore me,
t'unfold to Osmond all his deep designs.
- GRIMBALD I believe nothing: oh, thou fond impostor,
when wert thou last in hell? Is not thy name
forgot, and blotted from th' infernal roll?
But since thou say'st thy errand was to Osmond,
to Osmond shalt thou go: march, know thy driver.
- PHILIDEL *(kneeling)*
Oh spare me, Grimbald, and I'll be thy slave:
tempt hermits for thee in their holy cells,
and virgins in their dreams.
- GRIMBALD Canst thou, a devil, hope to cheat a devil?
A spy! why that's a name abhorr'd in hell.
Haste, forward, forward, or I'll goad thee on
with iron spurs.
- PHILIDEL But use me kindly then:
pull not so hard, to hurt my airy limbs;
I'll follow thee unforc'd: look, there's thy way.
- GRIMBALD Ay, there's thy way indeed; but for more surety
I'll keep an eye behind: Not one word more,
but follow decently.

Grimbald goes out, dragging Philidel.

PHILIDEL (aside)
So catch him, spell.

GRIMBALD (within)
O help me, help me, Philidel.

PHILIDEL Why, what's the matter?

GRIMBALD Oh, I am ensnar'd;
heav'n's birdlime wraps me round, and glues my wings.
Loose me, and I will free thee:
do, and I'll be thy slave.

PHILIDEL What, to a spy, a name abhorr'd in hell?

GRIMBALD Do not insult. Oh! oh! I grow to ground;
the fiery net draws closer on my limbs. Oh! oh! oh!

PHILIDEL Thou shalt not have the ease to curse in torments:
be dumb for one half hour: so long my charm
can keep thee silent, and there lie
till Osmond breaks thy chain.

(unbinds his own fetters)

Enter to him Merlin, with a vial in his hand; and Arthur.

MERLIN Well hast thou wrought thy safety with thy wit,
my Philidel; go meritorious on:
me other work requires, to view the wood,
and learn to make the dire enchantments void;
mean time attend king Arthur in my room;
shew him his love, and with these sovereign drops
restore her sight.

(exit Merlin, giving a vial to Philidel)

[N. 22 - We must work, wee must haste]

Recitative.

PHILIDEL We must work, we must haste;
noontide hour is almost past:
sprites that glimmer in the sun,
into shades already run.
Osmond will be here, anon.

Song.

To virtue with rapture I bear,
the balsam to heal, the cordial to cheer.
When vice is oppressing,
pursuing, distressing,
just heav'n with virtue takes part;
for sorrow, and sadness,
brings comfort and gladness,
to close ev'ry wound of the heart.

Enter Emmeline and Matilda at the far end of the wood.

ARTHUR O yonder, yonder she's already found:
my soul directs my sight, and flies before it.
See where she sits beneath the poplar shade;
now, gentle spirit, use thy utmost art,
unseal her eyes, and this way lead her steps,
while I conceal myself, and feast my eyes
by viewing hers, new opening to the day.

Arthur withdraws behind the scene. Emmeline and Matilda come forward to the front. Philidel approaches Emmeline, sprinkling some of the water over her eyes, out of the vial.

[N. 23 - Thus, thus I infuse]

Song.

PHILIDEL

Thus, thus I infuse
these sovereign dews.
Fly back, ye films, that cloud her sight:
and you, ye crystal humours bright,
your noxious vapours purg'd away,
recover and admit the day.
New cast your eyes abroad, and see All but me.

EMMELINE Ha! what was that? Who spoke?

MATILDA I heard the voice; 'tis one of Osmond's fiends.

EMMELINE Some blessed angel sure; I feel my eyes
unseal'd, they walk abroad, and a new world
comes rushing on, and stands all gay before me.

MATILDA Oh heav'ns! oh joy of joys! she has her sight.

EMMELINE I am new-born; I shall run mad for pleasure.

(staring on Matilda)

Are women such as thou? Such glorious creatures?

ARTHUR *(aside)*

Oh how I envy her, to be first seen!

EMMELINE Stand farther; let me take my fill of sight.

(looking up)

What's that above that weakens my new eyes,
makes me not see, by seeing?

MATILDA 'Tis the sun.

EMMELINE The sun! 'tis sure a god, if that be heav'n:
 oh! if thou art a creature, best and fairest,
 how well art thou, from mortals so remote,
 to shine and not to burn, by near approach!
 How hast thou lighten'd even my very soul,
 and let in knowledge by another sense!
 I gaze about, new-born to day and thee;
 a stranger yet, an infant to the world!
 Art thou not pleas'd, Matilda? Why, like me,
 dost thou not look and wonder?

MATILDA For these sights
 are to my eyes familiar.

EMMELINE That's my joy,
 not to have seen before: for nature now
 comes all at once, confounding my delight.
 But ah! what thing am I? Fain would I know;
 or am I blind, or do I see but half?
 With all my care, and looking round about,
 I cannot view my face.

MATILDA None see themselves
 but by reflection; in this glass you may.
 (gives her a glass)

EMMELINE (taking the glass, and looking)
 What's this?
 It holds a face within it: o sweet face!
 It draws the mouth, and smiles, and looks upon me;
 and talks, but yet I cannot hear it speak;
 the pretty thing is dumb.

MATILDA The pretty thing
 you see within the glass, is you.

EMMELINE What, am I two? Is this another me?
 Indeed it wears my clothes, has hands like mine;
 and mocks whate'er I do; but that I'm sure
 it cannot be, I'd swear it were my child.
 Matilda looks.
 Look, my Matilda; we both are in the glass.
 Oh, now I know it plain; they are our names,
 that peep upon us there.

MATILDA Our shadows, madam.

EMMELINE Mine is the prettier shadow far, than thine.
 I love it; let me kiss my t'other self.
 (kissing the glass)
 Alas, I've kiss'd it dead; the fine thing's gone;
 indeed it kiss'd so cold as if 'twere dying.

Arthur comes forward softly; shewing himself behind her.

EMMELINE 'Tis here again.

Oh, no, this face is neither mine nor thine:
I think the glass hath borne another child.

(she turns and sees Arthur)

Ha! what art thou, with a new kind of face,
and other clothes, a noble creature too;
but taller, bigger, fiercer in thy look;
of a controuling eye, majestic make?

MATILDA Do you not know him, madam?

EMMELINE Is't a man?

ARTHUR Yes, and the most unhappy of my kind,
if you have chang'd your love.

EMMELINE My dearest lord!

Was my soul blind; and cou'd not that look out,
to know you, ere you spoke? Oh counterpart
of our soft sex; well are you made our lords:
so bold, so great, so godlike are you form'd.
How can you love such silly things as women?

ARTHUR Beauty like your's commands; and man was made
but a more boisterous, and a stronger slave,
to you, the best delights of human kind.

EMMELINE But are ye mine? Is there an end of war?
Are all those trumpets dead themselves, at last,
that us'd to kill men with their thund'ring sounds?

ARTHUR The sum of war is undecided yet;
and many a breathing body must be cold,
ere you are free.

EMMELINE How came ye hither then?

ARTHUR By Merlin's art, to snatch a short liv'd bliss;
to feed my famish'd love upon your eyes,
one moment, and depart.

EMMELINE O moment! worth
whole ages past, and all that are to come!
Let love sick Oswald, now unpitied mourn;
let Osmond mutter charms to sprites in vain,
to make me love him; all shall not change my sool.

ARTHUR Ha! does th'inchanter practise hell upon you?
Is he my rival too?

EMMELINE Yes, but I hate him;
for when he spoke, thro' my shut eyes I saw him;
his voice look'd ugly, and breath'd brimstone on me:
and then I first was glad that I was blind,
not to behold perdition.

PHILIDEL This time is left me to congratulate
your new-born eyes; and tell you what you gain
by sight restor'd, and viewing him you love.
Appear you airy forms.

Airy spirits appear in the shape of men and women.

[N. 24 - Oh sight, the mother of desires]

MAN

Oh sight, the mother of desires,
what charming objects dost thou yield!
'Tis sweet when tedious night expires,
to see the rosy morning gild
the mountain tops, and paint the field!
But when sweet Clorinda comes in sight,
she make's the summer's day more bright,
and when she goes away 'tis night.

CHORUS When fair Clorinda comes in sight
etc.

WOMAN

'Tis sweet the blushing morn to view;
and plains adorn'd with pearly dew:
but such cheap delights to see,
heaven and nature
give each creature;
they have eyes as well as we;
this is the joy, all joys above,
to see, to see,
that only she,
that only she we love!

CHORUS This is the joy, all joys above
etc.

MAN

And, if we may discover
what charms both nymph and lover,
'tis when the fair at mercy lies,
with kind and amorous anguish,
to sigh, to look, to languish,
on each other's eyes!

CHORUS And, if we may discover
etc.

PHILIDEL Break off your musick, for our foes are near.

Spirits vanish.

Enter Merlin.

MERLIN My sovereign, we have hazarded too far;
but love excuses you, and prescience me.
Make haste; for Osmond is even now alarm'd,
and greedy of revenge is hasting home.

ARTHUR Oh take my love with us, or leave me here.

MERLIN I cannot, for she's held by charms too strong;
which, with th' enchanted grove, must be destroy'd:
till when, my art is vain: but fear not, Emmeline;
th' inchanter has no power on innocence.

EMMELINE Farewell, since we must part:
(to Arthur) when you are gone,
I'll look into my glass, just where you look'd,
to find your face again;
if 'tis not there, I'll think on you so long,
my heart shall make your picture for my eyes.

ARTHUR Where'er I go, my soul shall stay with thee:
'tis but my shadow that I take away:
true love is never happy but by halves;
an April sunshine, that by fits appears,
it smiles by moments, but it mourns by years.

EMMELINE May all good angels spread their wings,
and shield my love from harm.

(exeunt Arthur and Merlin)

EMMELINE This way, this way, Matilda;
now my Arthur's gone, the loveliest object
to my new-born sight, I'll look round and round
upon the lesser beauties of creation.

Enter Osmond at the other door, who gazes on Emmeline, and she on him.

EMMELINE Matilda, save me from this ugly thing,
this foe to sight; speak, dost thou know him?

MATILDA Too well; 'tis Oswald's fiend, the great magician.

EMMELINE It cannot be a man, he's so unlike the man I love.

OSMOND (aside)
Death to my eyes, she sees!

EMMELINE I wish I could not; but I'll close my sight,
and shut out all I can ~ It wo'not be;
winking, I see thee still, thy odious image
stares full into my soul; and there infects the room
my Arthur shou'd possess.

- OSMOND (aside)
I find too late,
that Merlin and her lover have been here.
If I was fir'd before when she was blind,
her eyes dart lightning now; she must be mine.
- EMMELINE I pr'ythee, dreadful thing, tell me thy business here;
and, if thou canst, reform that odious face;
look not so grim upon me.
- OSMOND My name is Osmond; and my business, love.
- EMMELINE Thou hast a grizly look forbidding what thou ask'st,
if I durst tell thee so.
- OSMOND My pent-house eye-brows, and my shaggy beard,
offend your sight, but these are manly signs:
faint white and red abuse your expectations;
be woman; know your sex, and love full pleasures.
- EMMELINE Love from a monster, fiend?
- OSMOND Come, you must love; or you must suffer love;
no coyness, none, for I am master here.
- EMMELINE And when did Oswald give away his power,
that thou presum'st to rule? Be sure I'll tell him:
for as I am his prisoner, he is mine.
- OSMOND Why then thou art a captive to a captive.
O'er-labour'd with the fight, opprest with thirst,
that Oswald, whom you mention'd, call'd for drink,
I mix'd a sleepy potion in his bowl,
which he and his fool friend quaff'd greedily.
The happy dose wrought the desir'd effect;
then to a dungeon's depth I sent both bound;
where, stow'd with snakes and adders, now they lodge;
two planks their beds, slippery with oose and slime,
the rats, that brush o'er their faces with their tails,
and croaking paddocks, crawl upon their limbs;
since when the garrison depends on me;
now know you are my slave.
- MATILDA He strikes a horror thro' my blood.
- EMMELINE I freeze, as if his impious art had fix'd
my feet to earth.

OSMOND

But love shall thaw ye.

I'll show his force in countries cak'd with ice,
 where the pale pole star, in the north of heav'n,
 sits high, and on the frosty winter broods;
 yet there love reigns: for proof, this magic wand
 shall change the mildness of sweet Britain's clime
 to Iceland, and the farthest Thule's frost,
 where the proud god, disdain'g winter's bounds,
 oe'rleaps the fences of eternal snow,
 and with his warmth supplies the distant sun.

Osmond waves his wand. The Scene changes to a stormy wintry country.

Enter Cupid.

[N. 25 - Prelude]

[N. 26 - What ho, thou Genius of the clime, what ho!]

Recitative.

CUPID What ho, thou Genius of the clime, what ho!
 Ly'st thou asleep beneath those hills of snow?
 Stretch out thy lazy limbs; awake, awake,
 and winter from thy furry mantle shake.

Genius arises.

[N. 27 - What power art thou, who from below]

Air.

COLD GENIUS

What power art thou, who from below
 hast made me rise, unwillingly, and slow,
 from beds of everlasting snow?
 See'st thou not how stiff and wond'rous old,
 far unfit to bear the bitter cold,
 I can scarcely move or draw my breath?
 Let me, let me, freeze again to death.

[N. 28 - Thou doating fool, forbear, forbear]

Air.

CUPID

Thou doating fool, forbear, forbear;
 what, dost thou dream of freezing here?
 At Love's appearing all the sky clearing,
 the stormy winds their fury spare:
 winter subduing, and spring renewing.
 My beams create a more glorious year.
 Thou doating fool, forbear, forbear;
 what, dost thou dream of freezing here?

[N. 29 - Great Love, I know thee now]

Air.

COLD GENIUS

Great Love, I know thee now;
 eldest of the gods art thou:
 heav'n and earth by thee were made,
 human nature
 is thy creature;
 every where thou art obey'd.

[N. 30 - No part of my dominion shall be waste]

Recitative.

CUPID No part of my dominion shall be waste;
 to spread my sway, and sing my praise,
 ev'n here I will a people raise,
 of kind embracing lovers, and embrac'd.

Cupid waves his wand, upon which the scene opens, and discovers an extensive prospect of ice and snow. Singers and dancers, men and women, appear.

[N. 31 - Prelude]

[N. 32 - See, see, we assemble]

CHORUS OF COLD PEOPLE

See, see, we assemble,
 thy revels to hold;
 tho' quiv'ring with cold,
 we chatter and tremble.

[N. 33 - 'Tis I, 'tis I, 'tis I that have warm'd ye]

Air.

CUPID

'Tis I, 'tis I, 'tis I that have warm'd ye;
 in spite of cold weather,
 I've brought you together;
 'tis I, 'tis I, 'tis I, that have arm'd ye.

CHORUS

'Tis Love, 'tis Love, 'tis Love that has warm'd us;
 in spite of cold weather,
 he brought us together:
 'tis Love, 'tis Love, 'tis Love that has arm'd us.

[N. 34 - Sound a parley, ye fair, and surrender]

CUPID, COLD GENIUS

Sound a parley, ye fair, and surrender.
 Set yourselves and your lovers at ease.
 He's a grateful offender
 who pleasure dare seize:
 but the whining pretender
 is sure to displease.
 Sound a parley?
 Since the fruit of desire is possessing,
 'tis unmanly to sigh and complain.
 When we kneel for redressing,
 we move your disdain.
 Love was made for a blessing
 and not for a pain.

Cupid waves his wand, the frost scene vanishes, and a summer prospect appears.

A grand dance. The singers and dancers depart.

EMMELINE I cou'd be pleas'd with any one but thee,
 who entertain'd my sight with such gay shows,
 as men and women moving here and there;
 that coursing one another in their steps,
 have made their feet a tune.

OSMOND What, coying it again!
 No more, but make me happy to my gust,
 that is, without your struggling.

EMMELINE From my sight,
 thou, all thy devils in one, thou dar'st not force me.

OSMOND You teach me well; I find you would he ravish'd;
I'll give you that excuse your sex desire.

He begins to lay hold on her, and they struggle.

GRIMBALD *(within)*
O help me, master, help me!

OSMOND Who's that, my Grimbald! Come and help thou me;
for 'tis thy work t'assist a ravisher.

GRIMBALD *(within)*
I cannot stir; I am spell-caught by Philidel,
and purs'd within a net,
with a huge heavy weight of holy words
laid on my head, that keeps me down from rising.

OSMOND I'll read'em backwards, and release thy bonds.
Mean time go in. ~

(to Emmeline)

Prepare yourself, ease my drudgery.
But if you will not fairly be enjoy'd,
a little honest force is well employ'd.

(exit Osmond)

EMMELINE Heav'n be my guard, I have no other friend!
Heav'n, ever present to thy suppliant's aid,
protect and pity innocence betray'd.

(exeunt Emmeline and Matilda)

[N. 35 - Third Act Tune: Hornpipe]

End of the third act.

ACT THE FOURTH

Scene the first

Scene, a grove.

Enter Osmond solus.

OSMOND Now I am settled in my forceful sway,
why then, I'll be luxurious in my love;
take my full gust, and, setting forms aside,
I'll bid the slave, that fires my blood, obey.

Enter Grimbald, who meets him.

GRIMBALD Not so fast, master, danger threatens thee:
there's a black cloud ascending from above,
full of heav'n's venom, bursting o'er thy head.

OSMOND Malicious fiend, thou ly'st: for I am fenc'd
by millions of thy fellows, in my grove:
I bad thee, when I freed thee from the charm,
run scouting thro' the wood, from tree to tree,
and look if all my devils were on duty:
hadst thou perform'd thy charge, thou tardy sprite,
thou wouldst have known no danger threaten'd me.

GRIMBALD When did a devil fail in diligence?
Poor mortal, thou thyself art overseen;
I have been there, and hence I bring this news.
Thy fatal foe, great Arthur, is at hand:
Merlin has ta'en his time, while thou wert absent,
t' observe thy characters, their force, and nature,
and counterwork thy spells.

OSMOND The devil take Merlin!
I'll cast 'em all a-new, and instantly,
all of another mould; be thou at hand.
Their composition was, before, of horror;
now they shall be of blandishment, and love;
seducing hopes, soft pity, tender moans:
art shall meet art: and, when they think to win,
the fools shall find their labours to begin.

(exeunt Osmond and Grimbald)

Scene the second

Scene, a wood, with a large oak in the front.

Enter Arthur, and Merlin at another door.

MERLIN Thus far it is permitted me to go;
but all beyond this spot is fenc'd with charms;
I may no more, but only with advice.

ARTHUR My sword shall do the rest.

MERLIN Remember well, that all is but illusion;
go on; good stars attend thee.

ARTHUR Doubt me not.

MERLIN Yet in prevention
of what may come, I'll leave my Philidel
to watch thy steps, and with him leave my wand;
the touch of which no earthy fiend can bear,
in whate'er shape transform'd, but must lay down
his borrow'd figure; and confess the devil.
Once more farewell, and prosper.

(exit Merlin)

ARTHUR *(walking)*
No danger yet, I see no walls of fire,
no city of the fiends, with forms obscene,
to grin from far on flaming battlements.
This is indeed the grove I should destroy;
but where's the horror? sure the prophet err'd.
Hark! musick, and the warbling notes of birds;

(soft musick)

more wonders yet; yet all delightful too.
A silver current to forbid my passage,
and yet t'invite me, stands a golden bridge:
perhaps a trap for my unwary feet,
to sink and whelm me underneath the waves;
with fire or water. Let him wage his war,
or all the elements at once, I'll on.

As he is going to the bridge, two syrens arise from the water, and sing.

[N. 36 - O pass not on, but stay]

1ST SYREN

O pass not on, but stay
and waste the joyous day
with us in gentle play;
unbend to love, unbend thee,
o lay thy sword aside,
and other arms provide;
for other wars attend thee,
and sweeter to be tried.

CHORUS

For other wars etc.

[N. 37 - Two daughters of this aged stream are we]

Duetto.

TWO SYRENS

Two daughters of this aged stream are we,
and both our sea-green locks have comb'd for thee;
come bathe with us an hour or two,
come naked in, for we are so:
what danger from a naked foe?
Come bathe with us, come bathe, and share
what pleasures in the floods appear:
we'll beat the waters till they bound,
and circle, round, around, around,
and circle round, around.

ARTHUR A lazie pleasure trickles thro' my veins;
here could I stay, and well be cozen'd here.
But Honour calls; is Honour in such haste?
Can it not bait at such a pleasing inn?
No; for the more I look, the more I long:
farewel, ye fair illusions, I must leave ye,
while I have pow'r to say, that I must leave ye.
Farewel, with half my soul I stagger off;
how dear this flying victory has cost,
when if I stay to struggle, I am lost.

As he is going forward, nymphs and sylvans come out from behind the trees. A bass and two trebles sing the following song to a minuet. Dance with the song, all with branches in their hands.

[N. 38 - Passacaglia]

[N. 39 - How happy the lover]

ONE SYLVAN, TWO NYMPHS

How happy the lover
 how easy his chain,
 how pleasing his pain,
 how sweet to discover
 he sighs not in vain.

[N. 40 - For love every creature]

ONE SYLVAN, TWO NYMPHS

For love every creature
 is form'd by his nature;
 no joys are above
 the pleasures of love.

The dance continues with the same measure played alone.

ONE SYLVAN, TWO NYMPHS

In vain are our graces,
 in vain are your eyes,
 if love you despise;
 when age furrows faces,
 't is time to be wise.
 Then use the short blessing,
 that flies in possessing:
 no joys are above
 the pleasures of love.

ARTHUR And what are these fantastick fairy joys,
 to love like mine? False joys, false welcomes all.
 Be gone, ye sylvan trippers of the green;
 fly after night, and overtake the moon.

Here the dancers, singers and syrens vanish.

ARTHUR This goodly tree seems queen of all the grove.
 The ringlets round her trunk declare her guilty
 of many midnight sabbaths revell'd here.
 Her will I first attempt.

Arthur strikes at the tree, and cuts it; blood spouts out of it, a groan follows, then a shriek.

ARTHUR Good heav'n, what monstrous prodigies are these!
 Blood follows from my blow; the wounded rind
 spouts on my sword, and sanguine dyes the plain.

He strikes again: a voice of Emmeline from behind.

- EMMELINE (from behind)
 Forbear, if thou hast pity, ah, forbear!
 These groans proceed not from a senseless plant,
 no spouts of blood run welling from a tree.
- ARTHUR Speak what thou art; I charge thee speak thy being:
 thou hast made my curdled blood run back,
 my heart heave up, my hair to rise in bristles,
 and scarcely left a voice to ask thy name.

Emmeline breaks out of the tree, shewing her arm bloody.

- EMMELINE Whom thou hast hurt, unkind and cruel, see;
 look on this blood, 'tis fatal, still, to me,
 to bear thy wounds, my heart has felt 'em first.
- ARTHUR 'Tis she: amazement roots me to the ground!
- EMMELINE By cruel charms, dragg'd from my peaceful bower,
 fierce Osmond clos'd me in this bleeding bark;
 and bid me stand expos'd to the bleak winds,
 and winter storms, and heav'ns inclemency,
 bound to the fate of this hell-haunted grove;
 so that whatever sword, or sounding axe,
 shall violate this plant, must pierce my flesh,
 and, when that falls I die. ~
- ARTHUR If this be true,
 o never, never to be ended charm,
 at least by me! Yet all may be illusion.
 Break up, ye thick'ning fogs, and filmy mists,
 all that bely my sight, and cheat my sense;
 for reason still pronounces, 'tis not she,
 and thus resolv'd. ~

Lifts up his sword, as going to strike.

- EMMELINE Do, strike, barbarian, strike;
 and strew my mangled limbs, with every stroke.
 Wound me, and doubly kill me, with unkindness,
 that, by thy hand I fell.
- ARTHUR What shall I do, ye powers?
- EMMELINE Lay down thy vengeful sword; 'tis fatal here:
 what need of arms, where no defence is made?
 A love-sick virgin, panting with desire,
 no conscious eye t'intrude on our delights;
 for this thou hast the Syren's songs despis'd;
 for this, thy faithful passion I reward;
 haste then, to take me longing to thy arms.
- ARTHUR O love! o Merlin! whom should I believe?

EMMELINE Believe thy self, thy youth, thy love, and me;
they only, they, who please themselves, are wise:
disarm thy hand, that mine may meet it bare.

ARTHUR By thy leave, reason, here I throw thee off,
thou load of life: if thou wert made for souls,
then souls should have been made without their bodies.
If, falling for the first created fair
was Adam's fault, great grandsire, I forgive thee;
Eden was lost, as all thy sons would loose it.

(going toward Emmeline, and pulling off his gantlet)

Enter Philidel running.

PHILIDEL Hold, poor deluded mortal, hold thy hand;
which, if thou giv'st, is plighted to a fiend.
For proof, behold the virtue of this wand;
th' infernal paint shall vanish from her face,
and hell shall stand reveal'd.

Strikes Emmeline with a wand, who straight descends: Philidel runs to the descent and pulls up Grimbald, and binds him.

PHILIDEL Now see to whose embraces thou wert falling.
Behold the maiden modesty of Grimbald!
The grossest, earthiest, ugliest fiend in hell.

ARTHUR Horror seizes me,
to think what headlong ruin I have tempted.

PHILIDEL Haste to thy work; a noble stroke or two
ends all the charms, and disenchants the grove.
I'll hold thy mistress bound.

ARTHUR Then here's for earnest;

Strikes twice or thrice, and the tree falls, a peal of thunder immediately follows, with dreadful howlings.

ARTHUR 'tis finish'd, and the dusk, that yet remains,
is but the native horror of the wood.
But I must lose no time; the pass is free;
th' unroosted fiends have quitted this abode;
on yon proud towers, before this day be done,
my glittering banners shall be wav'd against the setting sun.

(exit Arthur)

PHILIDEL Come on, my surly slave; come stalk along,
and stamp a mad-man's pace, and drag thy chain.

GRIMBALD I'll champ and foam upon't, till the blue venom
work upwards to thy hands, and loose their hold.

PHILIDEL Know'st thou this pow'eful wand? 'tis lifted up;
a second stroke wou'd send thee to the centre,
benumb'd and dead, as far as souls can die.

GRIMBALD I wou'd thou woud'st, to rid me of my sense:
I shall be whoop'd thro' hell, at my return
inglorious from the mischief I design'd.

PHILIDEL And therefore, since thou loath'st ethereal light,
the morning sun shall beat on thy black brows;
the breath thou draw'st shall be of upper air,
hostile to thee, and to thy earthy make;
so light, so thin, that thou shall starve for want
of thy gross food, till gasping thou shalt lie,
and blow it back, all sooty, to the sky.

(exit Philidel, dragging Grimbald after him)

[N. 41 - Fourth Act Tune: Air]

End of the fourth act.

ACT THE FIFTH

Scene the first

Scene, a camp.

Enter Osmond, as asfrighted.

OSMOND Grimbald made prisoner, and my grove destroy'd!
Now what can save me ~ Hark, the drums and trumpets!
Drums and trumpets within.
Arthur is marching onward to the fort.
I have but one recourse, and that's to Oswald;
but will he fight for me, whom I have injur'd?
No, not for me, but for himself he must;
I'll urge him with the last necessity:
better give up my mistress than my life.
His force is much unequal to his rival;
true; ~ but I'll help him with my utmost art,
and try t'unravel fate.

(exit Osmond)

Scene the second

Enter Arthur, Conon, Aurelius, Albanact, and soldiers.

CONON Now there remains but this one labour more;
and if we have the hearts of true-born Britons,
the forcing of that castle crowns the day.

AURELIUS The works are weak, the garrison but thin,
dispirited with frequent overthrows,
already wavering on their ill-mann'd walls.

ALBANACT They shift their places oft, and skulk from war,
sure signs of pale despair and easy rout;
it shews they place their confidence in magick,
and when their devils fail, their hearts are dead.

ARTHUR Then, where you see 'em clust'ring most, in motion,
and staggering in their ranks, there press 'em home;
for that's a coward's heap—How's this, a sally?

Enter Oswald, Guillamar, and soldiers on the other side.

OSWALD (advancing)
 Brave Britons, hold; and thou their famous chief,
 attend what Saxon Oswald will propose.
 He owns your victory; but whether owing
 to valour, or to fortune, that he doubts.
 If Arthur dares ascribe it to the first,
 and singled from a croud, will tempt a conquest,
 this Oswald offers; let our troops retire,
 and hand to hand let us decide our strife:
 this if refus'd, bear witness earth and heav'n,
 thou steal'st a crown and mistress undeserv'd.

ARTHUR I'll not usurp thy title of a robber,
 nor will upbraid thee, that before I proffer'd
 this single combat, which thou did'st avoid;
 so glad I am, on any terms to meet thee,
 and not discourage thy repenting shame.
 As once Aeneas, my fam'd ancestor,
 betwixt the Trojan and Rutilian bands,
 fought for a crown, and bright Lavinia's bed;
 so will I meet thee, hand to hand oppos'd:
 my auguring mind assures the same success.

(to his men)

Hence out of view; if I am slain or yield,
 renounce me, Britons, for a recreant knight;
 and let the Saxon peacefully enjoy
 his former footing in our famous isle.
 To ratify these terms, I swear. ~

OSWALD You need not;
 your honour is of force, without your oath.
 I only add, that if I fall, or yield,
 your's be the crown, and Emmeline.

ARTHUR That's two crowns.
 No more; we keep the looking heav'n and sun
 too long in expectation of our arms.

Both armies go off the stage.

They fight with sponges in their hands dipt in blood; after some equal passes and closing, they appear both wounded: Arthur stumbles among the trees, Oswald falls over him, they both rise; Arthur wounds him again, then Oswald retreats. Enter Osmond from among the trees, and with his wand strikes Arthur's sword out of his hand, and exit. Oswald pursues Arthur. Merlin enters, and gives Arthur his sword, and exit: they close, and Arthur in the fall disarms Oswald.

ARTHUR Confess thyself o'ercome, and ask thy life.

OSWALD 'Tis not worth asking, when 'tis in thy power.

ARTHUR Then take it as my gift.

OSWALD A wretched gift,
with loss of empire, liberty, and love.

[N. 42 - Trumpet tune]

A concert of trumpets within, proclaiming Arthur's victory; while they sound, Arthur and Oswald seem to confer.

OSWALD 'Tis too much bounty to a vanquish'd foe;
yet not enough to make me fortunate.

ARTHUR Thy life, thy liberty, thy honour safe,
lead back thy Saxons to their ancient Elbe
I wou'd restore thee fruitful Kent, the gift
of Vortigern for Hengist's ill-bought aid,
but that my Britons brook no foreign power,
to lord it in a land, sacred to freedom,
and of its rights tenacious to the last.

OSWALD Nor more than thou hast offer'd wou'd I take;
I would refuse all Britain held in homage;
and own no other masters but the gods.

Enter on one side, Merlin, Emmeline, and Matilda; Conon, Aurelius, Albanact, with British soldiers, bearing King Arthur's standard displayed. On the other side, Guillamar, and Osmond, with Saxon soldiers, dragging their colours on the ground.

Arthur going to Emmeline and embracing her.

ARTHUR At length, at length, I have thee in my arms;
tho' our malevolent stars have struggled hard,
and held us long asunder.

EMMELINE We are so fitted for each other's hearts,
that heav'n had erred, in making of a third,
to get betwixt, and intercept our loves.

OSWALD Were there but this, this only sight to see,
the price of Britain should not buy my stay.

MERLIN Take hence that monster of ingratitude,
him who betray'd his master, bear him hence;
and in that loathsome dungeon plunge him deep,
where he plung'd noble Oswald.

OSMOND That indeed is fittest for me,
for there I shall be near my kindred fiends,
and spare my Grimbald's pains to bear me to them.
Is carried off.

MERLIN

(to Arthur)

For this day's palm, and for thy former acts,
 thy Britain freed, and foreign force expell'd,
 thou, Arthur, hast acquir'd a future fame,
 and of three christian worthies, art the first:
 and now at once to treat thy sight and soul.
 Behold what rolling ages shall produce:
 the wealth, the loves, the glories, of our isle,
 which yet, like golden ore, unripe in beds,
 expect the warm indulgency of heav'n
 to call 'em forth to light. ~

(to Oswald)

Nor thou, brave Saxon prince, disdain our triumph:
 Britons and Saxons shall be once one people;
 one common tongue, one common faith, shall bind
 our jarring bands, in a perpetual peace.

Merlin waves his wand; the scene changes, and discovers the British ocean in a storm. Aelous in a cloud above, four Winds hanging, etc.

[N. 43 - Ye blust'ring brethren of the skies]

ÆOLUS

Ye blust'ring brethren of the skies,
 whose breath has ruffl'd all the watr'y plain,
 retire and let Britannia rise,
 in triumph o'er the main.
 Serene and calm, and void of fear,
 the queen of islands must appear;
 serene and calm, as when the spring
 the new-created world began,
 and birds on boughs did softly sing
 their peaceful homage paid to man,
 while Eurus did his blasts forbear
 in favour of the tender year.
 Retreat, rude winds, retreat
 to hollow rocks, your stormy seat;
 there swell your lungs, and vainly, vainly threat.

Aeolus ascends and the four Winds fly off: the scene opens and discovers a calm sea to the end of the house. An island arises to a soft tune, Britannia seated in the island, with fishermen at her feet, etc.; the tune changes, the fishermen come ashore and dance awhile, after which Pan and a nereid come on the stage and sing.

[N. 44 - Symphony (The fishermen dance)]

[N. 45 - Round thy coast, fair nymph of Britain]

Duet.

PAN AND NEREID

(sing)

Round thy coast, fair nymph of Britain,
for thy guard our waters flow:
proteus all his herd admitting,
on thy greens to graze below.
Foreign lands thy fishes tasting,
learn from thee luxurious fasting.

CHORUS

Round thy coast, fair nymph of Britain
etc.

[N. 46 - For folded flocks on fruitful plains]

Song of three parts.

CHORUS

(Alto, Tenor, Bass)

For folded flocks on fruitful plains,
the shepherds and the farmers gains,
fair Britain all the world outvies;
and Pan as in Arcadia reigns,
where pleasure mix'd with profit lies.
Thou Jason's fleece was famed of old,
the British wool is growing gold;
no mines can more of wealth supply:
it keeps the peasant from the cold,
and takes for kings the Tyrian dye.

The last stanza sung over again betwixt Pan and the Nereid, after which the former dance is varied and goes on.

PAN, NEREID

For folded flocks on fruitful plains
etc.

Enter Comus with three Peasants, who sing the following song in parts.

[N. 47 - Your hay it is mow'd, and your corn is reap'd]

COMUS

Your hay it is mow'd, and your corn is reap'd;
your barns will be full, and your hovels heap'd:
come, my boys, come;
come, my boys, come;
and merrily roar out harvest home,
harvest home,
harvest home;
and merrily roar out harvest home.

CHORUS

Come, my boys, come
etc.

1ST MAN

We have cheated the parson, we'll cheat him again.
For why should a blockhead have one in ten,
one in ten,
one in ten,
for why should a blockhead have one in ten?

CHORUS

One in ten
etc.

2ND MAN

For prating so long like a book-learn'd sot,
till pudding and dumpling burn to pot;
burn to pot,
burn to pot,
till pudding and dumpling burn to pot.

CHORUS

Burn to pot
etc.

3RD MAN

We'll toss off our ale till we cannot stand,
and hoigh for the honour of old England,
old England,
old England,
and hoigh for the honour of old England.

CHORUS

Old England
etc.

The dance varied into a round country dance.

Enter Venus.

[N. 48 - Fairest isle, all isles excelling]

Recitative.

VENUS Fairest isle, all isles excelling,
seat of pleasures and of loves;
Venus here will chuse her dwelling,
and forsake her Cyprian groves.

Air.

VENUS

Cupid, from his fav'rite nation,
 care and envy will remove;
 jealousy, that poisons passion,
 and despair that dies for love.
 Gentle murmurs, sweet complaining,
 sighs that blow the fire of love;
 soft repulses, kind disdainings,
 shall be all the pains you prove.
 Every swain shall pay his duty,
 grateful every nymph shall prove;
 and as these excel in beauty,
 those shall be renown'd for love.

[N. 49 - You say, 't is love creates the pain]

SHE You say, 't is love creates the pain,
 of which so sadly you complain;
 and yet would fain engage my heart
 in that uneasy cruel part.
 But how, alas! think you, that I
 can bear the wound of which you die?

HE 'T is not my passion makes my care,
 but your indifference gives despair:
 the lusty sun begets no spring,
 till gentle showers assistance bring:
 so love that scorches and destroys,
 till kindness aids, can cause no joys.

SHE Love has a thousand ways to please,
 but more to rob us of our ease:
 for wakeful nights and careful days
 some hours of pleasure he repays;
 but absence soon, or jealous fears,
 o'erflow the joys with floods of tears.

HE By vain and senseless forms betray'd,
 harmless love's the offender made;
 while we no other pains endure,
 than those that we ourselves procure:
 but one soft moment makes amends
 for all the torment that attends.

BOTH Let us love, let us love, and to happiness haste;
 age and wisdom come too fast;
 youth for loving was design'd.

HE I'll be constant, you be kind.
 (alone)

SHE
(alone) You be constant, I'll be kind.

BOTH Heaven can give no greater blessing
than faithful love, and kind possessing.

After the dialogue, a warlike concert; the scene opens above, and discovers the Order of the Garter. Enter Honour, attended by heroes.

MERLIN These who last enter'd are our valiant Britons,
who shall by sea and land repel our foes...

A march, while the British sailors and grenadiers come to the front of the stage.

[N. 50 - Trumpet tune Warlike Consort]

MERLIN Now look above, and in heav'n's high abyfs,
behold what fame attends those future heroes.
Honour who leads them to that steepy height,
in her immortal song, shall tell the rest.

The order of the Garter descends.

[N. 51 - Saint George, the patron of our isle]

Song.

HONOUR

I

Saint George, the patron of our isle,
a soldier, and a saint,
on that auspicious order smile,
which love and arms will plant.

II

Our natives not alone appear
to court this martial prize;
but foreign kings adopted here,
their crowns at home despise.

III

Our sovereign high, in awful state,
his honours shall bestow;
and see his scepter'd subjects wait
on his commands below.

CHORUS Saint George, the patron of our isle
etc.

ARTHUR

(to Merlin)

Wisely you have, whate'er will please, reveal'd;
what would displease, as wisely have conceal'd:
triumphs of war and peace, at full ye show,
but swiftly turn the pages of our woe.
Rest we contented with our present state;
'tis anxious to enquire of future fate.
That race of heroes is enough alone
for all unseen disasters to atone.
Let us make haste betimes to reap our share,
and not resign them all the praise of war.
But set th' example; and their souls inflame,
to copy out their great forefathers fame.

[N. 52 - Chaconne]

A dance of British sailors.

Finis.

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