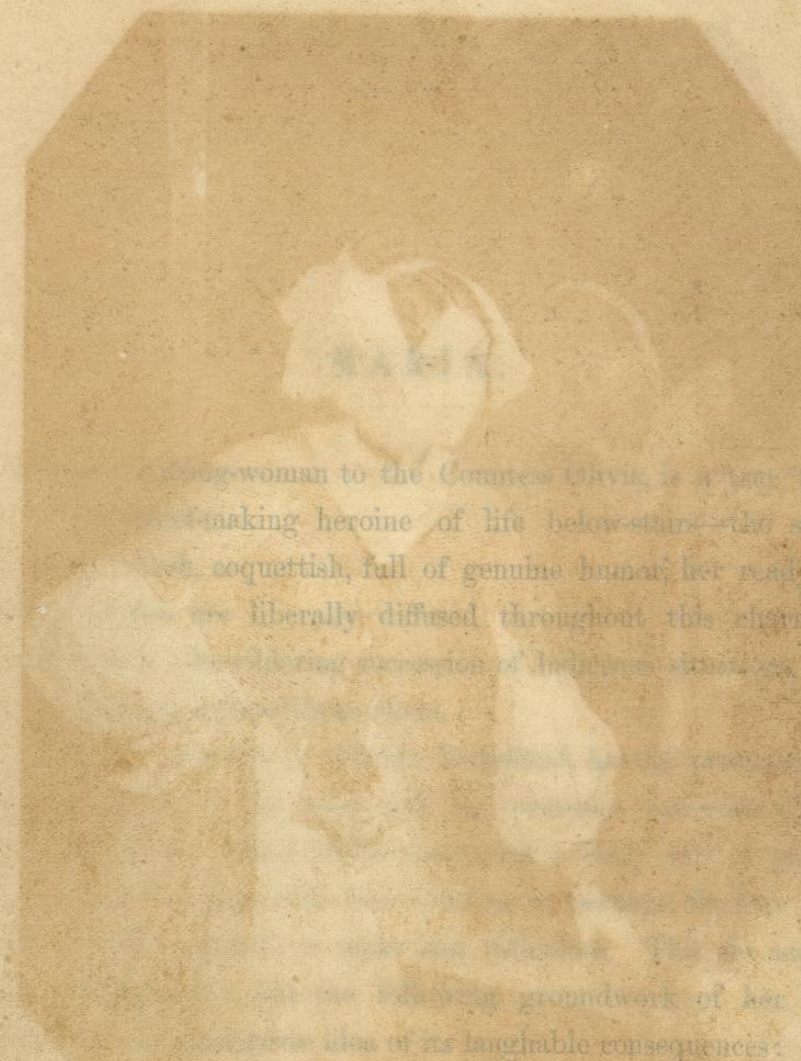




Maria.

TWELFTH NIGHT, ACT 2, SC. 3.

New York: D. Appleton & Co. 346 & 348 Broadway.



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...making heroine of life below-stairs—the stage
...coquettish, full of genuine humor; her ready re-
...are liberally diffused throughout this charming
...the strong expression of her own strength and
...the following groundwork of her plot
...of its laughable consequences:

...the devil a Puritan that he is, or any thing con-
...is a time-pleaser—an affection'd ass, that cons
...look, and utters it by great oaths; the
...of himself; so cramm'd as he thinks
...that it is his ground of truth; it is all
...the world is his; and he will make it so.



MARIA.

MARIA, waiting-woman to the Countess Olivia, is a true type of the mischief-making heroine of life below-stairs—the stage *soubrette*. Arch, coquettish, full of genuine humor, her ready resources of fun are liberally diffused throughout this charming comedy, with a bewildering succession of ludicrous situations, and merry mishaps deduced from them.

Malvolio, steward of Olivia's household, having presumed to take exception to the noisy and not over-nice carousals of Sir Toby Belch, for whom Maria entertains a saucy sort of preference, she, to be quits with him—but more, perhaps, for love of a practical jest—resolves to make him ridiculous. This she accomplishes effectually; but the following groundwork of her plot affords but an incomplete idea of its laughable consequences:

Mar. The devil a Puritan that he is, or any thing constantly but a time-pleaser—an affection'd ass, that cons state without book, and utters it by great swarths; the best persuaded of himself; so crammed, as he thinks, with excellences, that it is his ground of faith that all that look on him love him; and on that vice in him will my revenge find notable cause to work.

Sir To. What wilt thou do?

Mar. I will drop in his way some obscure epistles of love, wherein, by the color of his beard, the shape of his leg, the manner of his gait, the expressure of his eye, forehead, and complexion, he shall find himself most feelingly personated: I can write very like my lady, your niece; on a forgotten matter we can hardly make distinction of our hands.

* * * * *

Sir To. He shall think, by the letters that thou wilt drop, that they come from my niece, and that she is in love with him.

Mar. My purpose is, indeed, a horse of that color.

A sketch, only, of the garden scene, and we have done with this merry episode:

Sir To. Here comes the little villain:—How now, my metal of India?

Mar. Get ye all three into the box-tree; Malvolio's coming down this walk; he has been yonder i' the sun, practising behavior to his own shadow, this half hour: observe him, for the love of mockery; for I know this letter will make a contemplative idiot of him. Close, in the name of jesting! [*The men hide themselves.*] Lie thou there! [*throws down a letter*] for here comes the trout that must be caught with tickling.

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Mal. By my life, this is my lady's hand! These be her very C's, her U's, and her T's; and thus makes she her great P's. It is, in contempt of question, her hand.

* * * * *

* * * * *

I do not now fool myself, to let imagination jade me; for every reason excites to this,—that my lady loves me. She did commend my yellow stockings of late; she did praise my leg being cross-gartered; and in this she manifests herself to my love.

* * * * *

I thank my stars I am happy. I will be strange, stout, in yellow

stockings and cross-gartered, even with the swiftness of putting on.

* * * * *

Sir To. I could marry this wench for this device.

Sir And. So could I too.

Sir To. And ask no other dowry with her but such another jest.

* * * * *

Mar. If you will then see the fruits of the sport, mark his first approach before my lady: he will come to her in yellow stockings—and 'tis a color she abhors; and cross-gartered—a fashion she detests; and he will smile upon her—which will now be so unsuitable to her disposition, being addicted to a melancholy as she is, that it cannot but turn him into a notable contempt: if you will see it, follow me.

Sir To. To the gates of Tartar, thou most excellent devil of wit!

It will be seen that Sir Toby Belch was as good as his word, for once at least; he did marry the merry Maria, whose power of amusing him had taken him captive. Yet we will hope for gallantry even from so coarse a lover; Fabian tells the Lady Olivia, in final explanation, that

* * * * * Maria writ

The letter at Sir Toby's great importance—

In recompense whereof, he hath married her;

and we will amiably believe him capable of thus liberating Maria from a position of much embarrassment toward her mistress, with whose dignity she had indeed made something too free—in order that the Lady Olivia might find it easy to forgive a jest from her *aunt* which would be insufferable from her waiting-woman.