

was needed. The great Colley's influence might be most useful. He married Charlotte for it.

The girl had cause soon to regret her bargain. From morn till eve she was tracing her spouse through the hundreds of Drury, where resided many a wench who was frail as well as fair. Scenes of unbraiding and tears were followed by blows. The monago of the Charles became a public scandal. The too seductive musician, wearied by his wife's chiding, wooed and won another blossom and took ship with it for the Indies, leaving his better half alone to go through the travail of a first confinement.

When she rose from her bed Charlotte seemed another woman. Mrs. Oldfield, who was about retiring from the stage, gave her some lessons and spoke highly of her mental parts.

The debutante appeared as Mademoiselle in "The Provoked Wife" and was pronounced promising. Then, in company with Quin, played Cleopatra, The Distressed Mother, and a host of tragic characters, without being hissed off; was appointed "chief female understudy" in Colley Gibber's theatre, with the mission of undertaking any part on shortest notice in case of any one of the regular company falling ill.

Charlotte quarreled with some regal domineering creature, and retired in dudgeon to the new house in the Haymarket, then specially licensed to Mr. Fielding; which gentleman engaged the seceder at a salary of four guineas per week. But ignorant, reckless Charlotte slid into debt, became disgusted with the stage, threw up her engagement, pawned her credit and her clothes, and set up as a grocer in Long Acre.

For awhile the young tradeswoman was enchanted, for, by the way of frolic, her father's fine friends came to buy. She was a good horsewoman, she affirmed; why not then go her own journeys, do her own canvassing with country traders? Of course; an excellent idea. A saddle-horse was purchased instantan, and a field hired all in a hurry as a dwelling for the beast.

One evening in the dusk, a certain grimy youth elected to be amorous. Laughingly she edged him to the street with quip and banter, or it wouldn't do to offend customers, and

pushed him out, banged to the door, and fastened it with chain and bolt.

Alas! if the stable door was shut, the mare was stolen; under cover of the darkness and of dallying, other youths had crept in upon their bellies and made havoc of her goods. The bright brass weights were gone, so were the takings of the till, and everything else of value upon which the thieves had been able to lay hand.

Charlotte sat down and railed at fate, whilst she hugged her baby to her breast; then rose up and wrote penitently to her papa. But Colly was adamant to his giddy daughter. Mere acquaintances—as oftimes is the case—were more charitable than blood-relatives.

Somebody supplied the bankrupt groceress with a few pounds, which she proceeded to invest in madcap haste, as her way was, in the first speculation that offered. This chanced to be a puppet-show, up two flights of stairs over a tennis-court in St. James street.

She rigged out her dolls in new and gorgeous raiment, furbished up their noses and splintered cheeks, had new scenery painted regardless of expense; purchased mezzotintos of eminent persons, and got the portraits imitated in wood—and then sat down to take the town by storm.

Again the jaded interest of beaux and belles was aroused by the doings of the mad-cap. Fashion flocked up the two pairs of stairs; pronounced the entertainment vastly genteel; vowed that Colley was a brute for neglecting so talented a creature (Charlotte spoke all the parts behind a screen, just as a Punch-and-Judy man does); came again and again, delighted.

All was going well; but Charlotte's creditors, who upon her first failure had been content to look upon the trifle that she owed them as a bad debt, began to open their eyes now that she bade fair to prosper. They pursued her; their emissaries hung about the tennis-court. She, as well as the audience, grew disgusted; and with Charlotte to be disgusted was to throw up the occupation of the moment, and take refuge from annoyance in something novel. She sold the show, which was worth five hundred pounds, for twenty, and disappeared for a time in the unfathomable mazes of low London.

For several years we search for her in vain;