

MEN: Being outspoken is part of your charm—
ST. B.: Candour, Madame,
CAS.: Is part of your charm!

ANNA: When high officials honour me,
I know that I shall find
The national economy
Is what they have in mind.
I'm not upset a little bit
Their homage to receive,
But never like a hypocrite
Pretend to be naive!

MEN: So before you pop the question,
May I offer a suggestion?—
Things are really far
Better left the way they are!
ST. B.: Though you shake us,
CAS.: All our motives perceiving,
Don't mistake us:

MEN: This isn't make-believe:
If you
Hadn't a sou,
I wouldn't pine
If you were mine!
ST. B.: I would marry you
CAS.: Minus revenue!

ANNA: Please say you'll be mine!
ANNA: Thank you kindly; I must decline!
ST. B.: The sun would always shine for me—
CAS.: And life would be divine for me—
ANNA: Ah!
ALT. MEN: Please, Merry Widow, be mine!

(For a moment the "picture" holds—the MEN with arms outstretched to ANNA, who is laughing gaily. Then):
ST. BRIOCHE: Madame has such a beautiful voice!
CASCADA: Superb!
ANNA (mischievously): Don't you think it has rather a metallic quality—like the clinking of coins? (She laughs gaily at their scandalized reaction): Forgive me, gentlemen! This is my first experience of an Embassy—and I've never been very "diplo-matic" anyway! I'm afraid I say exactly what I think!
ST. BRIOCHE: A refreshing change for us, Madame! May I claim a dance?
(As ANNA smilingly hands to him her programme so that he can write his name on it):
CASCADA: I was just about to ask Madame the same favour—
MEN (ad lib.): And I too! Please, Madame! May I have a dance too, Madame? (etc.)

(During this, CASCADA snatches the programme from ST. BRIOCHE and moves down R. to write his own name on it. ST. BRIOCHE and the other MEN follow him, and there is a general scramble to pencil-in claims to dances.
Simultaneously, ZETA and VALENCIENNE enter, with CAMILLE following. ZETA greets ANNA effusively):
ZETA: Ah, my dear Madame Glavari! This is a great honour—a very great honour! We're overjoyed to welcome you—to VALENCIENNE—aren't we, my dear? VALENCIENNE: Yes indeed—so good of you to come, Madame!
ANNA: Not at all—I think it was most kind of you to invite me!
ZETA: I simply must dance with you, dear lady! May I have your programme?
ANNA: By all means—

(Laughingly, she indicates the group of MEN, and ZETA, with a gasp of indignation, moves in on them to join the competition for ANNA'S programme. CASCADA and ST. BRIOCHE engage ANNA in conversation, vying with one another for her attention.)
(During this, VALENCIENNE takes CAMILLE aside, and speaks confidentially to him):
VALEN.: Yes, I think she would be very suitable. I shall introduce you—at once.
CAMILLE (unhappily): But, Valenciennne
VALEN. (insistently): Getting you married to somebody else is the only way I can cure you, Camille—you must do as I say.

CAMILLE (miserably): Oh, very well.
VALEN. (turning to ANNA): Madame Glavari!
ANNA (dissenting herself from ST. BRIOCHE and CASCADA): Yes, Baroness?
VALEN.: Allow me to present my friend, the Count de Rosillon. He begs the favour of a dance with you!
(She moves back a little to allow CAMILLE to pass in front of her to greet ANNA.)
ANNA: Why, certainly—I'm delighted to meet you, Count.
CAMILLE: I'm honoured, Madame (He bows.)
ANNA: Here is my programme. (She takes it from ZETA, glances at it, and breaks off.)
OH! (Mischievously.) I'm afraid there's only the interval left.

VALEN. (sharply): Camille!
CAMILLE (in confusion): Pardon me, Madam (He turns to VALENCIENNE.)
VALEN. (firmly—but for CAMILLE'S ears alone): You're not going to sit out with her?
CAMILLE (baffled): But I thought you wanted me
VALEN.: Come away at once!

(VALENCIENNE takes the bewildered CAMILLE aside, expostulating with him. ANNA looks after them in surprise—and joins in the MEN'S laughter.)
ANNA (dismissing the matter—gaily): Listen, my friends. Tomorrow you must all come to my house. I will give a party—for all the Pontevédrian colony in Paris. What do you say to that?
(Delighted reaction from the MEN.)
ZETA (gaily): Bravo, my dear! Splendid! What a child of Nature you are—just like my attaché, Count Danilo Danilovitch! He, too, is completely unspooled—a genuine Pontevédrian—irrepressibly gay, like yourself.