

**THE SECRETARY: A
PLAY IN FIVE ACTS**

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The Secretary: A Play in Five Acts by James Sheridan Knowles

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JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES

**THE SECRETARY: A
PLAY IN FIVE ACTS**

THE SECRETARY.

THE
SECRETARY.

A Play,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES,

AUTHOR OF "THE HUNCHBACK," ETC.

LONDON:
EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.

MDCCCLIII.

TO

JOHN FORSTER, ESQUIRE,

IN

GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF MANY ACTS OF KINDNESS RENDERED
TO THE AUTHOR,

IN

THE COURSE OF HIS DRAMATIC CAREER,

This Play

IS DEDICATED.



ADVERTISEMENT.

To Mr. JAMES's able Novel of the "KING'S HIGHWAY," I am indebted for the Plot of this Drama, and I take this opportunity of acknowledging my obligation in this particular respect, and also of thanking the distinguished Author for many an hour of sweet instructive beguilement, enjoyed in the perusal of his productions.

For his careful revision of the MS. and for superintending the press, I return my hearty acknowledgments to my friend W. A. Dow, Esq., King's Bench Walk, Temple.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| <i>The King</i> | | MR. RYDER. |
| <i>Duke of Gaveston</i> | | MR. G. BENNETT. |
| <i>Lord Sherbrooke</i> | | MR. HUDSON. |
| <i>Lord Byerdale</i> | | MR. PHELPS. |
| <i>Lord Sunbury</i> | | MR. WALDRON. |
| <i>Sir George Barkley</i> | | MR. GRAHAM. |
| <i>Sir Richard Penwick</i> | | MR. LYNN. |
| <i>Sir John Friend</i> | | MR. MELLON. |
| <i>Sir William Parkyn</i> | | MR. ROBERTS. |
| <i>Colonel Green</i> | | MR. MICEADY. |
| <i>Wilton</i> | | MR. ANDERSON. |
| <i>Harrison</i> | | MR. LAMBERT. |
| <i>Charnock</i> | | MR. C. J. SMITH. |
| <i>Armstrong</i> | | MR. SELBY. |
| <i>Williams</i> | | MR. YARNOLD. |
| <i>Page</i> | | MR. STANTON. |
| <i>Lady Laura Gaveston</i> | | MISS HELEN FAUCIT. |
| <i>Emmeline</i> | | MRS. WIGAN. |

Conspirators, &c. &c.

THE SECRETARY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—LORD BYERDALE'S *Study*.—WILTON seated at a table in the act of writing.—Several folded letters before him, other letters lying open, papers, &c.

Wil.—THAT memory should feed itself! wax stronger
In its impression, without agency
Of that which wrought it; till the simulation—
For e'en so much it is—grows palpable
As the original—holds commune with
Our ears and eyes, yet all's within ourself!
At first her image was a dreamy thing
That came and went, and might, for aught I deem'd,
Have gone for ever—now 'tis ever with me!
Substantial presence! steadfast constancy!
I write, I read, I talk, and breaking off
In listless absence, to myself return
In company with her! She is my theme
That supersedes all others! Why is this?
What do I nourish? Hope in spite of hope!
Madness of wishes—never to be bless'd!
Her groom is not beneath her more than I,
The secretary of a haughty lord!
His clerk!—that in his counsels holds no share
More than his pen! What better should I be,
A man who claims no core of kith or kin
In the wide world! I had a friend—a good
And gracious one—who foster'd me, to play
A higher part. Compell'd by urgent cause