

**JEANNETTE & JEANNOT,
OR THE CONSCRIPT'S
VOW: A MUSICAL
DRAMA IN TWO ACTS**

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Jeannette & Jeannot, Or The Conscript's Vow: A Musical Drama in Two Acts by W. H. Eburne

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W. H. EBURNE

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Robinson's Edition of Plays.

JEANNETTE & JEANNOT;

OR

THE CONSCRIPT'S VOW.

A MUSICAL DRAMA,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY W. H. EBURNE,

COMEDIAN AND VOCALIST.

EDINBURGH:
H. ROBINSON, 11, GREENSIDE STREET.

M.DCCC.LII.

PREFACE.

TO THE PUBLIC.

THE accompanying little sketch, without pretensions to any great originality, was suggested by the immense popularity of the song of *Jeannette and Jeannot*, first sung in Edinburgh by myself. A *piece de circonstance* was produced in London, bearing the title of the ballad, which Mr Murray was anxious to produce at the Theatre Royal. Its merits, however, not meeting with the manager's approval, the idea occurred to me of constructing a story, or probable incident, of the conscription, and introducing the whole of the original songs and the duet, also a ballad I have presumed to pen myself. I submitted my play to Mr W. H. Murray, under whose management I was then engaged, and had the honour of receiving a very complimentary note from that gentleman, which I have much pleasure in subjoining, as a gentle apology for thus wildly rushing into print. Business obliged me to leave Scotland a fortnight after this date, which prevented Mr Murray from producing the piece, in which he had kindly offered to sustain the character of Napoleon. His wonderful likeness to the Emperor, when dressed for the part, is well remembered in Auld Reekie. I am indebted to the politeness of Mr Robinson for producing my little drama in this shape; and if you will—kindly allowing for the vanity of a scribbler—accord me a patient hearing, condemning me most heartily, if deserved—but if you should chance to hesitate in your decision, pray give me the benefit of the doubt; and accept the most profound sentiments of respect from your very obedient servant,

W. H. EBURNE.

Edinburgh, June 22, 1802.

LETTER from the late W. H. MURRAY, Esq.

Theatre Royal, March 21, 1849.

Sir,—I return the MS. of "Jeannette and Jeannot," with
the perusal of which I have been extremely pleased.

I am,

SIR,

Your very obedient Servant,

W. H. MURRAY.

To W. H. Eburne, Esq.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED.

Gentlemen.

THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

MARSHAL VICTOR.

GENERAL JOURDAIN.

COLONEL L'CLAIR.

JEANNOT, a young Conscript, betrothed to Jeannette.

SERGEANT DELORME, an old soldier.

HENRI DELPARC, }
PIERRE DUPLISSÉ, } *Conscripts.*

JACQUE PONTIN, a Rustic.

MONSIEUR ARMAND, a Notary.

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

Ladies.

JEANNETTE, in love with Jeannot.

MADAME LEJEUNE, her Mother.

MARIAN, Jeannette's Cousin.

Male and Female Villagers, Conscripts, Soldiers, &c.

JEANNETTE AND JEANNOT ;

OR, THE CONSCRIPT AND THE EMPEROR.

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George Beckwith
ACT I.—SCENE I.

A French Landscape at Vack—Jeannette's Cottage third entrance right—Sloping platform L. U. E.—Music to begin—March and trumpet call in the distance, as MARIAN enters, second entrance L. H.

MARIAN.—Ah! my brave countrymen, whom the spirit of Napoleon converts into heroes—there you go upon your march to tread the path of glory. Nothing but the sounds of drums rolling, trumpets blowing, and flags rustling in the wind—with the measured tread of regiments, and the cries of "Vive Napoleon!" Yes, all this martial thund'ring usurps the peace and solitude of our once quiet little village, till the faces of our simple villagers beam with such a glow of loyalty when they greet their Sovereign, that it does one's heart good to see them as they cry—"Vive l'Empereur; and so I say, with all my heart—"Vive l'Empereur! and Vive la Belle France!" Oh, dear! I wish my poor simple swain—poor Jacques Pontin—would put on a little of the martial air, and a little more of the gay cavalier. I can't help laughing at his fears, though I share in them sincerely. And there's poor Jeannette in her cottage with her mother, breaking her little heart, I suppose, at the prospect of Jeannot having to follow his regiment in the present campaign against the Prussians.

Jacques Pontin enters, L. S. E.

JACQUES.—Now, its no use talking, Marian. Why should I go for a soldier? What have I to do, or what do I know about Emperors—or Sultans of Russia—or Turks of India—or Popes of Kamshatka! I've no acquaintance with the Royal Family—I disclaim such connections. Now, tell me, Marian (*whining*), do I look like a soldier?

[Puts himself in awkward position.]

MARIAN.—Well, I must confess that you look a great deal more like a scarecrow just now;—but see what a good drilling will do for you—you would be moulded, in time, as fine as the Joans of Arc, and the other fighting gladiators that stood on Madame Lejeune's mantle-piece.

JACQUES.—Psha! You might as well get the bellows and try to blow up a flash of lightning brighter, as to try to fashion me into "heads up." (*Throws up his head—his cap falls.*) That would be heads off. Fire! (*imitates.*) Fizz!! (*Marian starts.*) Quick, march! (*marches awkwardly.*) This is my style of marching, Marian, when the enemy's in view. (*Walks backwards.*)

MARIAN—(*laughing.*)—Oh, you fool!

JACQUES.—Yea, but I'd look a much greater fool if you were to see me in battle, trying to fire a gun with my head off.



MARIAN.—Why, Jacques, the glory of France depends upon the bravery of Napoleon's troops; and would you be one to cast a slur upon the valour of your country!

JACQUES.—O, no—certainly not—that's it, you see. I don't want to cast a slur, and that's why I don't want to go, for I think if they were to take me, I should, somehow or other, upset the whole concern—they'd better let me remain at home in the bosom of my family—yes, “for the glory of France;” and when they came back, wouldn't I say they were brave fellows. Yes, yes, I'll ask them to let me stay here and learn to make wooden legs for the soldiers when they return to their sweethearts.

MARIAN.—But, my valorous Jacques, you forget one trifling impediment—how can you get off!

JACQUES.—How? Why, I'll take up the fashionable complaint—say I'm short-sighted, and would be sure to kill the wrong man. Bang! and down goes a COLONEL, perhaps.

MARIAN.—Then perhaps they'd say they could make a drummer of you.

JACQUES.—Well, that might be better than a shooter; for if I saw any danger—and my musical instrument was large enough—I could plunge myself through the sheep-skin, and lay there till the firing was over.

MARIAN.—Aye, but what excuse would you make for such clumsiness!

JACQUES.—Why, I'd say I was troubled with corns, and that they had just begun shooting, and wounded me severely.

MARIAN.—Well, now Jacques, I'm really ashamed of you; look at Jeannot, how martial and how military he looks—I'm sure he's a pattern for you.

JACQUES.—Well, and so am I—I'm a pattern—only of a different sort.

MARIAN.—Yes, and you're a very ugly pattern, and no one will copy you. I say again, take example of Jeannot—look at his spirit.

JACQUES.—Yes, and if I went to battle you'd soon have to look at my spirit—a sort of unpleasant-looking body that would come back to wear out my old clothes. But I only wish that you resembled Jeannette—why, she is frightened out of her wits at the idea of losing her lover, and quite melancholy at times, at the thought of his joining the Conscription.

MARIAN.—Of course that's natural.

JACQUES.—Well, then, don't you be so unnatural.

MARIAN.—I should be as anxious, sir, if you were as resolute as Jeannot, for I should be unworthy of my sex if I did not play off my little bit of perversity, like the rest of womankind. But, Jacques, consider that every Frenchman, however low his origin, who fights in defence of his country, knows that certain rewards and promotion are bestowed by Napoleon upon those who deserve it; and the result is seen in those extraordinary acts of gallantry that electrify and astonish the world.

JACQUES.—Well, it's of no use talking. You might as well cut off my hair and sow it in a corn field, expecting young wigs to spring up, as to fancy that I was ever cut out to be cut up as a soldier. Have the appearance of a companion for an Emperor!

Enter Sergeant Delorme.

SENG.—Now, my valiant rustic! You must make your appearance to enter your name in the Conscription—remember 'tis a glorious cause, and the will of our Sovereign—heaven bless him! Vive l'Empereur!

JACQUES.—Oh, Lor!—they's another dig—they're like a lot of wasps, flying about and stinging one in vital parts with *glory* and *ambition*, and *heroes*—and all that sort of combustible material.

SENG.—Why, comrade!

JACQUES.—(*alarmed*).—O dear!—O lor!—he called me “comrade.”

SENG.—Harkye! my little hero of the sheepfold—can it be that you have mounted the white feather in your cap!

JACQUES.—Have I?—(*takes off his cap and looks at it*). I don't see it.

SENG.—Tush, man!—you're not afraid. Ought not every Frenchman to nourish a grateful feeling for the man who has raised his country to be the terror and admiration of the world! Napoleon—our Emperor—found France in a state of the wildest anarchy and confusion; and in a few years, by his own wonderful abilities, has made her the proud nation that she is. Do we not then owe him our gratitude, and would it not be an eternal disgrace if his subjects were to refuse their assistance while he is still aiming to raise their native land to the highest pinnacle of fame.

JACQUES.—(*aside*).—I begin to feel a grain or two of bravery stealing in. I must confess. I think there's something in that, certainly. (*Aloud*).—Yes, sir, certainly—as you say—of course—(*barling*)—liberty of the press, sir, you are quite right.

MARTIN.—Oh, yes; but when I think of the many brave fellows that are yearly sacrificed,

SENG.—Guns and ambuscades!—my fair damsel, it must ever be so, with other countries as well as this. Our great emperor knows that he is at the head of a brave nation, and, relying upon his people's regard for him, he seeks to strike terror into the hearts of his enemies by showing how completely the confidence of his subjects are with him.

JACQUES.—I'm off. I've been sucking in courage like old Peire Soulier, the cobbler, imbibing his morning potation, or a calf sucking in his morning's milk. (*Aloud*).—Vive la Republique! Aye, O! I beg pardon, I mean—yes, exactly—vive the public people! And now I'll vanish, for if I stay I shall boil over with valour, and go off like that ambitious frog who took in too much air, and then blew himself up for doing so. (*Exit Jacques Pontin, I. E. L.*)

MARTIN.—O dear! O dear! I begin to tremble now that Jacques has gone—and seems so suddenly courageous—lest any harm should come to him.

SENG.—Cheer up, my little Boadicia, and let the red flag of the God of Battles flush in your pretty cheek, to guide your wavering swain.—By all that's glorious, I look upon this war like some proud banquet—where the blood that flows shall act like nectar, and nerve the hearts of all good soldiers to struggle for their liberty—for liberty, my lass!—the blessed liberty of independence.

(*Exit Sergeant and Marian*)