CASTE; AN ORIGINAL COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

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Caste; an original comedy in three acts by T. W. Robertson

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T. W. ROBERTSON

CASTE; AN ORIGINAL COMEDY IN THREE ACTS



CASTE

An Original Comedy in Three Acts

By T. W. ROBERTSON

Reprinted from the acting book used in the performances of the famous Boston Museum Company, by the courtesy of the late Annie M, Clarke, for many years its leading lady.

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BOSTON WALTER H. BAKER & CO

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SANTA BARBARA



CASTE

CHARACTERS

(First production, Prince							
George D'Alroy	Đ.,	•0	*	*	10	407	Frederick Younge.
CAPTAIN HAWTREE ECCLES	20	ē.,	25	20	20	2.7	. S. B. Bancroft.
ECCLES			*	*	1	+	. George Honey.
SAM GERRIDGE .						100	John Hare.
SAM GERRIDGE . MARQUISE DE ST. M ESTHER ÉCCLES . POLLY ÉCCLES .	Al	R	•	*	*		. Sophia Larkins.
ESTHER ECCLES .						*	. Lydia Foote.
POLLY ECCLES	6		•	*	10	•	. Marie Witton.
(First production in the United							
Hon. Geo. D'Alroy Captain Hawtree	S.,					7.1	. W. J. Florence.
CAPTAIN HAWTREE							. Owen Marlowe.
Eccles							William Davidge,
Eccles Sam Gerridge . Esther Eccles .							 Edward Lamb.
ESTHER ECCLES .					4	H_{i}	enrietta Chanfrau.
POLLY ECCLES MARQUISE DE ST. M		+				Ali	s. W. J. Florence.
MARQUISE DE ST. M	AU	R				A	Irs. G. H. Gilbert.
TFirst production in Bosto	in,	H_{σ}	war	1 2	Ithe	næun	n, September 2, 1867.)
Hon, George D'Al Captain Hawtree Eccles Sam Gerridge Marquise de St. M Esther Eccles	RG	Y	20	20	20	Ye	. H. G. Clarke.
CAPTAIN HAWTREE		0					Harry Crist.
Eccles			36				Mr. Keeler.
SAM GERRIDGE .					0		. Mr. Scallan.
Marouise de St. M	AU	R					Mrs. Farren.
ESTHER ECCLES .							Cecile Rush.
POLLY ECCLES		*		30	(6)		. Lillie Marden.
(First production at T.	he .	Bost	on A	Inn	eum.	, Sep	tember 22, 1867.)
Hon, George D'At	RO	Y		1			. L. R. Shewell.
Hon. George D'At Captain Hawtree Eccles		٩,	- 3		- 0	- 83	7. A. Smith.
Eccles							William Warren.
SAM GERRIDGE ESTHER ECCLES .			74				7. H. Ring.
ESTHER ECCLES .							. Annie Clarke.
POLLY ECCLES MARQUISE DE ST. M	-	(+)			0.0	0.540	 Louisa Meyers.
MARQUISE DE ST. M	AL	R	- 30			Mrs	E. L. Davenhort.

HON, GEORGE D'ALROY	(Wallack's	Theatre, Nev	v Yo	k, 1	V. 7	., N	wember S, 1875.)
CAPTAIN HAWTREE ECCLES SAM GERRIDGE ESTHER ECCLES POLLY ECCLES George Honey, MARQUISE DE ST. MAUR (Globe Theore, Boston, Mais, November S, 1875.) HON, GEORGE D'Alboy CAPTAIN HAWTREE Cover Honey, SAM GERRIDGE The House, SAM GERRIDGE The House, Cover Honey, SAM GERRIDGE The House, Cover Honey, Marquise De St. Maur Chara Fisher Macder. (Wallock) Theore, Nove York, N. Y., October, 1889.) HON, GEORGE D'Alboy CAPTAIN HAWTREE Charles Graves. SAM GERRIDGE Tom Robertson. ESTHER ECCLES Rose Coghlau. POLLY ECCLES Tom Robertson. ESTHER ECCLES Thomas Albury The Control of the Control Garrick Theore, London, February 5, 1895.) HON, GEORGE D'ALROY CAPTAIN HAWTREE UV. L. Abington. ECCLES The Captain Hawtree G. IV, Anson. MARQUISE DE ST. MAUR Rose Leclerq. ESTHER ECCLES And Havery SAM GERRIDGE The Control of the Control Theorem. The Control of the Control Theorem. Captain Theorem, London, October 16, 1896, Knickerbooker Theorem, New York, January 18, 1897.) Hen Control District Theorem. Beston, March 2, 1897.)	HON, GEORG	E D'ALRO	iv.	e ^{ll} o		1	H. 7. Montague.
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POLLY ECCLES	SAM GERRIDO	GR		8 8		- 33	. 7. H. Burnett.
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MARQUISE DE ST. MAUR Susie Vaughan.	MAROUISE D	E ST. MA	TIP				. Susie Vaughan.
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PREFACE

Or all the Robertson dramas probably "Caste" took the most decided hold on popular favor. Its sentimental story, its strongly drawn characters which allowed to half-a-dozen actors equally good opportunities in very different lines of business gave it an instant success.

It is doubtful if any other modern play was so many times performed and in so many different theatres within a year as was "Caste." At the time of its production there was not only no international copyright; there was no protection for a play of any sort, so that as soon as it had been played in London it was the property in fact, if not in honor, of any manager who would bother

to take it.

"Caste" was first produced at the famous Prince of Wales' Theatre in the Tottenham Court Road, London, April 6, 1867, during the régime of the Bancrofts. Lester Wallack secured the manuscript of the play from the Bancrofts and prepared to produce it in New York in the following September. But he was anticipated in this production by W. J. Florence, who had committed the play to memory in London, and got it on the stage at the Broadway Theatre, then in Broome Street, August 5, 1867, the Wallack production being made in Brooklyn, September 2. Wallack's attempt to protect his prior rights by suit is a matter of history, the defeat of that manager and the legal triumph of Florence not speaking very well for the bonor of the courts of that time.

No sooner was "Caste" successfully given in New York than it sprang into popularity everywhere. That was the time of the stock company, and the traveling company was practically unknown. Within the month of September, for example, the piece was played

on four different stages in the city of Boston.

All through the sixties and seventies the piece continued a popular play, but with the disappearance of the stock company, it dropped out of sight until the popular English comedian, John Hare, who had created the rôle of Sam Gerridge, when the play was first produced in London, revived it during his tour of the States in 1896-97.

Probably the best Eccles that the American public has known was George Honey, who created the rôle in London and afterwards was seen in this country for several seasons in the same part. Next to him in point of genuine humor was the Eccles of William Warren of the Museum. Mr. Honey had the advantage of Warren in knowing the type better. But the performances of both these men in this part will be remembered always with keen

relish by all who were so lucky as to see them.

"Caste" has been called by those who wish to put a little contempt on it "a cup and saucer" drama. But as a play it will always remain a model of its kind. It is terse, well constructed, with capital acting opportunities, and absolutely no halt in its movement and interest. If it be in any sense really a "cup and saucer drama," it is a pity that some modern writers do not catch the trick.

The present edition is carefully compiled from the prompt book in use at the Boston Museum where the play enjoyed one of its most pronounced successes. Business, stage positions and the few traditional interpolations are preserved exactly as employed in that famous play house. In elaborating the business of the third act in the scene in which D'Alroy returns the description given by Mrs. Bancroft—the original Polly Eccles—in "On and Off the Stage" has been carefully followed.

M. A.

Boston, December, 1912.

PROPERTIES

ACT I.—Key ready at R. 3 E. Letters for postman. Box with ballet dress. Rasher of bacon and other packages for Polly. Cigar case for Hawtree. Teakettle on hob of fireplace. Letters for Esther in pocket of gown. Coins for George to give Eccles.

ACT 11.—Cigarettes for George. Parasol for Polly. Decanter of claret and brandy and glass for Eccles on sideboard of inner

room.

ACT III.—Box with ballet dress. Slate and pencil on table. Bundle of circulars in Sam's pocket. Coin in Polly's pocket. Coral in baby's cradle. Wine bottle for Eccles. Letter and check for Esther. Deal table at R. 3 E. for Sam. Ring for Sam. Baby's cloak and cap for Marquise. Sample of wall paper.

CASTE

ACT I

Scene.—Home of the Eccles. Living-room in ground-floor apartment at Stangate. Large window with deep scat at C., back, overlooking street. Door R. 3 E. into hall, giving view of outer door when open. Door at R. 1 E. to kitchen. Fireplace at L., with mantel over it. Fire laid ready to light. At L. C. table with cover. Large chair at R. of it; two small chairs at L. of it. Against back drop, at L. of window, dresser covered with dishes. Bureau against wall R., between doors.

LIGHTS full up.

(As curtain rises slowly on empty stage George D'Alroy and Captain Hawtree are seen to pass window from L. Handle of door R. 3 E. is tried, and voices heard outside. Key then heard to turn in lock.)

GEO. (epening door R. 3 E. and entering, followed by HAWTREE). I told you so. The key was left under the mat in case I came. They're not back from rehearsal. (Crosses L., to fireplace.)

Haw. (coming C.; looking around). And this is the Fairy's

Bower.

GEO. And this is the Fairy's fireplace; the fire is laid, I'll light it. (Places hat and stick on table and lights fire with match from mantelpiece.)

RED LIGHT gradually on at fireplace.

Haw. And this is the abode rendered blessed by her abiding. It is here that she dwells, walks, talks, eats and drinks. Does she eat and drink?

Geo. Yes, heartily. I've seen her.

HAW. And you are really spoons-case of true love-hit dead.