

**A SNUG LITTLE KINGDOM:
A COMEDY OF BOHEMIA
IN THREE ACTS**

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A Snug Little Kingdom: A Comedy of Bohemia in three acts by Mark Ambient

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MARK AMBIENT

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A COMEDY OF BOHEMIA
IN THREE ACTS**

A SNUG LITTLE KINGDOM

A COMEDY OF BOHEMIA IN THREE ACTS.

BY

MARK AMBIENT.

*"Away from the world and its toils and its cares,
I've a snug little kingdom up four pair of stairs."
From "The Cano-bottomed Chair," by Thackeray.*

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A SNUG LITTLE KINGDOM.

CHARACTERS:

Original cast, Royalty Theatre, January 31st, 1903.

Bernard Gray (<i>a musical composer</i>)	MR. LYN HARDING.
Hubert Gray, M.B. Lond. (<i>his young brother</i>)	MR. H. B. WARNER.
Ben Kershaw (<i>inventor and sole proprietor of Kerahaw's Sauce</i>)	MR. CHARLES WARNER.
Mrs. Blower (<i>a lodging-house keeper</i>)	MRS. CALVERT.
Amelia (<i>her "general"</i>)	MISS MAY WOOLGAR MELLON.
Fister Hope (<i>a hospital nurse</i>) ...	MISS NANCY PRICE.
Dolly (<i>a chorus girl</i>)	MISS MAUDE DANKS.

SCENE.

ACT I. } ACT II. } ACT III. }	A GARRET IN SOHO (<i>March 15th</i>)	{ 5 p.m. 7.30 p.m. 9 p.m.
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TIME OF REPRESENTATION.

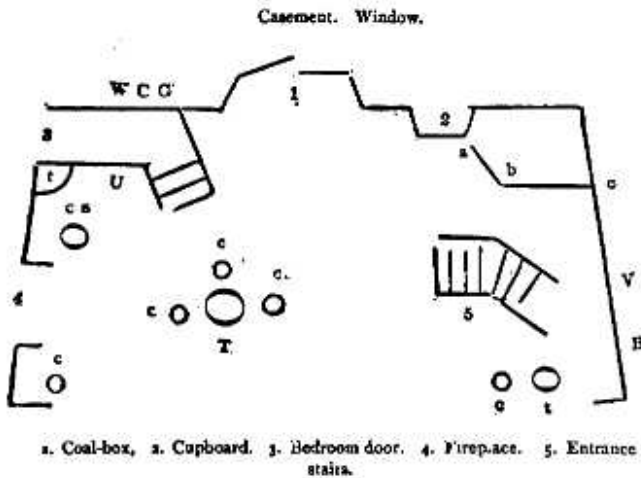
ACT I., fifty minutes; ACT II., fifty-two minutes; ACT III., twenty-eight minutes—two hours ten minutes.

LIGHTING.

ACT I., Daylight; ACT II., Sunset; ACT III., Moonlight.

SCENE PLOT.

Back cloth : Chimney-pots and spire of St. Anne's, Soho.



The scene is a picturesque old panelled garret of an old-fashioned house in Soho, once the town mansion of a nobleman, now a lodging-house.

The entrance to the garret is up a flight of stairs (from the entrance door on the floor below) which come up through an oblong hole in the stage L. C. (4 x 3 feet) guarded by a carved oak balustrade on the two longer sides. The only other entrance (or exit) is at back, R. U. E., where a little carved wooden staircase of two steps and a platform, guarded by a balustrade, leads to Bernard's bedroom door, which is therefore raised two feet off the stage at back R. U. E.

(N. H.—In provincial theatres (where it is impossible to cut the stage up L. and make all entrances from below) a door up L. can be substituted; it should be raised two feet above the stage to correspond with the bedroom door up R., with two steps up (off the stage) platform and two steps down (on to stage), guarded by balustrade similar to balustrade up R. For amateur performances all that is absolutely necessary for the purposes of the play is a door up L. and a door up R.)

Old-fashioned fireplace down R. with old carved mantel.

Latticed window set in recess at back, C., with practicable case-

ments, opening outwards, looking out over chimney-pots and spire of St. Anne's, Soho.

A wooden partition (a, b, c), at back L., hinged at (b) so that (a, b) forms swing door while (b, c) is fixed, serves to hide from view the sink where Dolly and Hubert wash up the tea things in Act I.

FURNITURE.

The furniture should suggest traces of his old Oxford rooms, and also of the comfortable home in which Bernard Gray was brought up. It must all be good but very second hand, so that the garret, although poverty-stricken, shall not look in the least squalid, but on the contrary be very picturesque. It must be obviously the bachelor quarters of a musical composer with artistic tastes and no money.

"This snug little chamber is crammed in all nooks
With worthless old knickknacks and silly old books,
And foolish old odds and foolish old ends,
Cracked bargains from brokers, cheap keepsakes from friends.

Old armour, prints, pictures, pipes, china (all cracked),
Old rickety tables, and chairs broken backed;
A twopenny treasury, wondrous to see;
What matter? 'tis pleasant to you, friend, and me.

* * * * *

That praying rug came from a Turcoman's camp;
By Tiber once twinkled that brazen old lamp;
A Mameluke fierce yonder dagger has drawn,
'Tis a murderous knife to toast muffins upon."

THACKERAY'S *Cane-bottomed Chair*.

Old oak cupboard with wooden doors on pedestal stands between window and partition. Carved oak chest with brass handles and practicable lid used as coal box, runs entire length of window recess. An old bookcase (B) filled with books and music L. An old grandfather clock (G) stands between bedroom-stairs and window. Three tables (T, t, t), viz.: an oval Chippendale table, R. C., and two small tables, one up R. in corner by balustrade, the other down L. Six chairs, viz.: an old grandfather chair, Chippendale (g, c), L. of table. An old cane-bottomed chair (c. b.), "with withered old arms and twisted old feet," above fireplace. Four old-fashioned rush-bottomed chairs (c, c, c, c). One behind table, one R. of table, one down R., and one down L. (R. of small table). Several coloured pictures of popular composers adorn the walls, including Wagner (W), and Verdi (V). Old fender, fire irons and small shovel. Old-fashioned oval looking-glass above mantel. Old brass Roman

lamp on top of cupboard (R.). Small umbrella stand (U). The carpet is old and faded—the hearthrug, an old Turkish praying rug. The window curtains and valance are green. The partition and both balustrades are artistically draped with old gold and green tapestries—good but very faded. A folded rug and two large coloured cushions to make a couch of the window-seat. A third cushion in the grandfather chair.

PROPERTIES.

Barrel-organ (heard off) constructed to play Bernard's song "The 'Aughty Automobile." In fender—kettle and spirit lamp. On mantel—two flower jugs, two brass candlesticks (with candles) tea-caddy, cabinet photo of Dolly (at the age of eleven), Bernard's pipes, one a penny cherry-wood, tobacco jar, matches. An Egyptian dagger hangs on wall by mantel. In cupboard—a picturesque array of coloured china. Under cupboard—large wooden Colman's Mustard box, covered with green baize and supporting flower-pot. On table R. c. sheets of blank music paper, pencils, a manuscript song—"Hope on, hope ever"—a soft velvet music case with tapes. On the floor—a litter of music. On table up R. a jug of water and three glasses. On table down L. a flower vase. On wall at back a handsome floral block calendar (c.) entitled, in large gold letters "The Gerald Massey Calendar", the block bears the date Saturday, March 15—in bold type—and underneath this couplet:—

"Hope on, hope ever! After darkest night
Comes full of loving life the laughing morning."

Gerald Massey.

HAND PROPERTIES.

BERNARD.—Act I. Loaf and butter, pot of bloater paste. Act II. Pawn-ticket in waistcoat pocket. In bedroom—soft felt hat and overcoat and a music-hall song with coloured frontispiece entitled "The Haughty Automobile."

HUBERT.—Act I. Cigarette (in his mouth). Red book (in tail-coat pocket). Glass of water (behind partition).

KERSHAW.—Act II. Handsome stout walking stick. Act III. Bottle of whiskey in paper, some cigars in a paper. Violin in case. Pocket-knife containing stout corkscrew, cheque-book and stylo-pen (in pocket).

DOLLY.—Act I. Crumpled bit of paper (inside her bodice). Bunch of lilies (which she enters carrying). Behind partition.—Teapot, sugar basin, and slop basin, cream jug, three tea cups and saucers (artistic), spoons and knives, salt cellar with salt, white table-cloth, also basin full of water and dish-cloth. Act III. Large feather fan.

MRS. BLOWER.—Act I. Red book. Large napkin containing hot potatoes. Coal-scuttle filled with coals.

NURSE.—Act I. Kershaw's note. Act III. Purse containing a shilling.

AMELIA.—Act I. Vi's letter to Dolly. Act II. Dustpan and brush. An opera score—labelled "The Kingdom of Love"—in large quarto envelope, registered and addressed to Bernard, with letter inside.

COSTUMES.

BERNARD.—Wears "a ragged old jacket" and "tattered old slippers"—but is artistically dressed.

HUBERT.—In strong contrast to his brother is fashionably attired in faultless black tail-coat, high hat, etc.

KERSHAW.—In rough tweed suit and overcoat, lined with sable but showing no fur when buttoned up. He wears a soft felt hat and carries a handsome walking-stick. He has all the air of great prosperity without the slightest trace of ostentation.

MRS. BLOWER.—Acts I. and II. dark skirt and loose print blouse and apron, bright red petticoat. Act III. False front "all curls"—little grey ringlets—decked out in all the colours of the rainbow—large coloured scarf round her neck, gaudy shawl round her shoulders, apron of many colours, flowers in her hair.

NURSE.—Dove-coloured uniform, cloak and bonnet edged and lined with crimson silk—a red cross on her left arm.

AMELIA.—Very shabbily but neatly clad.

DOLLY.—Acts I. and II. Simple inexpensive coat and skirt with hat to match. Act III. White evening dress, she carries a large feather fan.

MUSIC.

ACT I.

1. Curtain rises on melody of "Hope on."—It goes up on first bar of refrain, which Bernard is discovered humming, and accompanies him to end of refrain.

2. Song Mrs. Blower "The 'Aughty Automobile." (p. 11.) Cues : (Mrs. B.) "Makes me laugh to think of it."

3. Soft music for Dolly's entrance—"Hope on." (p. 13.) Cue : —(Ber) "Hope on"—(Dolly) "When he's working."

4. Song—Dolly—"Hope on, hope ever." (p. 14.) Cue :—(Dolly) "I'm so sorry." Verse 1, accompanied by strings only (slow and soft). Cue for Verse 2 (Dolly) "I love pretending." Verse 2 full orchestra and faster.

5. Soft music for Dolly's speech—"Hope on." Cues : —(Dolly) "Little pal"—"Oh! mother." (p. 16-17.)

6. Soft music for Bernard's final speech and curtain fall.—"Hope on." Cues : (Ber.) "What does he mean,"—"little pal."