TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	XX
Socrates	
HE CHIDES HIS DISCIPLES FOR BEHAVING LIKE WOMEN AS HE PREPARES TO TAKE THE HEMLOCK. "I sent away the women, for I have heard that a man should die in peace."	3
Michelangelo	
1. WHILE COMPARING FLEMISH AND ITALIAN PAINTING HE PAUSES TO EXPLAIN WHY ARTISTS ARE UNSOCIABLE. "His Holiness embarrasses me when he asks me why I don't come to see him more often."	8
2. WAS DANTE RIGHT TO CONSIGN BRUTUS AND CASSIUS TO HELL FOR MURDERING CAESAR? "Whoever kills a tyrant kills not a man but a beast disguised as a man."	23
Frederick the Great	
1. JUST BEFORE THE BATTLE A GERMAN CONQUEROR ANA- LYZES A FRENCH TRAGEDIAN'S VERSES. "When you have been accustomed for a long time, as I have been, to all this brawl of battle, you will not think it strange that, on the eve of the day on which a battle is to be fought, anyone should amuse himself as I am doing."	32
2. DURING THE BATTLE HE TWITS AN AIDE FOR BELIEVING IN A LIFE AFTER DEATH. "In following your system you have, I agree, no risk to run, whether you are mistaken or are not mis-	38

Ancien Régime

A GROUP OF FRENCH WITS DELIGHT THEMSELVES BY DISCUSSING THE IMPROPRIETIES. "Madame, one is bound to admit that one can never speak up for innocence without being slightly improper."

53

Jean Jacques Rousseau

PORTRAIT IN DIALOGUE I

- 1. MME. D'ÉPINAY REPROVES HER BOORISH PROTÉGÉ FOR RIDICULING THE COMPANY SHE KEEPS. "I should cut a poor figure among a lot of artificial persons walking tiptoe in their Sunday best-that's not my style at all."
- 64 2. MME. D'ÉPINAY REVILES ROUSSEAU FOR UNGALLANT SUS-PICIONS AND SHOWS HIM THE DOOR. "Monsieur, go! Your presence makes me sick."
- 67 3. THE OLD REBEL ENJOYS COLD PORK, PICKLED TROUT, AND THE IMPUDENCE OF YOUNG BOSWELL. her passion is still lively, and she threatens to tell her husband what has happened unless I agree to continue our intrigue?"

Casanova-Voltaire

THE GREAT AMORIST INTERRUPTS HIS MAJOR OCCUPATION TO ARGUE FOR THE NECESSITY OF SUPERSTITION AMONG THE MASSES. "The essence of freedom consists in thinking you have it."

81

Benjamin Franklin

A SKIRMISH IN LONDON WITH BRITAIN'S SECRETARY OF STATE 100 FOR AMERICA. "I must set you right there, Mr. Franklin."

Dr. Samuel Johnson

	PORTRAIT IN DIALOGUE II	
1.	AN EXPLOSION AT MR. DILLY'S THE BOOKSELLER. "I hate all impudence; but the impudence of a chit's apostasy I nauseate!"	100
2.	WITH PONDEROUS GIBES, HE DENIES THAT MEN HAVE MORE LIBERTY THAN WOMEN. "We have all the labor and the danger, and the women all the advantages."	113
3.	HE IS CALLENGED TO EXPRESS HIMSELF ON THE ISSUE OF DEATH AND SALVATION. "No rational man can die without uneasy apprehension."	116
4.	A DISSENTING MINISTER BRAVES A STORM ON THE RIGHT OF MINORITIES TO PREACH WHAT THEY BELIEVE. "But, sir, is it not very hard that I should not be allowed to teach my children?"	118
5.	THE ABSTEMIOUS DOCTOR IS NOMINATED TO WRITE TO A FRIEND OF "THE CLUB" FOR A HOGSHEAD OF CLARET. "As I drink none, I am no more than humble scribe."	124
6.	THE SOCIAL WISDOM VERSUS THE PERSONAL FOLLY OF DRINKING WINE. "Sir, there is no more reason for your drinking with him, than for his being sober with you."	130
7.	GOOD FRIDAY THOUGHTS ON GARDENS, PARK WALLS, CHERRIES, AND ORANGE PEEL. "In an orchard there should be enough to eat, enough to lay up, enough to be stolen, and enough to rot upon the ground."	134
8.	WHILE EATING MUTTON AT MRS. THRALE'S, HE FLIRTS IN- NOCUOUSLY WITH HIS NEIGHBOR FANNY BURNEY. "Are you making mischief between the young lady and me already?"	137
9.	HE PREPARES THE BASHFUL MISS BURNEY FOR AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE FORMIDABLE BLUESTOCKING, MRS. MONTAGU. "So, at her, Burney—at her, and down with her!"	142
10.	A BEAUTIFUL HOSTESS REPROACHES HIM ON THE INFRE- QUENCY OF HIS COMPLIMENTS. "It constantly moves my in- dignation to be applied to, to speak well of a thing which I think con- temptible."	150
11.	SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS FAILS IN HIS DEFENSE OF DAVID GARRICK. "Besides, besides, sir, besides—do you not know,—are you so ignorant as not to know that it is the highest degree of rudeness	152

to quote a man against himself?"

Goethe

PORTRAIT IN DIALOGUE III

- 1. THE WORLDLY AUTHOR OF THE SORROWS OF WERTHER 158
 REBUKES A TIMID UNIVERSITY GRADUATE ON THE SOCIAL TABOOS. "Have you ever been in love yourself?"
- 2. HE SHOCKS A YOUNG PROFESSOR OF HISTORY BY DISMISSING THE WHOLE RECORD OF THE PAST AS A TISSUE OF
 LIES. "Not everything in history actually happened."
- 3. A MUSICAL GATHERING AT WEIMAR FEATURING A 176
 TWELVE-YEAR-OLD UNKNOWN—FELIX MENDELSSOHNBARTHOLDY. "Go down into the garden and cool off! You are
 burning like fire!"
- 4. AN OLYMPIAN OF WORLD LITERATURE TURNS HIS GAZE 180 ON HIS OWN COUNTRYMEN, AND ON THREE GREAT POETS—VOLTAIRE, BYRON, AND HIMSELF. "The Germans cannot stop being Philistines!"
- 5. HE TELLS AN ENGLISH MUNITIONS MANUFACTURER THAT 187
 ROCKETS WOULD HAVE PROVED USEFUL TO SATAN IN
 PARADISE LOST. "In any case, it would have been more poetic."
- 6. AFTERNOON THOUGHTS ON BISHOPS, ENGLISHMEN, MAD-HOUSES, AND DANGEROUS BOOKS. "I am ready to follow Your Highness into hell, but I am determined not to follow you into a madhouse."

Napoleon

PORTRAIT IN DIALOGUE IV

- 1. FAMILY REUNION IN THE TUILERIES ON THE EVE OF A 199 CORONATION. "Have you a throne to give me, my dear brother?"
- 2. NAPOLEON AND GOETHE: A CONQUEROR OF MEN INTER-RUPTS HIS BREAKFAST TO QUESTION A POET. "Sire, I observe that when Your Majesty travels he does not neglect to take notice of even the smallest objects."
- 3. A FORMER FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO RUSSIA HEARS AN EM-PEROR PREPARING FOR WAR AMID PROTESTATIONS OF PEACE. "I repeat, I do not want war."

- 4. MOSCOW AND THE ROAD BACK. "Can you picture to yourself, 218 Caulaincourt, the figure you would cut in an iron cage, in the main square of London?"
- 5. NAPOLEON AND METTERNICH: AN IMPERIAL TANTRUM 222 OVER THE PROSPECT OF AUSTRIAN NEUTRALITY. "I was brought up on the battlefield, and a man like me does not concern himself much about the lives of a million men."
- 6. EPILOGUE TO WATERLOO: A DEFEATED CONQUEROR CON-SIDERS THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME. "I shall go to the United States. They will give me some land.... I shall exist on the products of my fields."
- 7. FINALE ON ST. HELENA: AN IRATE CAPTIVE LECTURES A 235 BRITISH GOVERNOR ON THE PROPER BEHAVIOR TO-WARD A FORMER EMPEROR. "I am an emperor in my own circle, and will be so as long as I live."

Shelley-Trelawny

A POET AND AN ADVENTURER EXCHANGE THOUGHTS ON WOMEN, BOOKS, AND CLIPPERS DURING A TRIP TO LEGHORN. "We are indebted to the poets for having transformed women from what they were to what they are."

Byron-Trelawny

A BITTER EXILE SOUNDS OUT A COUNTRYMAN ON THE SITU-ATION AT HOME AND TOASTS A "ROYAL PERSONAGE."

"If I met the Devil at your table I should treat him as a friend of yours."

Byron-Kennedy

AN ERRANT POET DISCUSSES THE STATE OF HIS SOUL WITH 259
AN ANXIOUS BRITISH MINISTER. "What, then, you think me in a very bad way?"

Charles Lamb

SOME LONDON WITS GATHER TO CONSIDER WHICH OF THE CELEBRATED DEAD THEY WOULD MOST HAVE LIKED TO MEET. "Yet, I would rather have seen Chaucer in company with the author of the Decameron, and have heard them exchange their best stories together."

Hazlitt-Northcote

- 1. AN ESSAYIST AND A PAINTER EXCHANGE THOUGHTS ON 287
 PRUDERY AND NUDITY. "I have seen pictures muffled up to the chin that had twenty times as much vice in them."
- 2. APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA. "You certainly have not spared others. 293
 Why should you expect nothing but the milk of human kindness?"

Alexandre Dumas

AN ASPIRING YOUNG WRITER SPURNS A SUGGESTION MADE 298
BY AN OFFICE COLLEAGUE. "Dumas: What is France waiting for? Lassagne: The historical novel. Dumas: But the history of France is so boring! Lassagne: What!"

Stendhal

A FIERY ADVOCATE OF FREE THOUGHT FINDS HIMSELF IN A 307 LAIR OF ADVERSARIES. "You see, we have no way of understanding one another. I am a rat and you are a cat."

Victor Hugo

AUTHOR MEETS ACTRESS: A YOUNG PLAYWRIGHT SPARS VER-BALLY WITH HIS LEADING LADY OVER THE LINE, "MY SUPERB AND GENEROUS LION." "The fact is that it seems awfully funny to me to be calling Monsieur Firmin 'my lion.'"

Heinrich Heine

PORTRAIT IN DIALOGUE V

- 1. A GERMAN EXPATRIATE PULLS THE LEG OF A REPRESENTA-TIVE OF THE FRENCH PRESS. "There's nothing so amusing as to mystify your contemporaries, but, taking everything into account, there's nothing so difficult."
- 2. THE BIG THREE: HEINE, BALZAC, AND EUGENE SUE CLASH
 AT BREAKFAST OVER A SHEAF OF "ISMS," PAUSING LONG
 ENOUGH TO CONSIDER A MARITAL PROBLEM. "I can't
 understand why fidelity is more strongly demanded of a man than of a
 woman. We lose nothing by a woman's infidelity."
- 3. A BRITISH VISITOR HEARS A GLOWING TRIBUTE TO HIS 337 COUNTRYMEN, THE INMATES OF BEDLAM. "I found English madmen infinitely saner than my own Germans or than these Parisians—indeed, much saner than myself."

Thomas Carlyle

A GLOOMY DEAN OF ENGLISH LETTERS BEMOANS THE STATE
OF ENGLISH MORALS AND POLITICS. "I see no hope for these
times—they must go to perdition their own way."

Wagner-Rossini

REUNION IN PARIS: A RETIRED COMPOSER OF THE OLD 362 SCHOOL INVITES A FELLOW EXPATRIATE TO EXPOUND THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE. "Ah! Monsieur Wagner—like a new Orpheus you have no fear of crossing the redoubtable threshold!"

Lincoln

washington, d.c., 1864

A NEW ENGLAND MOTHER PLEADS WITH A PRESIDENT FOR THE LIFE OF HER SON OVER A WAR SECRETARY'S PROTEST. "Don't be in such a hurry, Stanton; listen to any woman speaking for her son's life."

Bismarck

AT VERSAILLES

THE IRON CHANCELLOR IS OUTSMARTED BY A BOGUS SPANISH GRANDEE DURING THE SIEGE OF PARIS. "No one will
ever make me believe that Paris is a heroic city; but, be that as it may,
we shall soon be in it."

Meanwhile in Paris

ERNEST RENAN PRECIPITATES A LITERARY STORM BY CALL- 400 ING THE BESIEGERS "A SUPERIOR RACE." "The Germans have very few pleasures, and of these the greatest are hatred, meditation, and vengeance."

The Goncourt Brothers

RECORDED FRAGMENTS OF INTIMATE COLLOQUIES AMONG 404 FLAUBERT, CAUTIER, DAUDET, ZOLA, TURGENIEFF, AND OTHERS. "I never go near a woman without a feeling of respect and surprise at my good luck."

Alfred Lord Tennyson

A POET-LAUREATE REMINISCES ABOUT SOME EARLY LITERARY
ENTHUSIASMS AND PUZZLES OVER THE CASE OF JOHN
KEATS. "He was a livery-stable-keeper's son. I don't know where he
got it from ... unless from heaven."

Leo Tolstoy

AN AMERICAN REFORMER STOUTLY RESISTS THE DOCTRINE 4:

OF NON-RESISTANCE IN THE COUNTRY PLACE OF A
GREAT PACIFIST. "Kennan: Suppose that this bleeding, defenseless, half-naked girl bad appealed to you for protection and had thrown
herself into your arms; suppose it had been your daughter—would you
still have refused to interfere by an act of violence? Tolstor (silent
for a few moments; his eyes filled with tears): Do you know absolutely
that that thing was done?"

Walt Whitman

A PATRIARCH OF AMERICAN POETRY CELEBRATES HIS SEVENTY-SECOND BIRTHDAY WITH CHAMPAGNE AND TESTIMONIALS. "I must say to my friends further along the table that I am about half blind and I cannot see more than ten feet ahead and hardly that—else I am sure I should specify them."

Oscar Wilde

THE LAST PHASE: AN EXILE ENTERTAINS SOME FRIENDS IN A 454 PARIS CAFÉ. "The world will not listen to me now."

Thomas Hardy

WILLIAM ARCHER FEELS OUT HIS HOST ON THE CHANCES OF A MIDNIGHT VISITATION FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD. "I seriously assure you that I would give ten years of my life—well, perhaps that offer is rather beyond my means—to see a ghost."

Anatole France-Auguste Rodin

REUNION AT VILLA SAID: A BROKEN FRIENDSHIP IS REPAIRED 490 AT THE SHRINE OF AN ANCIENT STATUE OF APHRODITE.

"A Greek girl with a body like a flower..."

Shaw-Chesterton

TWO MASTERS OF WIT AND PARADOX BREAK A LANCE OVER 498
THE ABSORPTION OF ALCOHOL. "There is only one form of drunkenness I acknowledge—the drunkenness of sobriety."

Thomas Masaryk

 HOW AN AMIABLE ACADEMIC RECLUSE BECAME A REVO-LUTIONARY AND FOUNDED A COUNTRY. "It was no use; I had to bring about the necessary reform by revolutionary means." 2. KAREL CAPEK SOUNDS OUT THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY ON HIS RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL BELIEFS. "They told me that this year the nightingales were singing because they had plenty of mosquitoes. And a thought passed through my mind: do those nightingales sing their praises to the Good Lord for those mosquitoes? And those mosquitoes—that buzzing of theirs, is that also a song of praise because the nightingales are swallowing them as they fly?"

Clemenceau

AN AGING TIGER BEWAILS THE SOFTNESS OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES AND NOSTALGICALLY SURVEYS HIS OWN CAREER. "The truth is that all of you are just waiting for an excuse to twiddle your thumbs."

H. G. Wells-Joseph Stalin

LIBERALISM VERSUS MARXISM. "I am more to the left than you, Mr. Stalin."

551

567