

MANON.

THE STORY OF THE OPERA.

The story of Manon Lescaut, as here given, is a dramatization, by Meilhac and Grille, of the famous novel by Abbe Provost. The last act of the opera, however, is original with the two librettists.

The action occurs in the year 1721. Guillot Morfontain and a party of gay friends are making merry at an Inn. Manon, escorted by her cousin Lescaut, of the Guards, arrives on her way to a convent. She is of the peasantry, but vain as well as beautiful. Guillot leaves his friends, to pay attention to the young girl. He meets with no success, and is finally compelled to retreat.

The Chevalier Des Grieux, however, who appears upon the scene during the temporary absence of the cousin Lescaut, is more successful. Although about to take holy orders and become a priest, Des Grieux is charmed and infatuated by Manon's beauty and seeming simplicity; while she, in her vanity, seeks for a higher social position, and is also fascinated by the young Chevalier's manliness. The result is an almost immediate elopement of the pair.

They occupy apartments in Paris (act second). Before Des Grieux can secure his father's consent to their marriage the young man is placed in jeopardy by Lescaut and De Brétigny. The two men are soon pacified; shortly afterwards Des Grieux is seized by six men in the Count's (his father's) employ, and all taken away from Manon.

In the third act we find Manon under protection of De Brétigny. But she learns that Des Grieux (whom she really loves) is not the priest at St. Sulpice; and she flies from Brétigny to win back her lover.

In the second scene there is an interesting and dramatic situation, wherein Manon succeeds in inducing Des Grieux to renounce the priesthood and renew a gay life.

In the fourth act is seen the interior of the gambling-house in Paris. Des Grieux is unjustly accused of cheating, and trouble ensues. He and Manon are about to be arrested where Count Des Grieux appears and release the Chevalier; but Manon, through the effort of Guillot who seeks revenge, is condemned to transportation.

In the last scene (a lonely road on the way to Havre), Manon again meets her lover Des Grieux, and dies in his arms.

NOTE. In the original score of the opera, the second scene of act fourth as here given is really the fifth act.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE CHEVALIER DES GRIEUX.	ATTENDANT AT ST. SULPICE.
THE COUNT DES GRIEUX. his Father.	A SERGEANT OF GUARDS.
LESCAUT, of the Royal Guard; Manon's cousin.	A SOLDIER.
GUILLOT MORFONTAIN, Minister of Finance, and a Roue.	POUSSETTE, Actresses.
DE BRÉTIGNY, a Nobleman.	JAVOTTE, Actresses.
AN INNKEEPER.	ROSSETTE, Actresses.
	MANON, the Adventuress.

Gamblers, Croupiers, Guards, Travellers, Townspeople, Ladies, Gentlemen, etc.