

26 MOLIERE

MR JOURDAIN Well, anyway, don't forget to send me the musicians who are to sing at the table.
MUSIC MASTER You will have everything you need.
MR JOURDAIN But above all, make sure the ballet is beautiful.
DANCIN' MSTR Everything will be as you like it including among other things, certain minuets that you shall see.
MR JOURDAIN Ah! The minuet is my dance! I want you to see me dance it. Let's do it, master.
DANCIN' MSTR A hat, sir, if you please.

Mr Jourdain takes the hat off his Lackey's head and wears it over his nightcap. The Dancing Mstr takes Mr Jourdain's hand and sings the melody to a Minuet to which he makes his student dance.

DANCIN' MSTR La-la-la... Watch the cadence, if you please. La-la-la... Lift the right leg La-la-la... Try not to move your shoulder so much... La-la-la... Don't hold your arms so rigidly... La-la-la... Lift up your head... Kindly turn out your toes; don't turn them in... La-la-la... Hold your body straight...
MR JOURDAIN Aha?
MUSIC MASTER A matchless performance!
MR JOURDAIN That reminds me; teach me how I should bow when greeting a marchioness, for I shall soon have need to know.
DANCIN' MSTR How to bow when greeting a marchioness?
MR JOURDAIN Yes, a marchioness by the name of Dorimene.
DANCIN' MSTR Give me your hand.

Bourgeois Gentleman 27

MR JOURDAIN No, you just have to do it. I'll remember it.
DANCIN' MSTR Well, if you wish to greet her with great respect, you must bow once and fall back; then, advancing towards her, you make three more bows bending down to her knees on the last one.
MR JOURDAIN Let's see you do it.

The Dancing Mstr takes the three bows.

MR JOURDAIN Good!
1ST LACKEY (Entering) Sir, your fencing master is here.
MR JOURDAIN Have him come in and give me my lesson. (To the Music Master and Dancing Mstr) I'd like you to watch me at this.

Scene 3: Mr Jourdain, Dancing Mstr, Music Master, Fencing Mstr, 1st Lackey.

FENCIN' MSTR (Taking two foils from the Lackey and handing one to Mr. Jourdain) Let's begin, sir, with the salute. Your body erect, leaning slightly upon the left thigh. Your legs not so far apart. Your wrist opposite your hip. The tip of your sword at shoulder level. Your arm not quite so extended. Your left hand at eye level. Angle your shoulder more. Your head up. Assume a look of confidence. Advance. Your body steady. Hit me in quart and follow through. One, two. Recover. Once again, steadily. One, two. Jump backwards. When you thrust, sir, you must

disengage your sword first and then have your body lean into that attack. One, two. Let's go. Hit me in tierce and follow through. Advance. Thrust from there. One, two. Recover. Once more. One, two. Jump backwards. (He scores two or three touches as he calls out.) On guard, sir. On guard!

MR JOURDAIN

Aha!

MUSIC MASTER

You're doing marvelously.

FENCIN' MSTR

As I have already told you, the whole secret of fencing consists of two things: to give and not to receive, and, as I showed you the other day by means of demonstrative reasoning, it is impossible to receive if you know how to deflect the sword of your adversary from the line of your body. This can be accomplished quite simply by a slight movement of the wrist either inward or outward.

MR JOURDAIN

In this way, therefore, a man of little courage can be sure to kill without being killed himself?

FENCIN' MSTR

Without a doubt. Did you not see the demonstration?

MR JOURDAIN

Yes.

FENCIN' MSTR

And from this you can see the basis for the esteem that the state must bestow upon the men of our profession, and why the science of arms is so vastly superior to all the useless sciences such as dancing, music and...

DANCIN' MSTR

Easy does it, my good fencing master. I'll have you speak more respectfully of dancing.

MUSIC MASTER

I'll thank you, sir, not to abuse the excellence of music.

FENCIN' MSTR

I find you both very laughable in your wish to compare your sciences to mine.

DANCIN' MSTR

Behold the man of importance.

MUSIC MASTER

Behold the funny animal with his plastron!

FENCIN' MSTR

My little dancing master, I'm going to teach you some very fancy steps; and you, my little musician, are going to have some very pretty tunes sliced out of you.

DANCIN' MSTR

I'll teach you your own trade, swashbuckler!

MR JOURDAIN

(**To Dancing Mstr**) Are you mad, quarreling with someone who understands tierce and quart, and who knows how to kill a man by demonstrative reasoning?

DANCIN' MSTR

I scoff at his demonstrative reasoning and at his tierce and his quart!

MR JOURDAIN

(**To the Dancing Mstr**) Gently, I say!

FENCIN' MSTR

(**To Dancing Mstr**) How's that? You impertinent dwarf!

MR JOURDAIN

Oh! My fencing master...!

DANCIN' MSTR

(**To Fencing Mstr**) How's that? You bulky drayhorse!

MR JOURDAIN

Oh! My dancing master...!

FENCIN' MSTR

If I go after you...

MR JOURDAIN

(**To Fencing Master**) Gently!

DANCIN' MSTR

If I lay my hands on you...

MR JOURDAIN

(**To Dancing Mstr**) Easy now!

FENCIN' MSTR

I'll slice you in such a way...

MR JOURDAIN

(**To Fencing Mstr**) Please...!

DANCIN' MSTR

I'll thrash you so that you...

MR JOURDAIN

(**To Dancing Mstr**) I beg you...