48 Act One

Kipps (Interested in spite of himself.) The lawyers?

CHITTERLOW Exactly. And very civil they were too.

KIPPS And?

CHITTERLOW We're in! Biff! Just like that!

Kipps A fortune?

CHITTERLOW A fortune!

KIPPS (Hesitant.) How much?

CHITTERLOW (*Grandly*.) Twelve hundred pounds, sire!

KIPPS For me? Twelve 'undred?

CHITTERLOW Twelve hundred pounds a year!

(Having only just regained his balance, KIPPS sways once then passes

out - flat on his back.)

Shop! . . . Shop!

(SID, PEARCE and BUGGINS come in – each from separate directions.)

SID What's up?

CHITTERLOW Twelve hundred . . . that's what's up!

PEARCE Twelve hundred?!

CHITTERLOW A year. It's the truth. I went to the lawyer myself.

BUGGINS (Kneeling over KIPPS.) It wouldn't surprise me if he hasn't dropped

dead. Dropped dead with the shock of it.

(FLO, VICTORIA and KATE appear.)

FLO Who's dead?

Buggins Artie.

FLO Oh Artie . . . Artie!

BUGGINS All that money. And he won't live to enjoy it.

VICTORIA Money?

Pearce Twelve hundred. A year.

FLO He ain't dead. He's comin' round.

VICTORIA I wonder if he'd like to get married.

FLO (Patting Kipps's face.) Come on, Artie. There, there . . . there, there.

Buggins Water!

Chitterlow Champagne, more like.

KIPPS (Coming to.) Where am I? Where am . . . ?

CHITTERLOW Sire!

KIPPS Oo – I just remembered. Twelve 'undred! Twelve 'undred a year!

(And HE passes out again.)

Pearce Travel. If I had that sort of money I'd travel.

BUGGINS He don't want to go to France. Them Frenchies 'll have it off 'im in

no time.

VICTORIA (Rushing to KIPPS.) He'll be going nowhere in this state.

KATE If I was him I'd go to the Rockies and shoot bears.

FLO How ladylike.

Pearce London – that's the only place for the man about town.

Buggins And what about the shop?

SID Hang the shop.

(But Shalford has entered, unobserved.)

