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YOUNG
MR. PRITCHARD.

MEYER'S CELEBRATED GREASE PAINTS.

We are now prepared to furnish a full line of Grease Paints of the celebrated make of Charles Meyer, at the manufacturer's price. These paints are acknowledged by professionals to be the *best*, and are in general use in our theatres. Compared to the old method of using powders, these paints are far superior, as they impart a clearer and more life-like appearance to the skin, and, being of a greasy nature, cannot easily be affected by perspiration. We can supply the following necessary colors, put up in a neat box, with full directions for use, viz.: Light Flesh, Dark Flesh, Brown, Black, Lake, White, Carmine, and Slate. Price, \$1.00.

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Justly recommended by the profession as being the *best*.

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{ Blanc de Théâtre. }

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We can furnish any of the articles advertised in the catalogues of other publishers of plays, at list prices.

WALTER H. BAKER & CO., 10 Milk Street, Boston.

YOUNG MR. PRITCHARD.

A COMEDY IN TWO SCENES.

BY

ESTHER B. TIFFANY.

21243 R1

BOSTON:

Walter H. Baker & Co.



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ELECTROTYPED BY C. J. PETERS AND SON, BOSTON

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MISS BETTY }
MISS HETTY } Maiden ladies.
EDITH Their niece.
HENRY PRITCHARD.

Costumes modern and appropriate.

The division into scenes may be disregarded if desired.

YOUNG MR. PRITCHARD.

SCENE I. — *An old-fashioned sitting-room. MISS H. and MISS B. discovered before glass cupboard, containing china and glass. MISS B. with hand on key.*

MISS B. But, my dear, we have always left the key in the lock before, and I am sure young Mr. Pritchard's feelings —

MISS H. My dear, young Mr. Pritchard's feelings could be very easily mended, whereas one of great-grandmother Gorham's teacups —

MISS B. But I am sure that young Mr. Pritchard would never make so bold as to drink out of one of great-grandmother Go —

MISS H. Then, if young Mr. Pritchard does not drink out of great-grandmother Gorham's teacups, why should we leave the key in the keyhole?

MISS B. It looks so suspicious to take it away.

MISS H. It looks so careless to leave it in.

MISS B. Young Mr. Pritchard is a gentleman.

MISS H. Young Mr. Pritchard is a man.

MISS B. My dear, you are growing excited.

MISS H. My dear, you are growing warm.

MISS B. But, my dear, we have discussed this very point for the last ten years —

MISS H. Nine years —

MISS B. Ten years. Ever since we began to let the house in the summer. Let the house! Our honored father could not rest in his grave, if he knew that the old homestead — (*Takes out handkerchief.*)

MISS H. The old Gorham homestead — (*Takes out handkerchief.*)

MISS B. Built in the year 1702 —

MISS H. By Peter Gorham, of Salem, England —

MISS B. And descending, along with the teacups, in un-interrupted —

MISS H. (*embracing sister*). Poor Betty!

MISS B. Poor Hetty! (*They weep.*)

(*Enter EDITH.*)

EDITH. Well, aunties, they are carrying down the trunks. The train starts in an hour. Are you most ready?

MISS H. (*putting up handkerchief*). Yes, except for putting away the key of the cupboard.

MISS B. But, my dear Hetty, the key is always left in the lock. Young Mr. Pritchard is a single man — there are common cups enough in the china-closet. Did not I go to school with young Mr. Pritchard's mother? And didn't his great-grandmother Wren marry our great-grandmother Bowdoin? If any man could be trusted with great-grandmother Gorham's teacups, young Mr. Pritchard's the man.

MISS H. My dear, I am the oldest.

MISS B. My dear, I am the most practical.

MISS H. My dear, I have great-grandmother Gorham's baptismal name.

MISS B. My dear, I have great-grandmother Gorham's nose.

MISS H. It's my place.

MISS B. It's my right.

EDITH. Oh, Aunt Hetty — Aunt Betty —

MISS H. You don't give me a chance to speak.

MISS B. You cut short the words in my mouth.

MISS H. } If you only would listen.

MISS B. }

MISS H. I see — there is nothing left for it but —

MISS B. The only satisfactory way —

MISS H. If I put down my arguments on paper —

MISS B. If I present you my side in writing —

(*Both seat themselves at table with pen and paper.*)

EDITH. I know we shall miss that train. However, I don't care. In fact, I can't help hoping we may, and tomorrow's, too. If only we could get a sight of that Mr. Pritchard. How ridiculous it is that, for the last ten years — ever since I was so high — he has been hiring our house in the summer, and yet we have never met. I wish my aunts weren't ashamed about renting the house. Just because they knew his mother, they feel too proud to have anything to do with him.

MISS H. (*writing*). As for young Mr. Pritchard's antecedents —

MISS B. (*writing*). As for the likelihood of young Mr Pritchard —

EDITH. Aunt Betty, you have been calling Mr. Pritchard,

young Mr. Pritchard, ever since I can remember. He must be an octogenarian by this time.

MISS B. My dear, young Mr. Pritchard is a very promising young man.

EDITH. How young?

MISS H. One and forty.

MISS B. My dear, young Mr. Pritchard is three and forty, if he's a day.

MISS H. My dear Betty, young Mr. Pritchard is the exact age of —

MISS B. Fanny Johnson's daughter, who was born —

MISS H. In the year Uncle Joseph sailed for China, which makes them both —

MISS H. } One and forty!

MISS B. } Three and forty! (*Both jump up.*)

MISS H. But my dear Betty!

MISS B. But my dear Hetty!

MISS H. I am quite certain of my facts, because —

MISS B. I know I am right, because —

MISS H. If you would but let me speak —

MISS B. If you would but listen —

EDITH. Oh, gracious, aunties! when a man gets that old, what does it matter anyway?

MISS H. } One and forty!

MISS B. } Three and forty!

MISS H. I see there is nothing for it but —

MISS B. The only satisfactory way —

MISS H. If I should put down my arguments in black and white —

MISS B. If I present my side in writing — (*Both seat themselves at table.*)

EDITH (*comes front, takes out photograph*). When shall I find out about him? Here it is three years that we have been exchanging books and things, and never a glimpse have we had of each other. I wonder what relation he is to that old Mr. Pritchard, that he comes here every year with him? (*Goes to drawer of cabinet.*) It was merely by accident that first time that I left anything here — my gloves, I remember, almost brand new — and when we came back in the fall, and I went to find them, they were gone, but there was a box of chocolate creams instead. Then, next year, just for fun, I left a ribbon, and he left Tennyson's poems, marked. Then, the next time, I left my photograph, and found this. Goodness! if Aunt Hetty or Aunt Betty knew! Let me see, what can I leave this time? What color are his eyes, I wonder? I wonder if he would like to know what color mine

are, or my hair? My hair! That's an idea! I'll — Aunt Betty, are your scissors in your bag?

MISS B. Don't disturb me, my child.

EDITH. Oh, here they are. (*Cuts off lock of hair, and puts it in drawer of cabinet. Exit.*)

MISS B. There, sister.

MISS H. There, sister. (*Hand letters.*)

MISS B. Why, sister, how hot you look, and tired.

MISS H. My dear Betty, you look quite flushed and exhausted.

MISS B. Let me get you a fan.

MISS H. Let me run and fetch you a glass of wine.

MISS B. Why, my dear, you talk as if things were as they used to be in the days when we had a cellar full of wine. (*Takes handkerchief.*)

MISS H. And a stable full of horses. (*Handkerchief.*)

MISS B. And a kitchen full of servants.

MISS H. Poor Betty! } (*embracing.*)

MISS B. Poor Hetty! }

MISS H. Perhaps it would refresh and comfort you to read my letter.

MISS B. And you to read mine. (*Retire to different sides.*)

MISS H. (*reading*). Gorhamville, June 10, 18—. My beloved sister: Appreciating to the utmost the sound judgment, delicate discrimination, and inherent amiability of your nature, I yet feel constrained to confess —

MISS B. (*reading*). My dearly beloved sister: Conscious in the innermost depths of my soul of the nobility of your sentiments, the brilliancy of your parts, and the soundness of your understanding, truth necessitates me to write —

MISS H. (*reading*). Feeling convinced that your piercing eye has only to be pointed one instant on the truth of my arguments to —

MISS B. (*reading*). Throwing myself upon the clearness of your discrimination, I —

(*Enter EDITH.*)

EDITH. The carriage, aunties.

MISS H. (*reading*). The name of the Gorham family —

MISS B. (*reading*). Descendant of the Pritchard's —

EDITH. Aunt Betty, the carriage! The carriage, Aunt Hetty!

MISS H. Mercy on us!

MISS B. Hurry, sister, hurry! (*Throw on shawls, and exeunt.*)

SCENE II. — *Same as Scene I. Enter HENRY PRITCHARD, carrying valise, fishing-pole, and gun. Butterfly pinned on his hat. Throws down things.*

PRITCHARD. Foiled again! Told them I was coming to-morrow, in hopes of catching them to-day; but it's no good, the servant tells me they are off. When shall I ever see the pretty original of my photograph? Let's see what the little cabinet has this year. (*Goes to cabinet and opens drawer.*) Nothing! Not even a glove or a ribbon! What an old fool I've been, anyway! Well, at least, I've got a good cigar. (*Lights cigar, and takes off hat.*) And an extremely rare specimen of a cecropia. Found him on a rose-bush in front of the house. Fine neighborhood, this! The best place for cecropias I know. (*Pins butterfly on curtain.*) And as for this (*takes out handkerchief from crown of hat*), let's see, where shall I put him? (*Goes to cupboard.*) H'm — yes — this glass decanter; just the thing. (*Puts snake in decanter, and stands it on side-table. Sits down.*) So the little girl thought she wouldn't leave me anything this year. (*Glances over the table.*) If those old ladies would only remember to leave me an ash-receiver. (*Rises, goes to cupboard, and takes out teacup.*) This will do. (*Complacently.*) Though it is I who say it, you won't find many smokers so careful about spilling ashes as I am. How pleased the dear old ladies would be if they could look in upon me. (*Sets cup on centre-table.*) By the way, though, I think I'll have another look in that drawer. (*Goes to cabinet.*) Aha! Tucked cosily into the farthest corner, a lock of hair, yellow hair, and tied with a blue ribbon. So she didn't forget me, after all. I hope she doesn't expect the same of me, though, as I really couldn't spare any considerable amount. A tress of my moustache, that might do. Well, there's time enough to decide on that. Now for an interview with the cook about dinner. (*Exit.*)

(*Enter MISS H. and MISS B. out of breath.*)

MISS B. The first time in ten years that we have missed the train.

MISS H. Which I think ought to prove to you quite conclusively, Hetty, that your habit of arguing —

MISS B. My dear sister, I never said a word; I merely —

MISS H. (*falling over fishing-pole.*) Gracious me!

MISS B. (*bumping against gun.*) Bless us, and preserve us!

Miss H. } Burglars!
Miss B. }

Miss H. A dusty valise on our best parlor chair!

Miss B. A dusty umbrella leaning up against our best parlor wall-paper!

Miss H. (*darting to curtain*). An awful wriggling thing pinned up on our best parlor curtain!

Miss B. (*darting to side-table*). A horrible wriggling serpent in our best cut-glass decanter! (*Both rushing to centre-table.*)

Miss H. A heap of dirty ashes —

Miss B. In great-grandmother Gorham's teacup —
(*Sink down in chairs.*)

(*Enter EDITH.*)

EDITH. Oh, Aunt Hetty! oh, Aunt Betty! what do you think?

Miss H. AND Miss B. We knew it — burglars!

EDITH. Burglars? No — Mr. Pritchard!

Miss H. AND Miss B. Then he will protect us. Where is he?

EDITH. Eating plums down in the orchard. Bridget says these are his things.

Miss H. His things!

Miss B. His things!

Miss H. His things! Do you think young Mr. Pritchard, whose mother went to school with us at the Bridgewater Academy, would put a dusty valise on our best parlor chair?

Miss B. And a horrible wriggling creature on our best parlor curtain?

Miss H. And a terrible green serpent in our best cut-glass decanter?

BOTH. And cigar-ashes in great-grandmother Gorham's best teacup?

EDITH (*who has been examining cabinet*). Why, the other one must be here, too. The hair's gone.

Miss B. My dear child, do come away from that horrid green reptile.

Miss H. My dear Edith, don't go near that gun. As for these being young Mr. Pritchard's things, it's utterly out of the question.

EDITH. But, aunty, who ever heard of burglars going round with guns, and fishing-poles, and umbrellas, and butterflies, and snakes?

Miss B. My dear, you never can tell what burglars won't do. And it appears to me very much more likely for a burglar with the evil propensities of his class to go about with

guns, and fishing-poles, and serpents, than for a gentleman like young Mr. Pritchard —

EDITH. Well, the simplest way of settling the question is by looking at the name on the bag. Stars! How dusty it is!

MISS H. Merely a ruse of the burglar to hide his name and escape recognition.

MISS B. I don't believe there is any name on it. I do not believe the burglar would dare.

EDITH. Well, it's a nice looking bag, worked on canvas, too, on one side.

MISS H. By the burglar's wife, I don't doubt.

EDITH (*taking out handkerchief*). I'm going to dust it off.

MISS H. (*jumping up*). Wait! (*Takes newspaper from her bag, and spreads it on floor. Sets valise on it. Takes feather-duster from wall and dusts it.*)

EDITH (*reading*). Henry —

MISS B. (*reading*). Wren —

MISS H. (*reading*). Pritchard. (*Impressive silence*).

MISS B. (*in a frightened whisper*). You don't think they have murdered young Mr. Pritchard, and stolen his bag, and —

MISS H. No, sister, no. We can deceive ourselves no longer as to the true character of young Mr. Pritchard. And to *this* man have we been letting the house for the last ten years.

MISS B. And to this degenerate son of the Pritchards have we rashly intrusted the homestead and the heirlooms of the Gorhams.

MISS H. Let us interview Bridget. She must have known his propensities. She must have been in collusion with him. Come, sister. (*Exeunt.*)

EDITH. Where can he be? The other one! Oh, I'm so excited!

(*Enter PRITCHARD, eating plum.*)

PRITCH. Fine plum, very. (*Sees EDITH.*) Oh — I — I — beg your pardon. I fear I intrude. (*Aside.*) The original!

EDITH. Not at all; it is we who intrude. (*Aside.*) How awfully like the photograph he is — older brother, I am sure.

PRITCH. Let me clear a chair for you.

EDITH. You see, we missed the train, and so we didn't know you had come already, and, beside, we had nowhere else to go for the night.

PRITCH. A most fortunate combination of circumstances for me. (*Aside.*) The photograph doesn't, in the least, do her justice.

EDITH (*aside*). Yes, I'm sure he's the elder brother. Pleasant old gentleman. (*Aloud.*) Do you — I suppose you find it so lonely here that you bring your — friends and — relatives with you sometimes.

PRITCH. Lonely? Oh, no. Lonely? (*Shaking decanter*). Do you think it would be possible to be lonely when the place abounds, fairly abounds with these superb —

EDITH. My patience! You didn't find that about here?

PRITCH. (*enthusiastically*). Yes, indeed, not ten rods from the house.

EDITH. Ten rods from the house?

PRITCH. In Stag Hollow.

EDITH. Stag Hollow? I shall never go there again.

PRITCH. Oh, you needn't be afraid; you won't disturb them. You've no idea how tame they are.

EDITH. Tame?

PRITCH. Yes; most fearless creatures, crawl right over your feet. Why, one of them, splendid specimen, crawled right into my pocket once.

EDITH. Oh!

PRITCH. Yes, I was in luck that day. (*Aside.*) Very intelligent girl!

EDITH (*aside*). There's something awfully nice about him, in spite of that horrid snake. I suppose I like him for his brother's sake. (*Aloud.*) But still in this large house, I suppose some companionship, that of a younger brother, for instance —

PRITCH. Yes, if one had a brother. I never had.

EDITH (*aside*). Never had a brother! (*Aloud.*) Or of a cousin.

PRITCH. Yes. Strange enough, all my cousins, and I've a couple of dozens, are girls.

EDITH. Girls? (*Aside.*) Then it can't be his cousin. It was probably one of them that worked the bag.

PRITCH. But now you mention it, it is lonely, terribly lonely. I can imagine companionship that might — but then there are always books, poetry — Tennyson, for example.

EDITH (*aside*). So he likes Tennyson, too. How stupid it was of Aunt Hetty to say he was forty-three. I'm convinced he's only forty-one. I wish he'd take those glasses off his nose so I could see his eyes better.

PRITCH. Do you ever read poetry?

EDITH. Oh, yes, occasionally.

PRITCH. A — a — Tennyson? (*Takes off glasses, and begins to rub them, looking full at EDITH.*)

EDITH (*confused*). Yes, occasionally. (*Aside.*) The very eyes of the photograph.

PRITCH. I've got a volume in my pocket now. It's pleasant out in the rose-walk, don't you think? .

EDITH. The rose-walk?

PRITCH. Suppose we take a turn. (*Exeunt.*)

(*Enter Miss B. and Miss H.*)

MISS H. And to think Bridget could so have deceived us.

MISS B. All these years.

MISS H. Well, there's but one thing to be done. In that we both agree. He must leave.

MISS B. This very day.

MISS H. And will receive the expression of our displeasure by letter.

MISS B. (*solemnly*). By letter.

MISS H. A letter composed in the terms of courtesy that alone a gentlewoman and the descendant of gentlewomen would know by instinct how to choose, but yet breathing —

MISS B. A spirit of firm determination.

MISS H. We understand each other exactly. And before going any farther let me, my dear Betty, say to you, how consoling in all our afflictions I find it that however much in minor matters we may be perturbed by difference of opinion, yet, whenever a crisis like the present comes upon us, we are as one.

MISS B. My dear sister! (*Embrace, then seat themselves at opposite sides of table, and take up pens.*)

MISS B. (*writing*). Mr. Pritchard — Honored Sir —

MISS H. (*writing*). Mr. Pritchard — Esteemed Sir —

MISS B. (*looking up*). But, my dear Hetty, what are you doing?

MISS H. But, my dear Betty, what are you doing?

BOTH. Writing to young Mr. Pritchard.

MISS H. But I thought we both agreed —

MISS B. That I was the proper person to do it.

MISS H. I took it for granted —

MISS B. I never for a moment imagined —

MISS H. You yourself have always acknowledged that my epistolary style —

MISS B. You cannot forget that my honored father himself intrusted me with the copying of his celebrated treatise on —

MISS H. But I am the oldest.

MISS B. I have had the most experience.

MISS H. You are getting warm.

MISS B. You are exciting yourself.

MISS H. Sister, in a crisis like this, let us keep calm. I will make a proposition. Let each retire to the privacy of her own apartment, and there compose her letter; and young Mr. Pritchard shall be the judge as to which is the more convincing. (*Exeunt different doors.*)

(*Enter EDITH and PRITCHARD.*)

EDITH. So the photograph was of you, after all.

PRITCH. Yes, taken twelve years ago, before I wore either beard or spectacles. I suppose I have changed since then. I did not realize it.

EDITH. Changed? Well, if you cut off your beard, take off your spectacles, and brush your hair a little differently. But was it really twelve years ago that you had that photograph taken? Why, twelve years ago I was only five years old.

PRITCH. And twelve years ago I was just thirty.

EDITH. Which makes you only forty-two now. There, I knew Aunt Hetty was wrong!

PRITCH. So you were five when I was thirty. Five into thirty — five into thirty — I never was strong on arithmetic — but it strikes me that five into thirty goes six times, which makes me six times as old as you.

EDITH. Oh, dear! Well, but — but seventeen doesn't go six times into forty-two, does it?

PRITCH. Six times seventeen. $6 \times 17 = ?$ $6 \times 7 = 42$. $6 \times 10 = 60 + 42 = 102$. There must be some mistake there. I'm not quite one hundred and two.

EDITH. Oh, I'm catching up fast. We'll soon be just the same age. But, tell me, did you know, of course you did, though, why I tied up my lock of hair with blue ribbon?

PRITCH. Blue ribbon? No — I —

EDITH. You really didn't know? How queer men are! Why, to let you know that my eyes were blue.

PRITCH. Why, of course! Nothing more clear, now you mention it. And so for me, it would have been the correct thing to have tied up the tress of moustache I meant to leave for you with green.

EDITH (*indignantly*). Your eyes are not green!

PRITCH. Oh, no, neither am I growing bald.

EDITH. Bald? Oh, well, I don't think in a man a little baldness matters. In fact, I think to be somewhat bald gives a man rather a distinguished air.

PRITCH. Distinguished? Now you speak of it, I don't know but that most distinguished men we hear of were bald. There was — oh — Julius Cæsar — and — a — a — Charles the Bald — and — a — a —

EDITH. Yes — and — a — a —

PRITCH. Charles the Bald, and — a — a. Do you happen to remember whether Edward the Confessor was bald or not?

EDITH. I never heard he was *not*.

PRITCH. Then we'll give him the benefit of the doubt. Edward the Confessor — and — a — a — all the rest of them.

EDITH. Well, anyway, in the photograph you look awfully romantic.

PRITCH. Oh, yes, the photograph — I'm jealous of the photograph.

EDITH. But wasn't it queer I took you for your own elder brother? Ain't you glad you're not?

PRITCH. If I were, I'd —

EDITH. And you don't think my photograph flatters me?

PRITCH. Flatters you? (*Takes her hand.*)

(*Enter MISS B. and MISS H.*)

MISS B. I never wrote so fast before.

MISS H. I just dashed it off. (*Perceiving couple.*)

MISS B. Young man!

MISS H. Edith!

MISS B. Edith, you will please present this letter to young Mr. Pritchard.

MISS H. Edith, you will please present this letter to young Mr. Pritchard.

PRITCH. (*holding letters*). Ladies — I — does it matter which I read first?

MISS H. (*bridling*). My epistolary style —

MISS B. My penmanship —

PRITCH. (*opens both*). From hastily glancing over these letters am I wrong in inferring that I have in some way unconsciously incurred your displeasure?

BOTH. Unconsciously?

PRITCH. From the contents of these letters, I gather you think me unfit to take charge of the homestead and the heirlooms of the Gorhams. (*Impressive silence.*) My dear ladies, I see but one way out of it. Give me your permission to marry your niece.

BOTH. Marry our niece?

PRITCH. Who will not only take care of me, but of the homestead and the heirlooms of the Gorhams. (*Retires back with EDITH.*)

Miss H. (*to sister*). Such a request, after putting a bright green serpent into our cut-glass decanter!

Miss B. Yes, a serpent in the cut-glass decanter; but then — we went to school with his mother.

Miss H. But the cigar-ashes in great-grandmother Gorham's teacup!

Miss B. Yes, the cigar-ashes in great-grandmother Gorham's teacup — but then his great-grandfather Wren married our great-aunt Bowdoin.

Miss H. To be sure what he said about Edith taking charge of the house had some sense in it.

Miss B. The Pritchards always had a good deal of sense.

Miss H. It would interfere with our pecuniary arrangements, if we gave up renting the house.

Miss B. I dare say he never observed the decanter was cut-glass. The Pritchards never were much in the way of glass and plate, you know.

Miss H. And I suppose he never had seen anything that took his fancy like great-grandmother Gorham's teacups —

Miss B. He's considered a very promising young man!

Miss H. He looks steady!

Miss B. I should be sorry to stand in the way of Edith's prospects.

Miss H. It was always difficult to impress Edith with the advantages of a single life.

Miss B. Shall we —

Miss H. Well —

Miss H. }

Miss B. } Henry Pritchard, *take her!*

(*Embracing, etc.*)

EDITH. Oh! and Aunt Betty, you were quite wrong about his being forty-three!

Miss H. There, Betty, what did I —

EDITH. But you were wrong, too, Aunt Hetty —

Miss B. There, Hetty, didn't I —

EDITH. He's forty-two!

Miss B. }

Miss H. } Oh, well! — forty-two; I was only a year out of

the way.

PRITCH. Miss Hetty was right last year, and Miss Betty will be right next year!

Miss H. (*complacently*). And now that it has all turned out so well, wasn't it a strange coincidence that, when we were discussing the question of renting the house, I should have said, "Let's apply to young Mr. Pritchard"?

Miss B. But, my dear Hetty, it was I who first thought of Mr. Pritchard.

Miss H. Oh, no! My dear, I remember it as if it were yesterday. We were preserving plums — and I was in the kitchen — don't you recall —

Miss B. Certainly, I recall. *You* were in the kitchen with Bridget, and *I* came in and said —

Miss H. Said, "Whomever shall we apply to?" and then *I* said —

Miss B. No, *I* said —

Miss H. My dear sister, I remember distinctly —

CURTAIN.

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 "Boofer Lady," The.
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 Bumpkin's Courtship, The.
 Charles Sumner.
 "Curfew must not ring To-night."
 Closet Scene, The. ("Hamlet.")
 Defiance of Harold the Dauntless.
 Der Drummer.
 Deutsch Maud Muller, The.
 Doorstep, The.
 Factory-girl's Diary, The.
 Farmer Bent's Sheep-washing.
 Godiva.
 "Good and Better."
 Happiest Couple, The. (From the
 "School for Scandal.")
 Happy Life, The.
 Hans Breitmann's Party.
 Hour of Prayer, The.
 How Terry saved his Bacon.
 How He saved St. Michael's.
 In the Tunnel.
 Jackie on Watermelon-pickle.
 Jester's Sermon, The.
 "Jones."</p> | <p>Mahmoud.
 Mistletoe-Bough, The.
 Mr. Caudle and his Second Wife.
 Mr. O'Gallagher's Three Roads to
 Learning.
 Nobody There.
 Old Age.
 Old Farmer Gray gets Photographed.
 Old Methodist's Testimony, The.
 Overthrow of Belshazzar.
 Puzzled Census-Taker, The.
 Popping the Question.
 Red Jacket, The.
 Rob Roy MacGregor.
 Samson.
 Senator's Pledge, The.
 Showman's Courtship, The.
 Squire's Story, The.
 Story of the Bad Little Boy who
 didn't come to Grief, The.
 Story of the Faithful Soul, The.
 Stranger in the pew, A.
 Tauler.
 Voices at the Throne, The.
 Whistler, The.
 Yankee and the Dutchman's Dog,
 The.</p> |
|--|--|

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB NO. 2.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Address of Spottycus.
 Baby Atlas.
 Baby's Soliloquy, A.
 Beauty of Youth, The.
 Biddy's Troubles.
 Bobolink, The.
 Broken Pitcher, The.
 By the Alma River.
 Calling a Boy in the Morning.
 Cooking and Courting.
 Curing a Cold.
 Double Sacrifice, The.
 Farm-yard Song.
 Fortune-Hunter, The.
 Goin' Home To-day.
 Harry and I.
 In the Bottom Drawer.
 Last Ride, The.
 Learned Negro, The.
 Little Puzzler, The.
 Man with a Cold in his Head, The.
 Merchant of Venice, Trial Scene.
 Modest Cousin, The.
 Militia General, A.
 "Nearer, my God, to Thee."</p> | <p>Old Ways and the New, The.
 Opening of the Piano, The.
 Our Visitor, and What He came for.
 Over the River.
 Paddock Elms, The.
 Pickwickians on Ice, The.
 Picture, A.
 Press On.
 Possession.
 Quaker Meeting, The.
 Queen Mab.
 Rescue, The.
 Shadow on the Wall, The.
 Short Sermon, A.
 Sisters, The.
 Sunday Morning.
 There is no Death.
 Tobe's Monument.
 Toothache.
 Tragical Tale of the Tropics, A.
 Traveller's Evening Song, A.
 Two Anchors, The.
 Two Irish Idyls.
 What's the Matter with that Nose?
 Workers and Thinkers.</p> |
|--|---|

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB NO. 3.

<p>Appeal in Behalf of American Liberty. Ambition. Auction Mad. Aurelia's Unfortunate Young Man. Ballad of the Oysterman, The. Bob Cratchit's Christmas-Dinner. Bone and Sinew and Brain. Bunker Hill. Burial of the Dane, The. Church of the Best Licks, The. Countess and the Serf, The. Deck-Hand and the Mule, The. Evils of Ignorance, The. First Snow-fall, The. Flower-mission, Junior, The. For Love. Fra Giacomo. How Persimmons took Cah ob der Baby. Jonesville Singin' Quire, The. Last Tilt, The. Lay of Real Life, A. Law of Kindness, The. Losses. Mad Luce. Minute-men of '75, The.</p>	<p>Mosquitoes. Mr. Stiver's Horse. Ode. Old Foggy Man, The. Pat and the Oysters. Recantation of Galileo, The. Roast Pig. A Bit of Lamb. Roman Soldier, The. Riding down. Schneider's Tomatoes. School of Reform, Scenes from the. Similia Similibus. Singer, The. Solemn Book-Agent, The. Sons of New England, The. Speech of the Hon. Perverse Peabody on the Acquisition of Cuba. Temperance. Twilight. Two Loves and a Life. Two Births. Uncle Reuben's Baptism, Victories of Peace, The. Wedding-Fee, The. Wolves, The. What the Old Man said.</p>
---	--

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB NO. 4.

<p>Battle Flag of Sigurd, The. "Business" in Mississippi. Bell of Atri, The. Cane-bottomed Chair, The. Cobbler's Secret, The. Cuddle Doon. Custer's Last Charge. Daddy Worthless. Decoration. Dignity of Labor, The. Elder Sniffle's Courtship. Goin' Somewhere. Grandfather. He Giveth His Beloved Sleep. Hot Roasted Chestnut, The. House-top Saint, The. "Hunchback," Scene from the. Indian's Claim, The. Joan of Arc. Leedle Yawcob Straus. Little Black-eyed Rebel, The. Little Hero, The. Little Shoe, A. Lost Cats, The. Mary Maloney's Philosophy.</p>	<p>Minot's Ledge. Mother's Fool. Mr. O'Hoolahan's Mistake. Mr. Watkins celebrates. My Neighbor's Baby. Palmetto and the Pine, The. Pip's Fight. Post-Boy, The. Pride of Battery B, The. "Palace o' the King, The." Paper don't Say, The. Penny ye meant to gi'e, The. Question, A. Robert of Lincoln. Song of the Dying, The. St. John the Aged. Tramp, The. Tom. Two Portraits. Village Sewing Society, The. Way Astors are Made, The. What is a Minority? Widder Green's Last Words. William Tell. Zenobia's Defense.</p>
---	---

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB NO. 5.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A Blessing on the Dance. | Noble Revenge. |
| A Charge with Prince Rupert. | Not Dead, but Risen. |
| A Mysterious Disappearance. | "One of the Boys." |
| Art-Matters in Indiana. | Scene from "Loudon Assurance." |
| A Rhine Legend. | Scene from "The Marble Heart." |
| A Watch that "Wanted Cleaning." | Sideways. |
| An Exciting Contest. | Somebody's Mother. |
| An Indignation-Meeting. | Something Spilt. |
| An Irish Wake. | Tact and Talent. |
| Ballad of a Baker. | The Amateur Spelling-Match. |
| Ballad of Constance. | The Blue and Gray. |
| Ballad of Ronald Clare. | The Bridge. |
| Between the Lines. | The Canteen. |
| Burdock's Goat. | The Dead Doll. |
| Butterwick's Weakness. | The Flood and the Ark. |
| Dot Baby off Mine. | The Honest Deacon. |
| Edith helps Things along. | The Kaiser's Feast. |
| Failed. | The Little Shoes did it. |
| Faithful Little Peter. | The Scotchman at the Play. |
| Five. | The Seven Ages. |
| From the Sublime to the Ridiculous. | The Two Glasses. |
| Good-By. | Tired Mothers. |
| "If We Knew." | Uncle Remus's Revival Hymn. |
| Last Redoubt. | Whistling in Heaven. |
| Mollie, or Sadie? | Why Biddy and Pat got Married. |

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB NO. 6.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A Disturbance in Church. | One Touch of Nature. |
| A Disturbed Parent. | Paddy O'Rafter. |
| A Christmas Carol. | Putty and Varulsh. |
| A Miracle. | Reserved Power. |
| "A Sweeter Revenge." | Ship-Boy's Letter. |
| An Irish Love-Letter. | Sweet Singer of Michigan. |
| Behind Time. | Tacking Ship off Shore. |
| Blind Ned. | Tammy's Prize. |
| Cavalry Charge, The. | Talk about Shooting. |
| Clerical Wit. | Ten Years after. |
| "Conquered at Last." | The Benediction. |
| Count Eberhard's Last Foray. | The Changed Cross. |
| Deaf and Dumb. | The Fan Drill. |
| Der Shoemaker's Poy. | The Farmer's Story. |
| Down with the Heathen Chinees! | The Fountain of Youth. |
| Fight at Lookout. | The King's Kiss. |
| Fireman's Prayer. | The Palmer's Vision. |
| Greeley's Ride. | The Sergeant of the Fiftieth. |
| Great Future. | The Well-Digger. |
| Immortality. | "Them Yankee Blankits." |
| Joe's Bespeak. | They Met. |
| John Chinaman's Protest. | Virginus to the Roman Army. |
| Jim Lane's Last Message. | Warning to Woman. |
| Mr. Coville proves Mathematics. | Weaving the Web. |
| Nationality. | Widow Stebbins on Homœopathy. |

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB No. 7.

<p> A College Widow. A Free Seat. A Humorous Dare-Devil. All's Well that ends Well. A London Bee Story. A Modern Heroine. A Modern Sermon. A Reminiscence. A Royal Princess. Ave Maria. Civil War. Creeds of the Bells. "Dashing Rod," Trooper. Down Hill with the Brakes off. Drawing Water. Family Portraits. Fool's Prayer. Greatest Walk on Record. Hannibal at the Altar. "He giveth His Beloved Sleep." Hohenlinden. How Neighbor Wilkins got Religion. How Randa went over the River. Irish Boy and Priest. Jimmy Butler and the Owl. Jim Wolfe and the Cats. </p>	<p> Last Hymn. Left Alone at Eighty. Maud's Misery. National Game. New Dixie. On the Channel-Boat. Orient Yourself. Paddle Your Own Canoe. Patriot Spy. Pledge to the Dead. Pomological Society. Rhymes at Random. San Benito. St. Leon's Toast. That Calf. The Carpenter's Wooling, and the Sequel. The Dead Student. The Ladies. The Pin. The Retort. The Singers' Alms. This Side and That. Two Fishers. Uncle Mellick dines with his Master. </p>
---	--

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB No. 8.

<p> A Brick. A Colored Debating Society. Along the Line. A New Version of the Parable of the Virgins. An Evangel. Annie's Ticket. Apples — A Comedy. A Sermon for the Sisters. A Thirsty Boy. Aunt Phillis's Guest. Ballad of the Bell-Tower. "Christianos ad Leones!" City Man and Setting Hen. Daisy's Faith. De 'Spience ob Reb'rend Quacko Strong. Defence of Lucknow. Dutch Security. Fast Mail. Father William. From One Standpoint. Girl of the Crisis. Grave of the Greyhound. Indian Warrior's Defence. Labor is Worship. </p>	<p> Lanty Leary. Last of the Sarplnts. Legend of the White Hand. London Zoölogical Gardens. Masked Batteries. Miss Edith's Modest Request. Mrs. Brown at the Play. Old Grimes. People will laugh. Peril of the Mines. Parody on "Father William." Patter of the Shingle. Paul Clifford's Defence. Shiftless Neighbor Ball. Song of the Mystic. The Baron's Last Banquet. The Captive. The Dilemma. The Divorce Feast. The Farmer and the Barrister. The Man with a Bear. The Story of the Tiles. The Outlaw's Yarn. The Rich Man and the Poor <u>Man</u>. Two Dreams. Yankee Courtship. </p>
--	---

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB NO. 9.

<p>Antoinette. Antony to Cleopatra. Awfully Lovely Philosophy. Calif, The. Cheek. Claribel's Prayer. Cleopatra Dying. Dagger Scene from "The Wife," The. Dandy Fifth, The. Don Squixet's Ghost. Gingerbread. Hannah. "He and She." Hero Woman, The. Holly Branch, The. Jan Steener's Ride. Johnny on Snakes. King's Bell, The. Legend of Saint Barbara, The. Legend of the Organ-BUILDER. Life in Death. Little Girl's Song, The. Lookout Mountain. Loves of Lucinda. Man Wich didn't drink Wotter, The.</p>	<p>Make the Best of Every Thing. Marked Grave, The. Marriage of Santa Claus, The. Mice at Play. No Color Line in Heaven. Night Watch. Old Man's Dreams, An. One-legged Goose, The. Owl Critic, The. "Papa says so too." Poetry of Iron, The. Right must win, The. Reviving de Sinners. Selling the Farm. Setting a Hen. She would be a Mason. Similar Case, A. Sleep, The. Song of the North, The. Spinning-wheel, The. Time. Tomato, The. Tramp of Shiloh, The. Very Naughty Little Girl's Views. Widow of Nain, The.</p>
---	--

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB NO. 10.

<p>Autumn Leaves. Autumn Thoughts. Baffled Book-Agent, The. Banker and the Cobbler, The. Brudder Johnson on 'Lectricity. Building and Being. Carcassonne. Chain of Gold, The. Charge of the Heavy Brigade. Christmas Elegy, A. Clown's Baby, The. Confession, The. Conversion of Col. Quagg. Court Lady, A. Cruise of the "Monitor," The. Death of the Old Wife. Death of Steerforth. Garfield. Hark! How the Colonel took It. Intensely Utter. Jackdaw of Rheims, The. Mate of the "Betsy Jane," The. Nebuchadnezzah. No Time like the Old Time.</p>	<p>No Yearning for the Beautiful. "Ole Marster's" Christmas. Our Baby. Parting Lovers, The. Penitent, A. Purpose, A. Round of Life, The. Ramon. Rather Embarrassing. Ravenswood's Oath. Robert Emmett's Last Speech. Saving Mother. Scene from "Mary Stuart." Serenade, The. Sharpshooter's Miss, The. Sooner or Later. Story of a Stowaway, The. Squire Houston's Marriage Ceremony. The Way Rube Hoffenstein sells. This means You, Girls. Ticked All Oafer. Union of Blue and Gray. Widow to Her Son, The. Wild Weather Outside. Young Grimes.</p>
---	---

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB NO. 11.

<p>Abraham Lincoln and the Poor Woman. Big Ben Bolton. Bivouac of the Dead, The. Captain's Tale, The. Cataract of Lodore, The. Charge at Valley Maloy, The. Child's Evening Prayer, The. Clear Bargain, A. Closing Scene, The. Convent Robbing. Countersign was "Mary," The. Crutch in the Corner. Drifted Out to Sea. "Fall In." For Life and Death. Glimpse of Death, A. Going towards Sundown. Garibaldi and His Companions. Kelly's Ferry. Last upon the Roll. Leedle Yawcob Strauss: What He says. Magnificent Poverty. Mr. Murphy explains His Son's Conduct. Mysterious Rappings.</p>	<p>Nearer Home. No Precedent. Old Man goes to Town, The. O'thello. "Mebbe," Joe's True Feesh Story. Paddy's Metamorphosis. Pat's Bondsman. Pericles to the People. "Picciola." Red O'Neil, The. Reflections on the Needle. Roland Gray. Second Review of the Grand Army Silver Cup, The. Snow-storm, The. Speculation. Sneakers on de Corn. "Treadwater Jim." Unforgotten Foe, The. Variegated Dogs. Virginny. Washee, Washee. What saved the Union. Wonderful Tar Baby Story, The. Wreck of the White Ship. Yawcob Strauss.</p>
---	---

CONTENTS OF READING-CLUB NO. 12.

<p>Æsthetic Housekeeper, The. Asking the Gov'nor. Asleep at the Switch. Awkward. Bad Mix, A. Boys Who Never got Home, The. Concurrent Testimony. Cruise of the "Nancy Jane," The. Discontented Pendulum, The. Doctor's Wedding, The. Enoch of Calaveras, The. Fire! Fire! Fire-Worshippers, The. Funny Small Boy, The. Good-by, Proud World. How Dennis took the Pledge. How He Made It. How Tim's Prayer was answered. House that Jack built, The. Ideal of Woman, An. I have drank my Last Glass, Boys. Jack at All Trades, A. Judge Pitman's Watch. Katie's Answer. Little Presbyterian Maid, The. Little Rocket's Christmas</p>	<p>Lucille's Mistake. Making Love in the Choir. Memory. Money Musk. Mike McGaffaty's Dog. Nancy Sykes. New Church Doctrine, The. Night after Christmas, The. "Norval." Old Knight's Treasure, The. Only a Crippled Soldier. Pat and the Pig. Pegging Away. Penn's Monument. Policeman's Story, The. Postilion of Nagold, The. Public Grindstone, The. Scene from "Leah the Forsaken." Soldiers' Monument, The. Signing the Pledge. Sun-Burst. The Three Little Chairs. Two Ways of Telling a Story. Veterans, The. War with Alcohol, The.</p>
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