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ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE.

THE

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DRAMA.

OUR FOLKS.

BOSTON:

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OUR FOLKS.

A Play in Three Acts.

BY
GEORGE M. BAKER.

Dramatized from
RUNNING TO WASTE: THE STORY OF A TOMBOY.
BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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Boston:
GEORGE M. BAKER AND COMPANY.
1879.

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CHARACTERS.

CAPT. THOMPSON, a retired shipmaster.
HARRY THOMPSON, his son.
CAPT. SLEEPER, a returned Californian.
TEDDY SLEEPER, his son.
HIRAM SMALL, a mill-owner.
PHIL, Capt. Thompson's man-of-all-work.
MRS. THOMPSON, "good as gold."
MRS. SLEEPER, "hoping against hope."
BECKY SLEEPER, "the tomboy."
HULDA PRIME, "full of complaints."
SILLY YORK, "slipshod but willing."

COSTUMES.

CAPT. THOMPSON. Act I. Dark pants; blue-checked shirt, collar thrown back; black neckerchief, with sailor-knot; thin coat; broad-brimmed straw hat. Act II. Dark pants and vest; white shirt and collar; dressing-gown. Act III. Change gown to dark coat. Bald, iron-gray wig and short side-whiskers with all.

CAPT. SLEEPER. Dark pants and coat; blue shirt; black neckerchief; black felt hat; iron-gray wig; full beard.

HARRY. Act I. Mixed suit, suitable for a Harvard student; pants and shirt only, when he appears with Becky after the rescue. Act III. Darker suit. Both rather "nobby."

TEDDY. Act I. Age 15. Rather short pants out at the knees; short jacket out at the elbows; checked shirt; blue stockings; low-cut shoes; cap; curly wig, of light or red hair; pockets of pants stuffed with apples. Act II. Wide-brimmed straw hat, with blue ribbon; dark pants; pea-jacket; checked shirt, with wide collar turned over jacket; black neckerchief, with sailor-knot. Act III. Change jacket for linen coat.

HIRAM. Act I. Linen suit; straw hat. Act II. Change coat for a green jacket. Act III. Blue coat, with brass buttons; white pants and vest; high standing collar; flaming red tie; tall hat. Short-cut iron-gray wig and chin-whiskers for all.

PHIL. Act I. Overalls tucked into long boots; checked shirt; cap. Act II. Same, with green jacket.

- BECKY.** Act I. Age 16. Short brown dress, torn about the skirt; soiled white stockings; shoes without strings; high-necked blue-checked apron stained with berry-juice; light, curling hair flowing wild. Act II. Pretty muslin dress, cherry bow at the neck; broad-brimmed straw hat, with cherry ribbons; hair knotted with same. Act III. Of the same character.
- MRS. THOMPSON.** Wig of short, white curly hair; plump figure; rosy cheeks. Act I. Brown figured-muslin; light shawl, and summer bonnet. Acts II and III. Of the same character.
- MRS. SLEEPER.** Act I. Calico dress; white apron. Act III. White wrapper; hair unbound.
- HULDA.** Red wig, with bunched curls each side of her face. Act I. Calico dress; head tied up with a towel. Act II. Neat dark dress; white collar and cuffs; dark shawl; bonnet. Act III. Calico dress, sleeves rolled up; on last entrance, sleeves down; white collar and cuffs.
- SILLY.** Act I. Calico dress; handkerchief tied over her head. Act II. Same dress, with white apron; sleeves rolled up; hair flying.

NOTE. — This is a play without a villain, depending for success upon pictures of home-life and the characterization of homely every-day people. In dramatizing a story, a great amount of descriptive matter necessarily enters into the play, rendering "speeches" of uncommon length. Great care should be taken, where these occur, that the action of the play be not retarded by their too slow delivery. A careful attention to this at rehearsals is earnestly recommended.

Although three scenes are required, one will serve the purpose, where economy is a necessity, by the following arrangement: Have the "flat" made in three sections. In one a door is set for the closet in Act I.; in another a door; in the third a window. Now have an extra section, with a window, and you have all that is really necessary. Cover the "flat" with drab paper, except where the windows and doors appear; make the window-frames of light wood, stained black, — the casings as well as the door, — by pasting grained panel-paper, easily procured. Set these up; place a curtain of green paper, half rolled-up, at the window, and you have the scene for Act I. For Act II. remove the closet-section to R. of stage; place the door-section in its place C.; cover it with the drab paper, then set your extra window L. of this; put up white curtains, and that scene is ready for the table, flowers, cage, &c. For Act III. you have only to remove the paper from C. section, and change curtains.

Two years are supposed to elapse between first and second acts; one year between second and third.

OUR FOLKS.

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS.

ACT I. — SCENE: MRS. SLEEPER'S kitchen. Window in flat R., door in flat L., closet between, fireplace R. HULDA seated in rocking-chair, elbow on her knee, head resting on her hand, looking at the fire. Door L.; table L. C., covered with white cloth. Dishes on table, MRS. SLEEPER beside it, wiping dishes which she places in the closet while speaking. Chair near window, stool near rocking-chair.

Hulda. I've had every thing under the sun in the shape of aches, but this neuralagy does beat all. Seems as if the roof of my head would come off every time those needle pains dart through it. Oh, dear! There's another. Oh, oh! (*Rocks herself, and groans.*)

Mrs. S. Hadn't you better go into the sitting-room, and lie down?

Hulda. And leave you alone, when I came here to help? But, dear me! how can I help with all the pains and aches in creation devouring me?

Mrs. S. Ah! we all have our trials, — aching bodies and sorrowful hearts.

Hulda. Well, Delia, you've had your share, and no mistake, — your husband gone these five years, off mining in Californy, and not a word from him to know whether he's alive or dead.

Mrs. S. Don't say dead, Hulda. I cannot believe it.

Hulda. It looks precious like it when a man hasn't been heard of or from for five years.

Mrs. S. Had he left me forever, some kind friend would have sent me his last words. No, I cannot believe my dear, good husband is lost to me. Ever before my eyes is the welcome ship that comes bringing him to my aching, longing heart. That is the hope that cheers me.

Hulda. But it doesn't cheer you a bit, Delia: you haven't smiled these four years. If you'd only chirk up a bit, and laugh once in a while, it would do you lots of good. Where would I be with all my troubles if I let myself grow low-spirited, and groaned? Oh, dear! There's another. Oh, oh! (*Holds her head, and rocks.*)

Mrs. S. 'Tis hard to smile with an aching heart, but when he comes all will be changed. Will that day never, never come? [*Exit L., with table-cloth.*]

Hulda. She's a good woman, a real good woman; but that man Cyrus Sleeper just spoiled her. There wa'n't nothing too good for her, and he was just a hero to her. Hm! Catch me making a hero of the best man that ever lived! Oh, oh! my head, my head!

Becky (outside). Run, Teddy, run; don't let him

catch you. (*Runs on, door in flat.*) Oh, such fun! We've been up in one of Capt. Thompson's apple-trees, Teddy and I; and he's after us full tilt on horse-back. He couldn't catch me, but I'm dreadful 'fraid he'll overhaul Teddy, for he's loaded down with apples.

Capt. T. (outside). Stop, stop, you rascal!

Becky. There he is, but he sha'n't catch me. (*Runs into closet, and pulls the door after her.*)

Hulda. Dear me! what didos those young ones do cut up!

Teddy (running in door and down to L. corner). By jinks! here's a scrape, and no mistake. Hope Becky's got off.

(*Enter CAPT. T., door in flat, with a whip, and in a towering passion.*)

Capt. T. So, so, I've caught you in the act, at last, have I?

Becky (sticking her head out of the closet). Yes, Cap'n, you certainly have this time, and no mistake. S'pose we've got to catch it now. What's the penalty? Going to put us in the pound, or lock us up in the barn?

Capt. T. Neither, tomboy: I'll horsewhip you both (*flourishing his whip*), commencing with you, Master Ned.

Becky. Run, Teddy, run!

Capt. T. If you stir a step, you imp of mischief, I'll break every bone in your body.

Becky (coming from closet). Don't you touch my brother! Don't you dare to touch my brother! It's a shame to make such a fuss about a few apples.

Capt. T. It's a great shame that a girl of your age should be caught stealing apples.

Becky. 'Tain't my fault. We shouldn't have been caught if you'd only staid at home.

Capt. T. (aside). I'll be hanged if she isn't trying to shift the responsibility of the theft on to me. (*Aloud to TEDDY.*) Now, sir, what have you to say for yourself? Haven't I told you to keep off my place? Haven't I promised you a thrashing if I caught you there again?

Teddy. Yes, Cap'n, that's so. But I couldn't help it. I—I—I didn't want the apples, b— b— but I wanted to climb the tree for fun: it's such a hard climb, and — and —

Capt. T. Don't lie, you scamp, with your pockets stuffed full of my apples.

Teddy (looking down at his pockets). By jinks! Them must have dropped into my pockets when I was a-climbing.

Capt. T. Oh, you shall sweat for this, I promise you. Off with your jacket, quick! d'ye hear?

Becky (comes between CAPTAIN and TEDDY). Don't strike him, Cap'n, please don't. He's not to blame. He didn't want the apples, indeed he didn't. He don't like 'em; do you, Teddy?

Teddy (shaking his head). No, colic berries, bah!

Becky. I helped him up the tree, and I'm to blame for it all. You oughtn't to strike a boy for doing all he can to please his sister. If you must whip somebody; take me.

Capt. T. (pushing her to R.). Stand out of the way,

tomboy: your time will come soon enough, never fear. — Off with that jacket, d'ye hear?

Teddy (coolly unbuttoning his jacket, and taking it off). Don't tease him, Becky. I ain't afraid of his whip. If it's any fun for him, let him lay on. I guess I can stand it as long as he can.

Becky (running across stage, and throwing her arms about TEDDY's neck). He sha'n't strike you, Teddy. It's all my fault. He sha'n't touch you.

Teddy. Don't, Becky; quit! D'ye want to smother a feller? Don't be a ninny. It's got to come. Quit!

Becky. I won't. He shall kill me before he strikes you.

Capt. T. (takes BECKY by the arm, and flings her over to r.). I'll teach you to meddle: don't come near me till I've done with him.

Becky (shaking both fists at him). Oh, don't I wish I was a man!

Capt. T. (seizing TEDDY by the collar, and raising whip over his shoulder). Now, you scamp, I'll teach you to rob orchards.

Becky (runs up behind CAPTAIN, snatches whip, and runs to door in flat). Not before ladies, Cap'n: that's not polite. Some other time. Ha, ha, ha! Good-by, Cap'n. Good-by, Teddy: I'm off for a ride.

[*Exit, snapping the whip.*]

Capt. T. (runs up to door). Come back, you imp, come back! (*In doorway, looking off l.*) Might as well talk to the wind (*Shouts.*) Get off that horse. Confound the jade! (*Runs off.*) Stop! d'ye hear?

Becky (outside). Some other time. Hudup, Uncle Ned!

(TEDDY runs up to door, and looks off.)

Teddy. By jinks! She's riding away on the Cap'n's horse: hi! what fun! An' the Cap'n he's runnin' — no; he's turned round, and's comin' back. (*Runs down, and picks up his jacket.*) Now what shall I do?

Hulda. Do! Scoot.

Teddy. By jinks! I'm off. (*Runs to window, and tumbles out, then pokes his head in.*) Say, Aunt Hulda, you keep mum, and I'll divy on the apples. (*Disappears.*)

(*Enter MRS. S. from L., and CAPTAIN, door in flat.*)

Capt. T. So, so! Purty capers those young ones of yours are cutting up, Delia Sleeper!

Mrs. S. Do you mean Rebecca and Edward, Captain? Have they been making any trouble?

Capt. T. Trouble! trouble! Did they ever make any thing else? Ain't they the pests of the town? Who or what is safe when they are about? I tell you what it is, Delia: I'm a patient man, a very patient man; but I've endured this sort of thing just as long as I mean to. Something's got to be done.

Mrs. S. I'm sure I try to keep the children out of mischief.

Capt. T. No, you don't. That's just what's the matter. You've no control over them. You just let them loose, and like a couple of wildcats they go about seeking who they may devour. What's the consequence? Look at Brown's melon-patch. He couldn't find a sound melon. Then look at my

orchard. Despoiled by these barbarians! To-day I caught them in one of my trees, loaded with plunder. — caught them in the act!

Mrs. S. O captain! You did not punish them!

Capt. T. Punish eels! No: they were too sharp for me. But I will, be sure of that. Now, Delia, this thing must be stopped: it shall be stopped.

Mrs. S. I'm sure I'm willing to do any thing I can to keep them orderly.

Capt. T. Now, what's the use of your talking so? You're all bound up in your sorrows. You won't think of the matter again when I am gone. If you cared for their bringing up, you'd have that boy at school instead of letting him fatten on other folks' property; and bring that girl up to work, instead of letting her go galloping all over creation on other folks' horses. I tell you, Delia, you don't know how to bring up young ones.

Hulda. P'raps she'd better turn 'em over to you, Cap'n Thompson: you're such a grand hand at bring-in' up.

Capt. T. Hulda Prime, you just attend to your own affairs: this is none of your business, so shet up.

Hulda. Shut up! Wal, I never! Ain't you getting a leetle obstroperlons, Cap'n? This here's a free country; and nobody's to hinder anybody's freein' their mind to anybody, even if they are a little up in the world. Shut up, indeed! (*Rises, walks round her chair, and flounces down again.*)

Capt. T. I don't want any of your interference, Hulda Prime.

Hulda. I know you don't. But it's enough to make a horse laugh to see you coming here tellin' about bringin' up young uns! Brought up your Harry well, didn't yer?

Mrs. S. Hush, Aunt Hulda; don't speak of that matter now.

Hulda. Why not? When folks come to other folks' houses to tell 'em how to train up their children, it's high time they looked to home.

Capt. T. I brought up my son to obey his father; and there wasn't a better boy in the town.

Hulda. Want to know! He was dreadful nice when you had him under your thumb, but he made up for it when he got loose. Such capers! He made a tomboy of our Becky, and was just as full of mischief as he could stick.

Capt. T. No matter about my son: he's out of the way now.

Hulda. Yes: cos you wanted to put him to a trade, and he wasn't willin', and so started off to get a college education. Then you shut the door agin him, locked up your money, and vowed he should starve afore you'd help him. But they do say he's been through Harvard College in spite of yer.

Capt. T. Hulda Prime, you're a meddling old woman! It's a pity somebody didn't start you off years ago, — hanging round where you ain't wanted.

Hulda. I never hung round your house much; did I, Cap'n?

Capt. T. Now, Delia, listen to reason. You're too easy with them children: they want a strong hand to

keep 'em in line. You know I'm a good friend to you and yours, and though Cyrus Sleeper did treat me rather shabby —

Hulda. Good land! hear the man talk! It's no such thing. Shabby, indeed! When he was coming home in the "Boundin' Billow" that you and he owned together, from the West Injies, with a cargo of molasses, he got news of the gold diggings. Took ship and cargo right straight to Californy; sold the whole concern for ten times what it would have brought here, and sent you every cent of the money. Shabby, indeed! 'Twas the biggest speck you ever made.

Capt. T. Will you be quiet, woman? I ain't talking to you, and don't want any of your meddlin'.

Mrs. S. Aunt Hulda, don't interrupt, please.

Hulda. Then let him talk sense. The 'idea of Cyrus's ever treating anybody shabby is ridikerlous.

Capt. T. Those young ones must be sent to school.

Mrs. S. I can't afford it, Cap'n: you know the money's most gone.

Capt. T. It's all gone. You know I fairly divided the money Cyrus sent me; though, to hear some meddlin' folks talk (*looks at HULDA*), any body would think I kept it all.

Mrs. S. All gone, Cap'n?

Capt. T. Every cent. What you have been drawing during the last year is from my own pocket; but no matter for that. The school opens Monday. I'll send the children, and pay the bills. I'll be a father to them: they're not likely to have another very soon.

Mrs. S. Don't say that, don't say that! Cyrus will come back; I know he will.

Capt. T. If he's alive; but don't be too hopeful. There's been a heap of mortality among the miners. Chances are agin him. So you'd better be resigned, — better give him up. Put on mourning for a year, and look round.

Mrs. S. Give up my husband! He will come back, I know. I feel he will. Don't say give him up. I cannot, I cannot. (*Weeps*).

Hulda. Look round, indeed! Wal, I never! Why, it's bigamy, rank bigamy!

Capt. S. Well, do just as you please about that, only let me have my way in this. You see, they have got to earn their own living; and, the sooner they get a little learning, the better.

Mrs. S. Very well, Captain, I consent; only be easy with them at first.

Capt. T. Oh! I'll be easy enough if they mind me: if not, they'll catch it. And mind, no interference with my plans from you or Hulda.

Hulda. You needn't fret about me: merey knows I've troubles enough of my own. (*Puts her hand to her back.*) I declare, there's that lumbago coming back!

Capt. T. (*aside*). Glad of it! (*Aloud.*) Want to know if you've got that too. They do say that you're a calendar of complaints, — Monday, rheumatism; Tuesday, cancer; Wednesday, dyspepsia; Thursday, heart-disease; Friday, lumbago; Saturday, spine; Sunday, neuralgia. — only you do upset all calculations at times by having them all together, just when your help is needed. (*Aside.*) There's a shot for her.

Hulda. You understand my case purty well; don't you, Cap'n?

Capt. T. Yes, indeed! I'll be off, for fear it might be catching.

Hulda. 'Twould be the first thing you caught to-day.

Capt. T. Hm! (*Aside.*) The old fool! (*Aloud.*) Good-morning. [*Exit, door in flat.*]

Hulda. Mighty kind, all to once. 'Spose he's afraid he'll lose his whole crop if he don't lock up those young ones.

Mrs. S. The Captain has a kind heart, with all his roughness.

(*Enter SILLY, door in flat, with a basket.*)

Silly. How d'ye do, Miss Sleeper? How d'ye do, Aunt Hulda? I'm purty well, I thank yer. (*Sets basket on table.*)

Mrs. S. Ah, Silly!

Silly. Now, don't you say one word till I get through. I've got so much on my mind that if you jest jog my elbow I shall spill it all. Mrs. Thompson, says she to me this morning, "Silly!" — "What?" says I. — "Get the covered basket," says she. — "Yes, marm," says I; and started for the door. — "Stop, stop!" says she. "I want you to get the covered basket, and take some things to Miss Sleeper," says she. — "Yis, marm," says I; and started for the door. — "Stop!" says she. "What in the world are you thinking of?" — "The covered basket," says I. — "It's in the pantry, Silly," says she. "When I have finished what I have to say, I will tell you to go." — "Then you don't want the cov-

ered basket?" says I. — "Get the covered basket," says she. "Put in it the ham that was left at dinner, the pair of chickens I cooked this morning, a couple of mince-pies, and a loaf of bread. Do you understand?" — "Yis, marm," says I. "Basket, ham, chickens, mince-pie, bread." — "Very well," says she. "These are for Miss Sleeper, with my compliments." — "Yis, marm," says I. "Basket and all?" — "Bring back the basket, of course," says she. "Now go." And then I started for the door. "Stop, stop, Silly!" says she. — "You told me to go when you said go; and I was going to go," says I. — "I want you to go to the pantry; get a bottle of currant-wine, a jar of damson-preserves, and a box of sardines. These are for Aunt Hulda, with my compliments."

Hulda (jumping up). For me? Now ain't she good —

Silly. Couldn't you wait till I got through? — Says she to me. "No," says I, — Well, I guess that's all.

Hulda. Well, I'll take my things (*holds up her apron by the corners*).

Silly. All right (*puts articles in apron from basket*). Guess you don't get much sent you. You look as tickled as a cat with two tails.

Hulda. Silly, don't be a fool (*carries articles to closet*).

Silly. That's what mother said when I went to live with Miss Thompson. "Silly," says she, "do what you are told, when you are told, and the quicker the better: and never complain at your troubles; it's only the foolish who complain."

Hulda (goes back to chair). If she'd told you to hold your tongue, she'd have given you better advice.

Mrs. S. I'll take the basket, Silly (*takes basket to closet, and places things in it*). Tell Mrs. Thompson I shall never forget her kindness.

Silly. Yes, marm! (*To Hulda.*) Ain't you feeling well?

Hulda (crossly). I never feel well.

Silly. Don't you feel well enough to send a message to Miss Thompson?

Hulda. What message should I send her?

Silly. A "Thank you" wouldn't make you feel any worse (*takes basket from Mrs. S.*). I'm real sorry for you, Miss Sleeper: you've had lots of trouble. And mother says, says she, "Of all troubles, a livin' trouble is the worst." And I guess you've got a heap in her. [*Exit door in flat.*]

Mrs. S. (looking at HULDA). Poor old soul! Everybody has a hard word for her. They are right: she is a burden. But I can never forget her kindness to Cyrus when he was a poor boy. [*Exit L.*]

(*TEDDY sticks his head in at the window.*)

Teddy. Say, Aunt Hulda, is the coast clear?

Hulda. Yes; come in.

Teddy (getting in at window, and sitting on the back of chair near window). By jinks! wa'n't I scared, though! Where's Becky?

(*Enter BECKY, door in flat.*)

Becky. Here I am (*sits on table*).

Teddy (transferring apples from his pockets to his hat). Where you been?

Becky. Been to take the Cap'n's horse home: that was only politeness, after he had done us the honor to call here. Ha, ha, ha! But I exercised him well first. Ha, ha, ha!

Teddy. By jinks, I bet you did!

Becky. I'm awful hungry. Toss me an apple.

Teddy (tossing apple). Ketch it. What you going to do now, Becky? Might go fishin'.

Becky (nibbling her apple). Ha, ha, ha! Only you lost your line last Sunday.

Teddy. Can't have no fun, nor nothin'. Jest as you git a nibble, 'long comes some of the meetin'-house folks, and begin to talk about breaking the sabbath, and that jest scares off all the fish.

Becky. And the fisherman, too, Teddy. My sakes! how you did run last Sunday when Deacon Hill caught you fishing down at the fore-side! Ha, ha, ha!

Teddy (munching an apple). Plague take him! he jest marched off with my line and bait too.

Hulda. Served you right. The place for folks on Sunday is in church.

Teddy. Seems to me, Aunt Hulda, you don't go.

Hulda. Lor, child, I'm a poor afflicted creeter. I'm only expected to bear my troubles patiently, and I'm sure I do that.

Teddy. Don't think much of going to meeting, anyway. They always poke us up in the gallery, and won't let us go to sleep; and, if the sexton ketches a feller firin' spitballs, he just whacks him on the head.

Becky. Ha, ha, ha!

Hulda. Ah! you children might do lots of good

every day in the week, instead of spending your time in mischief.

Teddy. By jinks! I'd like to know how?

Hulda. Well, by helpin'.

Teddy. Yes, I guess not. I ain't got no rheumatics, nor lumbago, and I can't groan with a cent.

(*BECKY laughs internally.*)

Hulda. Then a-going to see sick folks, and carrying them little dainties, is a nice way to do good. When I was helping Miss Lincoln, years and years ago, she used to say to me sometimes, "Hulda; don't you want to clap on your bunnet, and run over to the Widder Stearns with the basket?" or, "Hulda, don't you want to carry this jelly to Mr. Peters? He's awful sick." And I used to go and go, and never feel a bit tired, because it was charitable work. Now, there's Mr. York, Silly's father, poor man, he's most gone with consumption: now, if you only had a nice little bit of somethin' to take over to him, you don't know how good you would feel. Oh, dear! if I was only strong and well! (*Rises.*) But what's the use of talking? Here I've got the rheumatics so I can't walk, and the neuralagy so I can't sit still; and I'm afraid there's a cancer coming on the end of my tongue, and then I can't talk. [*Exit L.*

(*Short pause; BECKY and TEDDY munching apples.*)

Teddy. Becky, what's the matter? you've sat still as much as five minutes. Sick, hey?

Becky. No, Teddy: I'm thinking, that's all.

Teddy. Don't do it. 'Twill make you sick; see if it don't.

Becky. I guess not. Teddy, I expect we're awful wicked.

Teddy. Do yer, though? What for?

Becky. Because we don't go to church Sundays.

Teddy. How are we going to church without clo'es? My elbows are all out, so's my knees. They'd send us home quick, I tell you.

Becky. 'Spose they would. Well, there's one thing we might do, — carry something nice to sick folks.

Teddy. Ain't got nothin' nice, and don't know any sick folks.

Becky. We know Mr. York, who's got the consumption.

Teddy. Well, we might go and catch some fish for him, only I've lost my line.

Becky. Nò; something better than that. Teddy, you run and get a basket: I know what to take.

Teddy (going R.). Don't know what ails Becky, but, by jinks, I'll bet there's some fun comin'.

[*Exit R., with hat full of apples.*]

Becky. My sakes! Did she ever do good? Everybody calls her a nuisance, and everybody laughs at her grumbling. She take things to sick folks, and feel good in doing it! Why, she talks like a minister.

(*Enter TEDDY R., with a large basket. Leaves apples outside.*)

Teddy. How's this, Becky?

Becky. That will do nicely. Now let's see what we can find to put into it. (*Opens closet.*) Here's a bottle of currant-wine. I guess that's good for con-

sumption: we'll take that. (*Puts it in basket.*) And here's a jar of preserves. They always give those to sick folks: we'll take that. (*Puts it in basket.*) And here's a box of sardines. I don't know about that: we'll take it, anyway. (*Puts it in basket.*)

Teddy. By jinks, Becky! them's the things Miss Thompson sent to Aunt Hulda. I was outside the winder, and saw Silly York when she gave them to her.

Becky. No matter: she'll send her more, I guess. Besides, Aunt Hulda won't care, for we're going to do good with them. There's a pair of chickens too, but I guess that they're too hearty for sick folks. Now let's be off. (*They take the basket between them, and go r.*)

Teddy. The basket is too big for the things.

Becky. No: the things are too small for the basket.

Teddy (laughs). Ha, ha, ha! (*BECKY joins in the laugh, and then looks serious.*)

Becky. Teddy, this is charitable work. You must be very serious. (*Both draw themselves up, put on long faces, then look down at the basket, up at each other, and exit r., laughing loud. Enter r., Mrs. SLEEPER; door in flat, Mrs. THOMPSON.*)

Mrs. S. Dear Mrs. Thompson, this is kind of you.

Mrs. T. (taking her hand). Mrs. Thompson, indeed! Since when have you learned to be so formal and so polite? When we were girls together we greeted each other as Rebecca and Delia, a custom we have continued until the present moment. Why change it now?

Mrs. S. (sighs). Because I have learned within a few moments that our stations are greatly changed. You are the wife of the richest man in the county: I am a dependent on his bounty.

Mrs. T. But our hearts have not changed, Delia. In your eyes I see the same loving light that greeted me years ago. And you will see the same in mine if you only look into them. "In the eye there lies the heart," the old song says; and mine were never known to tell a fib. Well, how are you? My husband has been here to-day.

Mrs. S. Yes; and from him I learned that my money is all gone.

Mrs. T. He told you that, did he? He must have been in a towering passion to have so far forgot himself.

Mrs. S. My money all gone! What shall I do?

Mrs. T. (sitting in rocking-chair). Use his, of course. It's all in the family. You and yours were always "our folks," and you'll not suffer while he has a dollar. He's an awful growler, dear old fellow. Ha, ha, ha! you've no idea how I have to manage him. Give him his own way, and he's as sweet-tempered as an angel. But of course I couldn't do that, being a woman. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, no! obstinacy is the ruling spirit I have to battle. Give him his own way, and he's ready for any good work. Oppose him in the slightest degree, and he is immovable; and so, my dear, like a wise woman, I never array myself against his wishes or opinions, but continually contrive plans for him to combat. I always fight for what I don't

want, and so get what I do. I triumph in defeat, and he is happy in his supposed victory. Ha, ha, ha! poor old fellow; how he is humbugged! He's going to send Becky to school, isn't he?

Mrs. S. That is his plan, I believe.

Mrs. T. No, it isn't: it's mine. I thought it was high time that some attention should be paid to Becky's education: so I took occasion the other day, after Becky had climbed the lightning-rod of the church, opposite our house, to call his attention to it with the remark, "Such exercise must be excellent for a girl's constitution, much better than going to school." He took fire at once, and vowed she should be sent to school. Ha, ha, ha! it was my plan, you see.

Mrs. S. But Harry —

Mrs. T. Ah! there you touch me. They quarrelled, and he drove him away. It's hard to bear the absence of a dear one from our home; but I have never lost sight of him. The mention of his name is forbidden; but snugly tucked away among my treasures are weekly reports of his progress at college, — tender, loving epistles, such as make a mother's heart glad and happy. He's a son to be proud of, Delia; and, once his father's obstinate old eyes are opened to the fact, we shall be a united family again. And so Aunt Hulda twitted him of it, did she?

Mrs. S. I was never so mortified in my life. I tried to stop her; but she would go on.

Mrs. T. Bless her dear old heart! I heard of it: he couldn't keep it to himself. So I sent Silly right over with a few little delicacies. Ha, ha, ha! how I

should have liked to have heard her! Dear me, how I am running on! I came here to meet a gentleman.

Mrs. S. A gentleman?

Mrs. T. Yes: it's time he was here. Ah! I hear his step. (*Rises. Enter HARRY THOMPSON, door in flat.*) Welcome, my dear, dear boy!

Harry (taking her in his arms, and kissing her). Dear, dear mother! I can greet you without a blush. Thanks to you, I have won my laurels.

Mrs. T. You carried off the honors at Harvard?

Harry. Yes: graduated at the head of my class.

Mrs. T. I knew you would.

Harry (goes to Mrs. S., and takes her hand). My dear old friend! I'm glad to meet you once more. (*Kisses her.*) You're my other mother, you know; for I believe this house was as much my home in the old days as the other.

Mrs. S. Ah! Harry! 'tis not the old home. Cyrus gone —

Harry. To return again, Heaven grant! Keep up a good heart. He was never fond of writing, you know; and men are returning often who have not been heard of for many, many years.

Mrs. S. Oh, you don't know how good your words sound! They all tell me to give him up, that he must be dead; but something within me makes me hopeful. I could not feel so if he were dead. When my little baby died, I felt it near me for a long time; but it was a shadowy presence, something that gave my heart no warmth, no consolation. But my husband is a living presence: his voice comes to me at times, not with a

ghostly sound, but with the clear, cheery ring that greeted me so often, — “Wife, home, home again!” Oh, he must, he will come!

Harry. Heaven grant he may!

Mrs. T. Amen!

Mrs. S. I will leave. I know you have much to say to each other, and I shall be in the way.

Harry. Not a bit of it. We want you, I want you; for I must have somebody near, that I may sound the praises of my angel mother there.

Mrs. T. Oh, nonsense, Harry!

Harry. Ah! but I will. What I am, you have made me. Out of your deep mother-love, spite of obstacles that might have dismayed the stoutest heart, you have fashioned an honorable road to fame and fortune for my feet. May the future show how much I prize that love!

Capt. T. (outside). Bring them along, Phil.

Harry. My father! (*Going L.*)

Mrs. T. Stay here, Harry. You must meet him some time; why not now?

(*HARRY goes behind her chair, and stands in corner with his arms folded.*)

Phil. (outside). Aisy, honies, aisy.

Becky (outside). Let go my ear.

Teddy (outside). You quit, now: my ear's tender.

Phil. (appearing at door in flat, holding BECKY and TEDDY by the ears). Ah, yis! 'tis a tinder tie that binds us. That's the way we took the pigs in the owld country. Scoot now! (*They run down to R. corner, and rub their ears. PHIL steps inside the door to L. CAPTAIN appears with basket.*)

Capt. T. More mischief! more thieving! Hang it! nothing is safe in this town.

Mrs. S. What's wrong now, captain?

Capt. T. What's wrong? What's always wrong? The capers of your young ones. I've caught these young ones of yours —

Becky. After a hard chase. Don't forget that, Cap'n.

Phil. Begorra! ye's may will say that —

Capt. T. Silence!

Phil. Will, I was only just afther remarkin' —

Capt. T. Shut up!

Phil. I'm dumb.

Capt. T. I caught them —

Phil. Ye's wrong there, Captain dear. 'Twas yer-silf tumbled over a log; an' a mighty sorry figure you cut.

Becky and Teddy. Ha, ha, ha!

Capt. T. Silence! I say.

Phil. And I caught them.

Capt. T. With wine, preserves, and sardines that I know came from my house. Are they thieves?

Becky. No, you hateful old thing!

Capt. Silence!

Phil. Faith! Captain dear, give them a chance. Guilty, or not guilty? Those in favor, say I —

Capt. T. Will you be quiet?

Phil. To be sure I will. Be aisy wid them, Captain dear. Sure, they're no thaves.

Capt. T. Did you come here to help me, or them?

Phil. Will, I dunno; but a throe Irishman is always

wid the wake. That's what makes them so fond of the girls.

Capt. T. Go home. I've done with you.

Phil. (*goes to door*). All right. Don't be hard wid them. If ye's want my ividence, send a habus corpus for me. [*Exit.*]

Capt. T. Clear out! (*He keeps his back to Mrs. T.*) Now, then —

Becky. Mind what you say! I won't be called a thief.

Mrs. S. Becky, be silent.

Teddy. Don't care: we ain't thieves. Only hook apples and melons.

Capt. T. Where were you going with that basket?

(*Enter HULDA, L.*)

Becky. Going to see sick folks.

Teddy. Yes; and carry them something nice.

Hulda (*looking into basket*). Land of liberty sakes! If them young ones ain't been lugging off my things!

Capt. T. Yours? How came you by them?

Hulda (*snatching basket*). That's my business. I didn't steal 'em. [*Exit L.*]

Becky. Oh, my! there's Harry, Teddy. (*HARRY steps forward. She runs into his arms.*)

Harry. Yes, yes; my little tomboy.

Teddy. By jinks! now we'll have some fun. (*Runs to HARRY.*)

Harry (*shakes hands*). How are you, old fellow?

(*CAPT. T. comes down L. when BECKY speaks, and glares at HARRY.*)

Capt. T. Harry Thompson!

Harry (stepping forward). Yes, sir: Harry Thompson. I hope I see you well.

Capt. T. (angrily). No, I ain't well. The sight of you makes me sick. What are you doing here?

(*BECKY, when HARRY steps forward, steps up to Mrs. T., who shakes hands with her, and kisses her. They appear to talk together for a short time; then BECKY takes a piece of chalk from her pocket, goes to closet, opens door a little way, holds it with her left hand, and appears to be drawing on the inside of the door. TEDDY wanders to R., sits on the floor, and eats an apple. Mrs. S. exit L. Mrs. T. has some tatting, and quietly works and rocks.*)

Harry. Visiting some old friends, sir.

Capt. T. Visiting, indeed! You impudent puppy! You've no right in the place. You've disgraced yourself. After all I've done for you, too!

Harry. Well, sir, what have you done for me? You are my father—

Capt. T. No, sir: I disown you.

Harry. You were my father until I was sixteen years old. You gave me a home; but when, with a boy's enthusiasm, I asked to be allowed to choose my own way in life, you objected, sternly objected, with the threat, that, if I dared to leave home, your doors should be closed against me. I could not relinquish my desire: you executed your threat. I had no right to complain of your treatment, since I disobeyed you. I have prospered in my undertaking, and so have no reason to regret my course.

Capt. T. Well, sir; well, sir! And now, having prospered in your disobedience, you return with the hope that my doors will be opened to you again. Never, sir; never!

Harry. I shall never ask admission to your house. If ever I enter it while you live, it will be at your invitation.

Capt. T. You'll never get that while I live. This is a trick to anger me. What brought you here? who set you up to this? Perhaps your mother —

Harry. Stop, sir! To impute a base motive to my mother is unworthy of you, who know her goodness and truth so well. Heap upon me all the abuse your anger can justify. I can bear it; but I should be more ungrateful than even you believe me, did I allow even the taint of suspicion to sully her pure name.

Capt. T. Go your way, base, ungrateful son! Not a cent of my money shall ever be yours! Keep out of my way, or I shall be tempted to horsewhip you.

Becky (throwing open closet-door, on which should be a well-executed sketch in chalk, on a black ground, of a running horse with a girl on its back, and an old man running after). As you did me. (Points to picture.)

Capt. T. Confound you all! You'll drive me mad!

[Exit door in flat.]

Teddy. By jinks! that's prime! Ha, ha, ha!
(*Becky joins in the laugh.*)

Harry. Well, mother, are you satisfied?

Mrs. T. Perfectly. The time has not come for reconciliation; but it will be brought about, never fear. (*Rises.*) I must speak with Delia. I will return soon.

[Exit, L.]

Becky. O Harry! it's just splendid to have you back! What fun we will have pitching quoits, and playing cricket! I haven't had a game of cricket since you left. Come, let's go and shoot the basin.

Harry. Shoot the basin? Why, Becky, how old are you? (*Sits in rocking-chair.*)

Becky. Sixteen, I believe. (*Sits on a stool at his side.*)

Harry. Sweet sixteen! And she plays cricket, and pitches quoits, and shoots the basin! What a smart, cultivated young lady!

Becky. Yes: I can do all you taught me.

Teddy. By jinks! that's so. Beats the fellers all holler.

Harry (confused). All I taught you? But, Becky, young ladies of sixteen should know something more.

Becky. Well, I can fly a kite, kick football, row a boat, and — and —

Harry. That's quite enough, if you expect to be a tomboy all your life. Young ladies of sixteen, some that I know, can cook, sew, sing, play, and —

Becky. My! you must know some fine ladies.

Harry. Oh, yes! Then they are educated. By the way, Becky, how do you get on at school?

Becky. Haven't been for four years; but I'm going next week, so the Cap'n says.

Harry. I'm glad of that. 'Tis time my little play-fellow was making herself useful. To do all we can to improve ourselves, to do all we can to help others, — that should be the aim of all.

Becky. Why, Harry, you never talked to me like that before.

Harry. More shame for me. Becky, you have been neglected; brought up in ignorance. You are bright, smart, — why, the possession of that one talent (*points to drawing on door*) is enough to make you famous!

Becky. What, drawing make me famous? Ha, ha, ha! that's easy enough.

Harry. Why, I know a young lady in Cambridge who makes lots of money drawing for the engravers.

Becky. You know her? what's her name?

Harry. Alice Parks. Pretty name, isn't it?

Becky. And you like her?

Harry. Oh, immensely! We're great friends.

Becky. And she sings and plays for you?

Harry. Often.

Becky (rises). Good-by.

Harry. Where are you going?

Becky. Going to shoot the basin. Come on, Teddy.

Harry. No, no: it's dangerous.

Becky. Poh, who's afraid? It's only to take a pole, jump on a log in the water, push out, keep her head straight, and you glide over the basin, and strike the island in no time.

Harry. But if you miss, over the falls you go.

Becky. But I don't miss. Catch me!

Harry. Stay and talk with me.

Becky. No. I can't play or sing like Alice Parks. (*Going n., turns back.*) I'm real glad you talked to me as you did. It's set me thinking.

Harry. Then sit down, and let me say more.

Becky. No: I've had enough for one day. I'm

going to shoot the basin. It may be my last frolic. Come on, Teddy.

Teddy. It's awful risky, Becky.

Becky. If you're afraid you'd better stay behind.

[*Exit R.*]

Teddy. By jinks! I won't be stumped by a girl.

[*Exit R.*]

Harry (looking off R.). She's a bright little body: pity she has been left to run to waste. But it's not too late. I've set her thinking. Something will come of that.

Hiram Small (outside). Whoa! stand still, can't you? Anybody to hum? (*Enter door in flat.*) Hallo, Harry Thompson!

Harry (shaking hands). Glad to see you, Hiram, and looking so hearty.

Hiram. Hearty! Well, you never said a truer word. Of course I am, for luck's with me. When it goes agin me you never saw such a mean, miserable shyster as I am. But now it's just glorious. Mill running on full time. Prices up, more than I can do. I can eat three square meals a day, sleep like a top, and be up to crow with the roosters in the morning. Where's all the folks? Where's Becky?

Harry. She's gone to shoot the basin.

Hiram. The deuce! It's a bad day for that business. Water's too high.

Harry. Do you think there's danger?

Hiram. Well, I wouldn't risk it; but Becky can do almost any thing.

Harry. She wants looking after. I'll go at once. You'll find the folks in the sitting-room. [*Exit R.*]

Hiram. Nice chap, Harry, and he's got larning. Purty cute trick that of Miss Thompson, to give him a college course, after the Cap'n wouldn't hear to it, and pay the bills out of his pocket. (*Enter HULDA, l.*) How de do, Hulda?

Hulda. Oh, don't ask me.

Hiram. Well, I won't if you don't want me to.

Hulda. I've got the dyspepsy and the lumbago and the asthma, and I've got nothing to live for.

Hiram. Well, if you've got all those to take care of, I should say you had. You want livenin' up. 'Spose I get the folks together, and come down and give you a surprise-party.

Hulda. The noise would kill me.

Hiram. I won't if you don't want me to. But I'm just dying for a time, — a real up-and-down, go in with your cowhide boots, and make all the noise you can, sociable. If somebody don't get up a party and invite me, I'll set the mill afire just to hear it roar.

Hulda. Seems to me you're dreadful lively.

Hiram. You're right, Hulda. Good fortune always makes me as kinky as a grasshopper, as lively as a young colt. I want to sing, shout, dance. Oh for a good old-fashioned cowtillion with a lively fiddle to set one's legs a-humming! (*Goes through the figures as he calls.*) "Take your partners;" "all ready, Mr. White;" "first four forward and back;" "ladies chain;" "all forward;" "swing partners." (*Catches HULDA, and swings her.*)

Hulda. Mercy sakes! do you want to kill me? (*Drops into chair.*)

(Enter L. MRS. S., while they are swinging.)

Mrs. S. Well, I never!

Hiram. How de do, Delia? Jest dropped round with a barrel of flour. Wanted to give my pony a little exercise. Been givin' Hulda a little too.

Hulda. Exercise! You've driven all the breath out of my body.

Mrs. S. A barrel of flour for me? O Hiram, you're too good!

Hiram. Guess not. The good die young, and I'm going on sixty.

Mrs. S. But I have no claim on you.

Hiram. Want to know! Wasn't Cyrus a good friend to me, and everybody in trouble? Wasn't he always casting bread upon the waters? I'm only returning it in flour. You can make the bread. When Cyrus went away, you and yours became "our folks" to everybody in the place; so it's all in the family.

(Enter TEDDY, door in flat, wringing out his wet jacket, hair over his eyes, wet.)

Teddy. By Jinks! we've had a scrape.

Hiram. What's the matter, sonny?

Teddy. Me an' Becky went to shoot the basin. She got over splendid; but I didn't head my log right, and was goin' by right straight for the falls. Becky she see I was goin'; reached out and caught my log, tipped me over, and in she went. I caught the bushes, but she went down the stream.

Hiram. And over the falls?

Teddy. Almost. I yelled like sixty; the men come runnin' out of the mill, but they couldn't do nothin'.

'Then purty soon I saw another man runnin' with a rope. By jinks! it was Harry Thompson. He jest kicked off his shoes, tied the rope round his waist, give the fellers the other end of it, give a run, jumped in, caught Becky just as she was going over the falls. The next minute they went under, and the next them fellers had 'em out; an' — an' — I'm awful hungry. (*Goes to R.*)

Hiram. Well done! I'll raise the wages of every man in the mill.

Mrs. S. Thank Heaven! But where is she? Where's my child?

(*Enter HARRY, door in flat, with BECKY in his arms.*)

Harry. She's here. (*Enter Mrs. T., L.*)

Mrs. S. (*staggering forward*). O Becky! (*Falls.*)

Hulda. Mercy sakes! she's struck.

Becky (*whom HARRY has set on her feet*). O mother! I've killed my mother! (*Falls on her mother's neck. Slow curtain. As it descends.*)

Mrs. T. Poor child! 'tis not her work; 'tis the long watch for the ship that never comes.

PICTURE. — *Mrs. S. and BECKY on floor, C. Mrs. T. standing behind them, looking down. HULDA, R. C., with a bottle which she takes from her pocket, and with which she is saturating a handkerchief, slightly bending forward. TEDDY R., with a twist in his jacket, looking at BECKY. HIRAM R., with his right leg over the corner of table, elbow on knee, chin on hand. HARRY at the other end of table, left hand on table, right at back of his head. Soft music.*

ACT II. — SCENE: *Sitting-room at CAPT. THOMPSON'S.*

Windows R. and L., in flat. Table between, covered with a red cloth ; on it a vase of flowers and several books. Windows have muslin curtains draped. Canary-bird in cage, in R. window. Chairs in windows. Door R., next window. Closet R., between door and entrance. Desk L., back to audience ; arm-chair behind it ; arm-chair L. C. CAPT. T. at desk, writing. MRS. T. in arm-chair, R. C., knitting.

Mrs. T. Well, Paul, did you have a pleasant day in Boston yesterday?

Capt. T. Did I ever have a pleasant day there? No. It's nothing but rush and bluster ; you can't talk to a man five minutes before he grasps his hat, and rushes off, saying he's "got to go and see a man." I've no patience with them. You'll not catch me there again soon. What's the news here since I've been gone?

Mrs. T. Delia's no better.

Capt. T. Didn't expect she would be. It's two years since she was struck with paralysis. Little chance of her ever getting well. Hard lines for her, especially with that grumbling old Hulda Prime about her.

Mrs. T. Ah! the grumbler has gone, and in her place is a new creature. The blow that prostrated Delia made a new woman of Hulda. At once she

took charge of every thing ; all her old troubles were forgotten ; she's a good cook, a careful housekeeper, a handy nurse, and a good mother to the children. They and the house are as neat as wax.

Capt. T. Bah ! that tomboy.

Mrs. T. She's no longer a tomboy, but a bright, helpful little woman. She's been at school two years, and always at the head of her class.

Capt. T. Well, I'm glad she's turned about. I never liked her, and I hope she'll never come in my way.

Mrs. T. Yet you are very fond of Teddy.

Capt. T. Well, he's quite another sort. He's the coolest piece I ever met. He came into the ship-yard the day after the tomboy was pulled out of the water, as unconcerned as if nothing had happened. I was just going to drive him off, when he asked me something about the ship. I was so surprised that I answered him ; and, confound him, I've done nothing but answer his questions ever since. As for the rest of the family, I washed my hands of them long ago.

Mrs. T. (*with a mischievous glance at Capt. T.*). It's strange how they get along. They have a mysterious friend somewhere about here. For the doctor's bill is regularly paid, and they've every thing they need. Who can it be ?

Capt. T. (*confused*). Well — ah — hum ! You needn't trouble yourself to find out. It's none of our business.

Mrs. T. Becky's smart. Out of school-hours she works at the mill.

Capt. T. She work! Impossible!

Mrs. T. Now, father —

Capt. T. Don't call me father. Haven't I told you I wouldn't be called father? I ain't a father! I won't be a father! When that boy disobeyed me I cut him out of my heart, and I'll never forgive him, never.

Mrs. T. (rising). Just as you please, fath — I beg pardon, I mean Paul. You know I never contradict you. (*Opens closet, and takes hat and shawl.*)

Capt. T. Where are you going?

Mrs. T. Out.

Capt. T. So I see.

Mrs. T. (aside). I wish he'd ask me where.

Capt. T. (aside). She wants me to ask her where she's going. Catch me! (*Aloud.*) Don't be gone long: it's lonesome here without you.

Mrs. T. No longer than I can help. [*Exit door R.*]

Capt. T. (rises, and peeps out of window L. in flat). Hum! told you so: there she goes straight down the hill to the Sleepers'. There never was such a woman. Deliberately disobeying her husband, bless her dear heart, I knew she would. Can't stand that. It's wrong. Obedience is a wife's first duty. But don't she make things fly over there? Poor Delia, she sha'n't want for physic as long as I live. And those young ones! Well, well, boys will be boys, and girls will be — tomboys sometimes, I suppose. There she goes in at the gate. (*Enter PHIL R. 1 E.*) Ah, my lady! You'd like to find out who the mysterious friend is? No, no: I'm a sly old dog.

Phil. Ah, ha, Captain! is it a sly look at the girls ye's havin'?

Capt. T. (turning quickly). Hallo! you here?

Phil. Yis, sir; but ye's can thrust me. I'll not till.

Capt. T. Tell, you booby! Can't a man look after his wife?

Phil. Oh! it's the misthress, is it? Well, that's all right: I forgive you.

Capt. T. Well, what do you want?

Phil. Did ye's hear the news of the big fire down beyant there?

Capt. T. Fire? When? where?

Phil. It was yisterday. Small's mill; an' a mighty illigant blaze it was intirely.

Capt. T. Small's mill burned down?

Phil. No, burned up; for it caught in the lower flure.

Capt. T. Anybody hurt?

Phil. Niver a one. The hands were at dinner; only two girls lift: Becky Sleeper, an' — an' the little cripple, Silly York's sister. They couldn't get out below; for, d'ye mind, it was all one roaring blaze. Ah, but wasn't Becky the brave girl! the minute, she jist raised a laddher to the skylight, tuk the cripple on the back of her, and was on the roof in the twinkle of an eye; thin begorra she rin back, sthrippid up the bags, made a rope, and lowered her to the ground. Jist in time you may belave, begorra! Didn't the pape shout whin they see her coomin'!

Capt. T. It was a brave deed.

Phil. You may will say that, for it's a judgment on ye's.

Capt. T. A judgment on me?

Phil. To be sure, for trating her so shamefully whin she was a tomboy. She niver could have done it if she hadn't been trained to fates of ground an' lofty tounblin' loike the ac-crow-bats. Oh, she's the brave one! If iver I have a girl, I'll make a tomboy ov her if I have to tie her hands and fate.

Capt. T. (sitting at desk). You go and find Hiram Small. Tell him I want to see him.

Phil. All roight (*going*). The young shaver Tiddy is outside. I've a moind he's waitin' fur a sight of ye's.

Capt. T. Send him in.

Phil. Will I foind the sisther, and sind her too?

Capt. T. The tomboy in my house? No.

Phil. You couldn't do bether.

Capt. T. Clear out.

Phil. All right. Ye's haven't forgotten the toime she run away wid the horse, an' ye's afther her. Be-gorra! how ye's did run! (*CAPTAIN rises.*) Oh, I'm off. [*Exit 1 E. R.*]

Capt. T. (sits). So Small's had a streak of bad luck again. Sorry for him. But he's a stout-hearted fellow, and won't mind it. (*Enter TEDDY R. 1 E.*) Hallo, Teddy! are you there?

Teddy. Ay, ay, Cap'n.

Capt. T. Well, Teddy, you've had a fire since I've been gone.

Teddy. By jinks! a buster. I tried to help. We got the blamed old ingine out, and got started down the hill with it; but it went too fast for us, and we

had to scoot out of the way, I tell you. She run down the hill, and then tipped over. That's all the puttin' out the fire I did: but Becky, she did enough for both; she's always doin' somethin', but she's my sister.

Capt. T. Sit down, Ted, till I get through my writing: then we'll harness up, and drive down to the yard. You'll find a book on the table. (*Writes.*)

Teddy. Ay, ay, sir. (*Goes to table, takes book, draws arm-chair near CAPTAIN, and opens book.*) By jinks, there's a fire. Ship on fire, and only a boy on it.

Capt. T. (*glancing at book, and then writing*). Yes, that's the story of Casabianca.

Teddy. Who's he?

Capt. T. The boy who stood on the burning deck.

Teddy. What deck?

Capt. T. The deck of the ship.

Teddy. What ship?

Capt. T. His father's ship.

Teddy. What did he stand there for?

Capt. T. (*impatiently*). Oh, read the story! it's all there.

Teddy. I'd rather hear you tell it.

Capt. T. Well, the father was fighting the enemy.

Teddy. What enemy?

Capt. T. The enemy of his country.

Teddy. What country?

Capt. T. Well — ah — yes, the country of a great king.

Teddy. What king?

Capt. T. Oh! the king who sat on the throne.

Teddy. What throne?

Capt. T. (groans). Give it up, Ted.

Teddy. Well, what's he doing?

Capt. T. Who?

Teddy. The Bunker boy.

Capt. T. Bunker boy! No, no; Casabianca. He was told by his father not to quit his post without his permission.

Teddy. What post?

Capt. T. The post of duty. He was killed.

Teddy. The boy?

Capt. T. No, the father.

Teddy. Whose father?

Capt. T. Casabianca's. Then the ship took fire: the crew deserted the ship, but he nobly stuck to his post.

Teddy. Who? the father?

Capt. T. The father was dead.

Teddy. Then of course he stude there. Well, what became of the boy?

Capt. T. He was blowed up.

Teddy. Who blowed him up?

Capt. T. There, that will do for to-day. You go and harness the horse, while I finish my letter. (*Writes.*)

Teddy (rising, and placing book on table). Ay, ay, sir (*comes down r.*): he was blowed up, the Bunker boy was. Served him right, for stieking there when he might have got ashore with the other fellers. Say, captain, where did he go to?

Capt. T. (angry). Go to thunder with your infernal questions.

Teddy. Ay, ay, sir. [Exit R. 1 E.]

Capt. T. Bah! Tumbled into my own trap. I told him never to be afraid to ask questions, and I'll be hanged if he is. (*Knock.*) Hallo, who's that? (*Shouts.*) Here, you Silly, you silly thing, where are you?

Silly (outside R.). Coming. (*Enter R. 1 E.*) Do you want me, Cap'n?

Capt. T. No, I don't want you. Somebody's at the door: if they want you, they're welcome to you.

Silly. Do you want me to go to the door?

Capt. T. What do I hire you for?

Silly. Nine shillings a week.

Capt. T. Start yourself, quick. (*SILLY goes to door R. U. E.*) Here, you! mind, I'm busy, and don't want to see anybody. [*Exit SILLY, shutting door after her.* That girl will be the death of me.

Silly (outside). Oh, you dear little thing! I must hug you. (*Throws open door.*) Come right in.

Capt. T. Didn't I tell you I wouldn't see anybody?

(*Enter SILLY.*)

Silly. You don't know who it is. You wouldn't shut her out, would you? She saved my sister.

Capt. T. (rises). Hang your sister! She —

(*Enter BECKY, door R. U. E.*)

Becky (gently). Beg pardon, Capt. Thompson, if I intrude. But I have a little business with you, and if you could kindly give me five minutes (*with a smile*), oh, I should be so much obliged!

Capt. T. (*aside, with a low whistle*). Pretty as a picture. (*Aloud with a low bow*.) Certainly, Miss Becky, if I can be of service to you. — Silly, you needn't stop.

Silly. But I want to: she saved my sister. (*BECKY laughs.*)

Becky. I'll come out, and see you before I go: you are not afraid to trust me with the captain, are you? (*Laughs.*) He won't eat me.

Capt. T. (*aside*). She looks good enough to eat. (*Aloud to SILLY.*) Here, you, start your boots quick.

Silly. My gracious! [*Exit R. 1 E.*]

Capt. T. (*sits at desk, and motions BECKY to a chair*). Now, Miss Becky, what have you to say?

Becky (*hand on back of chair, R. C.*). Captain, I've been wanting to come to you, to thank you for being so kind to us all; for helping — no, not helping; for you have done every thing. Without you, I don't know what would have become of us.

Capt. T. (*gruffly*). Bah! Is that all you came for?

Becky. No: I came to beg your pardon for being so much trouble to you when I was a wild tomboy (*with a smile*), stealing your apples, riding your horse, and leaving you to run behind. Oh, I know it was wrong now, and I'm so sorry!

Capt. T. Well, is that all you came for?

Becky. No. When I found how poor we were, when I saw my dear mother lying day after day on her bed helpless, when I began to think of you and Aunt Hulda doing every thing, and I strong and active,

doing nothing, I felt ashamed of myself; so I went to work in the paper-mill. You know how it was destroyed?

Capt. T. Yes; and how a brave girl, at the risk of her own life, saved a weak and helpless companion. Oh, I know it all!

Becky. Yes, the mill was burned. I had saved ninety dollars. Oh, I did so want to make it a hundred! but I couldn't. I meant to bring it to you, to pay you in part for what you have done for our folks; but I've brought you ninety. (*Places roll of bills on desk.*)

Capt. T. (*sits back in his chair; looks at the money, then at BECKY*). You — you bring (*affected; pulls out his handkerchief*) — I who (*wipes his eyes*) — you come — oh, this is too much! (*Puts handkerchief to his eyes; lets his head fall on desk, and sobs.*)

Becky (*frightened, after a pause*). O captain! I didn't mean to hurt your feelings: I only wanted to repay you just a little for your kindness. I didn't mean any harm; indeed I didn't.

Capt. T. (*jumps up*). Becky Sleeper, you're a little angel, and I'm an ugly old brute! (*Crosses to r.*) Pick up your money: I don't want it. To think that I've been abusing you all this time, and you coming in this way to pour coals of fire on my head! I'm an old fool! (*Crosses back to desk.*) Take your money, quick!

Becky. No; you mustn't ask me to do that, captain. If you knew what a temptation that money has been to me —

Capt. T. Temptation?

Becky. Well, I'll tell you ; but it's a secret. (*Sits in chair R. C.*)

Capt. T. (*pulls chair from desk, and sits near her*). Oh ! it's a secret, is it ?

Becky. Yes. You must not tell, not even Aunt Rebecca. You won't, will you ? Honor bright ?

Capt. T. Honor bright.

Becky. Now, ain't this nice, to think of you and I sitting so cosily together ! Ha, ha, ha ! it's just jolly. No one would think I had ever been such a torment to you ; and you ain't half so ugly as you used to be.

Capt. T. Is that the secret ?

Becky. No. I've just learned of a very nice way to make money, — one I should like very much ; but it is necessary to make a journey to Boston, to see a man —

Capt. T. (*groans*). To see a man !

Becky. What's the matter ? ain't you well ?

Capt. T. Go on.

Becky. And this man would give me work, to make designs for engravings. Aunt Rebecca — no, Harry — told me of it ; your Harry. (*CAPT. T. scratches his head, and looks away.*) (*Aside.*) He don't like that, but I'm not going to slight Harry. (*Aloud.*) I had the money to take me there ; and I was tempted to use it, — tempted, oh, so hard ! until I remembered it was your money ; and, to put the temptation from me, I brought it to you. I didn't want to until I had the hundred : now I'm glad I did. Had I gone, I should have disobeyed Aunt Rebecca, and — Harry.

Capt. T. Why disobeyed Aunt Rebecca ?

Becky. Because they (*emphasizing "they" with a toss of her head*) forbade my going until the expiration of the school-term.

Capt. T. She forbid you? nonsense! It's a capital idea; a nice way to earn money. And you want to go?

Becky (clapping her hands). Oh, don't I! If only it was right!

Capt. T. Right? of course it's right. She's no right to prevent you, and I should like to see her do it. You want to go to Boston: you shall go.

Becky. Oh, if I only could! I know I should succeed. But what would Aunt Rebecca and —

Capt. T. Hang Aunt Rebecca! I've just as much right to direct your actions as she has. I'm going to Boston to-morrow morning. You shall go with me.

Becky (jumping up). Do you mean to say you will take me?

Capt. T. To Boston to see a man, — a hundred if you want to. To see all the sights, — to the top of Bunker-hill Monument, and the State House. You shall see high life —

Becky. Oh, that would be splendid! If I only could!

Capt. T. You can and shall. Go home, get ready, and to-morrow morning at five o'clock meet me at the schoolhouse. Phil shall drive us to the depot, and at one we'll be in Boston. (*Rises; takes money from desk.*) Here, take your money (*tosses it into her lap*). When I want it, I'll ask for it.

Becky (rises). Well, of all things in this world! You really mean it?

Capt. T. Of course I do.

Becky. Honor bright?

Capt. T. Honor bright.

Becky. Oh, glory! Ha, ha, ha! I'm so thankful! Go to Boston? me? I can't believe it. Ha, ha, ha! It's too jolly for any thing!

Capt. T. Come, you haven't much time.

Becky. I must see Silly first.

Capt. T. Good-by, little one. Be sure and be on time.

Becky. When the clock strikes, you'll find me there. Oh! how can I ever pay you?

Capt. T. By shaking hands, and making a friend of the old man. You may add a kiss if you like.

Becky (throwing her arms about his neck). A dozen, you dear, good, kind, noble captain!

(*Enter PHIL., R. 1 E.*)

Phil. Ahem!

Becky. Good-by. (*Runs off R. 1 E.*)

Capt. T. Well, what the d —

Phil. Aisy, captain. Remimber ye's a dacon, an' don't add profanity to ye's other sins. Oh! I blush wid shame for the desate uv the world.

Capt. T. You stop that, quick! What do you want?

Phil. Sure, I found Mистер Small, an' he's coomin'.

Capt. T. All right. Have the horse ready to-morrow morning at five. I'm going to Boston.

Phil. To Boston, is it? Begorra! an' it's only the day ye's said ye'd niver go to the infernal place agin.

Capt. T. No matter what I said: do as I tell you. Put in both seats: I shall take Miss Becky with me.

Phil. (whistles). Whew! the little one's coom it over the captain! Will, I never! (*Knock.*)

Capt. T. See who's at the door.

Phil. (goes to door, R. U. E.). It's all right, captain. If you've taken the little one to ye's busom, it's a warm heart ye'll be havin'. [*Exit.*]

Capt. T. (crossing to R. 1 E.). I've got myself into a scrape; but I'll carry it out. They say she sha'n't go: I say she shall. I do hate obstinacy.

[*Exit R. 1 E.*]

Phil. (outside). He's waitin' for yees. Coom in. (*Enter PHIL., R. U. E., followed by HIRAM.*) Begorra! He's out uv it!

Hiram. No matter: I'll come in again.

Phil. Oh! sit down, man, an' I'll be afther finding him. [*Exit R. 1 E.*]

Hiram (dropping into chair R. C., elbows on knees, hands hanging down). I ain't got much of an ear for music; but there's two tunes I've got pretty well acquainted with, — fortune and misfortune. The fust is a lively jig, and the t'other is as melancholy as the Dead March in Saul. I've whistled 'em both so long that it seems as though this whack of luck oughtn't to hit me so hard. But it does. I'm thrown, floored, actually busted; and I feel mean enough to rob a hen-roost.

(*Enter HULDA, R. U. E.*)

Hulda. There he is. I thought he come in here. (*Places her hand on HIRAM'S shoulder.*) Hiram, if

'twasn't Heaven's doing I should say you was the wust-treated man in town.

Hiram (looking up). How de do, Hulda? Yes, the old tune's struck up agin. I'd kinder lost the hang of it, so long since I've heeded it. But now it seems just as nat'ral as "Auld Lang Syne."

Hulda. Hiram, I'm real sorry for you. Dunno as I'm welcome; and I'm sure this is the last house I ever expected to be in. But I couldn't help putting on my bunnet, and runnin' over to the mill to see you. When I got along here I saw you comin' in, an' the Cap'n going down the road, so in I came. (*Takes off her bonnet, and drops it in chair L. C.*)

Hiram. It's real kind of you, Hulda, — somethin' I couldn't expect; for I hain't treated you jest right, nohow.

Hulda (brings down chair from window, and sits R. of HIRAM). Oh, never mind me!

Hiram. Seems queer you should drop down on me jest then, Hulda; for I've been kinder looking back, and jest when you put your hand on my shoulder, I was thinkin' of that day when horse, wagon, tinware, and peddler went through the bridge together.

Hulda (sighs). I remember it too.

Hiram. Yes: you were stoppin' with Miss Johnson, helping her with her Thanksgiving. You were a smart girl those days, — not handsome, but kinder good, wholesome-looking. Don't you remember my coming round to the kitchen, and jokin' you 'bout Cyrus Cheever, who was kinder makin' up to you?

Hulda. Cyrus Cheever, indeed! he was a fool.

Hiram. Yes; an' I sung out to you, "Don't have him, Hulda: wait for me; I'll call when I come back, and pop the question." (*Laughs, then very sober.*) But I drove off, and popped through the bridge; lost the chance.

Hulda (aside). He'll never know what I lost. I took it in earnest, and waited and waited. Ah, dear me! (*Aloud.*) Some of your nonsense.

Hiram. I meant it, Hulda; as true as gospel I meant it. If it hadn't been for that accident I should have come back, and asked you, Hulda, true as preachin'. But the old tune struck up, and 'twas no use tryin' to get up a weddin' dance to such music as that. And then when I got in luck again, somehow I kinder got stuck up, and got used to bein' my own master; but I did kinder keep thinkin' of you.

Hulda. Nonsense, Hiram!

Hiram. But what's the use of my telling you all this? We've got by all that nonsense; and I'm flat on my back agin, and poor as poverty. Don't 'spose it's very manly in me to go confessing this thing now; but I've kinder felt mean about it, and your comin' to hunt me up, so cleverly and neighborly like, when I've nobody to feel sorry for me, has sorter made me do it.

Hulda (places her hand on his shoulder, and, as she speaks, lets it slide down his arm, reaching his hand at the finish). Hiram, I'm glad you told me this. You needn't be ashamed of it neither. It's a manly thing for you to do; it's wiped out some hard thoughts I had of you; and I want you to understand, that, if you'd come back that day, Cyrus Cheever, or any other man, would have been of no consequence at all.

Hiram (*clasping her hand*). Well, now, that's hearty of you.

Hulda. Hiram, I'm real sorry for you. What will you do now? your mill is ruined. 'Twill take a heap of money to build it up again.

Hiram. Donno, Hulda. But I ain't a bit scared. I've begun too many times at the foot of the ladder to give it up now.

Hulda. Trust in Heaven, Hiram, trust in Heaven.

Hiram. That's good pious doctrine, Hulda; but I'm kinder unsteady on religious p'int's, and I think Heaven does the handsome thing when it gives us this world, with all its promises and store of materials to work and weave, and brains to think and arms to work with; and we serve the Giver best when we take all this on trust, and turn it over, and work it up, and do the very best we can. That's my religion, Hulda, and I mean to live by it; and, if I can do that, I ain't afraid it won't carry me over the river. So I ain't goin' to trouble Heaven to set me goin', but jest look round, find somethin' to do, and then pitch in with a will.

Capt. T. (*outside*). All right, I'll find him.

Hulda (*jumping up*). Mercy sakes! here's the captain. I wouldn't have him see me here for a dollar. Where's my bunnet? (*Looks round without seeing it.*) Must have left it in the entry. (*Runs into closet R.*)

Hiram. That ain't the entry.

(*Enter CAPT. T., R. 1 E.*)

Capt. T. Hiram, I'm mighty sorry for you. (*Shakes*

hands.) If it had been one of my own ships I couldn't have felt worse. I was out of town all day yesterday, only heard of it this morning. Swept clean away, hey?

Hiram. Yes, captain; all gone. Some of the machinery might be saved, but it can do no good. What's the use of a horse if you can't get a stable for him?

Capt. T. Well, the first thing to do is to build a stable for your iron horse.

Hiram. It's easy enough to talk, but where's the money coming from?

Capt. T. How much will it take to set the mill going again?

Hiram. Ten thousand dollars. (*Whistles softly.*)

Capt. T. Ten thousand dollars? (*Whistles loudly.*) Any insurance?

Hiram. Not a cent's worth. 'Twas too risky. You see, a little combustible cotton-waste swept away my fortune in a couple of hours.

Capt. T. And you say ten thousand dollars would be required to rebuild the mill? That's a big sum.

Hiram. Yes. The stock's clean gone. But my agent in Boston would fill me up, if I could only get the mill on its legs again.

Capt. T. Hm! Pays good profit, hey?

Hiram. Splendid! I had a customer for all I could make. Might rebuild on shares with my agents. I guess they'd come down with five thousand, if I could show the other five.

Capt. T. Would they? Then you're all right, Hiram. Build it up, and set it going.

Hiram. Yes ; but where's my five thousand coming from ?

Capt. T. From my pocket, Hiram. 'Tain't the first time I've set you up in business ; and, though you've failed many times, I never lost a cent. You've always paid me principal and interest ; and the money's yours when you want to set things going. If your agents won't go in with you, I will : though where so much money's coming from, I don't exactly see.

Hiram (shaking the CAPTAIN'S hand vigorously). Capt. Thompson, you're a friend worth havin'. You've put new life into me. I thought my best friend was gone when the old mill went ; but I'm all right now.

Capt. T. Of course you are. Don't say any more about it, and don't let it leak out. I don't like to have my doings known.

Hulda (running from closet). But they shall be known, you ugly old angel !

Capt. T. Hulda Prime ! You here ?

Hulda. Yes ; and thank Heaven I am here to see such a noble spirit ! Capt. Thompson, I've said hard things about you, and to your face too ; but I take 'em all back, — except about Harry, — that I will stick to. You did treat him mean.

Capt. T. (sternly). Miss Prime, I am surprised to find you here.

Hulda. No more than I am to be here. Hiram will tell you all about it. You're just splendid ! Folks round here pity Miss Thompson because she's got such a brute of a husband ; but they needn't. I wish I had you —

Hiram. Hulda!

Hulda. Law sakes! I didn't mean that. You're just as good as you can be, and I'd like to hug you. (*Approaches CAPTAIN with outstretched arms. He backs to L.*) Come, Captain, shake hands, an' forgive me. (*CAPTAIN looks at her hand an instant, then takes it.*) You'll never regret this day's work as long as you live, — never! And I'll never go to sleep at night without a prayer for Capt. Thompson.

Capt. T. Pray as much as you please, Hulda: I shall need it all. But, if we are to be friends, not a word of what has been said here: you understand?

[*Exit L. 1 E.*

Hulda (looking after him). Needn't fear me. If you want to hide your light under a bushel, I'm not mean enough to kick it over. (*Turns.*) Hiram Small, what on airth ails you?

Hiram (who has been silently executing a double-shuffle). Doin'? Why, I'm ready to shout, dance, sing. 'The tune's changed, and I'm jest bilin' over. Hulda, just remember, the minit the new mill is up, you're spoken for.

Hulda. Do you mean it, Hiram?

Hiram. To be sure I do (*clasping her in his arms*), you dear old girl! (*Hugs her tight.*)

Hulda (loud). Mercy! I'm crushed!

(*CAPTAIN appears 1 E. L. BECKY appears 1 E. R. HIRAM sinks into chair, L. C., on HULDA'S bonnet.*)

Capt. T. Hiram Small!

Becky. Aunt Hulda!

(MRS. T. enters R. U. E.)

Mrs. T. Who's crushed? What's crushed?

(HIRAM rises, and holds out HULDA'S bonnet, crushed flat.)

Hulda (snatching it, and holding it up). Heavens and airth! my bunnet!

(CAPTAIN, MRS. T., and BECKY laugh. Quick curtain.)

ACT III. — SCENE: *Sitting-room at Mrs. SLEEPER'S.*

Door c. Windows draped with red curtains, R and L. in flat. Doors R. and L. Sofa R. back, on which TEDDY lies asleep. Armchair L., in which Mrs. THOMPSON is seated, knitting. Table c., covered with a red cloth; lamp burning upon it. BECKY seated R. of table, drawing on a wooden block. HARRY THOMPSON seated L. of table, reading a newspaper.

Mrs. T. No more work to-night, Becky. You'll spoil your eyes.

Becky. Don't stop me, aunty! I must finish this drawing to-night. That will make three this week, my usual number.

Harry. Three drawings a week? My eyes, what a genius! That beats Alice Parks.

Becky (aside). Alice Parks! He thinks of no one but her.

Harry. Three drawings a week! You must be getting quite a millionnaress. Let me see, two from two you can't, four from four you don't: twice two is four, and twice four is two. By the way, how long has this been going on?

Becky. What, your figuring? If it should go on forever, you'd never come to a sum total.

Harry. It must be a year.

Becky. Just a year since the Captain gave me that famous surprise-party; took me to Boston to see the grouty and grumpy Mr. Woodfern.

Harry. With whom you had the famous cricket-match.

Becky. Ha, ha, ha! such fun! My tom-boy tricks, as the Captain calls them, served me well that time. He wouldn't look at my drawings. Didn't want young beginners, "more plague than profit;" and then he looked "Clear out!" though he didn't say it. I was just going to obey his mute order, when I saw, oh, the most splendid cricket-bat on the wall, just over his head! "Oh, what a splendid cricket-bat!" said I. "What do you know about cricket?" said he. "I know it's just the best game I ever played," said I. "You play cricket?" said he. "Yes, indeed! Please let me take that bat: I won't hurt it." He took it down: I seized it, and handled it just as you taught me, Harry. "Now," said I, "if we only had a ball!" He took one out of a drawer. "We have," said he. "What next?" — "Bowl me a ball, and you shall see;" and I placed myself in position. Then he got excited; and, when I shouted "Play!" he bowled a swift ball. I struck quick and hard. It flew across the room, through a window, struck a glass globe filled with water, and down it came on the head of one of the workmen. He shouted "Help!" and I screamed, "Gracious! what have I done?" Mr. Woodfern said, "It's of no consequence. Let me see your drawings;" and my fortune was made. Ha, ha! how he did laugh, and shake his sides!

Teddy (dreaming). Look out, Becky! Keep her head straight: she's drifting. (*Rolls off sofa on to the floor.*)

Becky. Ha, ha, ha! Ted's dreaming.

Harry. Careful, old fellow. If you don't take better care of your head, you'll smash it all to pieces.

Teddy (sitting up, and rubbing his eyes). Don't care! I won't be stumped by a girl!

Harry. Stick to that, Ted, and we'll make a man of you.

Teddy (sits on sofa). What do you want to wake a feller up for? I was havin' the best time! Don't have any good times now, except you dream 'em, since Becky's taken to drawin', and has got a beau.

Becky. Hush, Ted. Ha, ha, ha!

Harry. A beau? Who is he?

Teddy. Why, didn't you know Herb Arnold, the minister's son, is awful sweet on our Becky? Yes, he tried to git on the right side of me. Wanted to know what's Miss Rebecca's favorite flower; and I told him she was very fond of Graham. Couldn't fool me.

Harry. Does he come here often?

Becky. Very often. (*Laughs.*)

Harry. And do you like him?

Becky. Of course. He plays and sings. (*Laughs.*)

Teddy. He's got weak eyes, and wears gold specs. One foot's a little shorter than the other, and he's got a lisp; but he's a pretty good-looking feller. I guess, if I gave my consent, he'd give me a new sled next winter.

Harry. Consider it well, Ted.

Teddy. He's awful fond of Aunt Hulda's pies. S'pose piety runs in the family.

(*Enter HULDA, door R.*)

Hulda (*holding her thumbs before her*). Something queer's got into my thumbs.

Harry. Rheumatism?

Becky. Lumbago?

Teddy. Tic-douloureux, I guess.

Hulda. Nonsense! I got rid of them things long ago. No, it's a pricking; and that's a sure sign something's going to happen.

Harry.

“By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.”

Teddy. It must be Hiram Small. (*BECKY and HARRY laugh.*)

Hulda. Now laugh! I tell you when I have that sensation, somethin' awful and mysterious always follows.

Teddy (*snuffing*). Somethin's burnin'!

Hulda. Land of Goshen! my soap's bilin' over! Come, Ted, and help me off with the kettle.

[*Exit door R.*]

Teddy (*rising*). Her fat's always in the fire.

[*Exit door R.*]

Becky. There: it's finished! (*Rises.*) Now, I'll just take a look at mother. (*Crosses to door L.*) I won't be gone long.

[*Exit door L.*]

Harry. Mother mine, at last we are alone; and now, as aunt Hulda says, something strange is going to happen. I am going to surprise you.

Mrs. T. Surprise me?

Harry. Yes. For a year I have been little better than a vagabond on the face of the earth, doing nothing, earning nothing, living upon your bounty.

Mrs. T. And why not? Are you not my son?

Harry. Yes, mother; and, because I am your son, I hate myself for the idle life I lead. I have youth, strength, an active brain, and an excellent education. These — with energy to pursue, and will to conquer — achieve greatness, and occupy high places in the world. I would try my powers.

Mrs. T. O Harry! you want to leave me?

Harry. I must, mother.

“Care-cankering rust the hidden treasure frets;
But gold that’s put to use more gold begets.”

I must no longer keep my treasure hidden, — the precious treasure with which your love has endowed me. I shall go to Boston, and study law.

Mrs. T. But, Harry, your father?

Harry. And what of him? To him I am a stranger. Almost daily, I meet him: he pulls his hat over his eyes, and hurries by. He is a man honored among men. His good deeds have filled many hungry mouths, smoothed many hard and thorny places, and lightened many weary loads. But to his own son, his only child, he is implacable, relentless. (*Rises.*) Let me go, mother. Afar off I can respect him; but, if I stay here, I fear I shall learn to hate him. [*Crosses to r.*]

Mrs. T. You are right, Harry. You must leave this place. Fondly hoping that the way to reconciliation might be found, I have kept you by my side; but dear as you are to me, painful as the separation would be, I had rather oceans divided us than that any act of mine should cause you to hate your father.

Harry (crosses, kneels at her side, and puts his arm about her). Mother, forgive me! It was a thoughtless speech. I could never hate one you love.

(Enter HIRAM. Small door c.)

Hiram. How de do? I'm pretty well, I thank you.

Harry (rises). Ah, Hiram! Walk in.

Hiram. Well, I guess I can't stop. Thought I'd run over and tell you the mill is all ready. We're goin' to start the ingine to-morrow morning. Pr'aps you'd like to come up, and see her go?

Harry. Thank you, I should.

Hiram. That's all. Good-evening! *(Going.)* By the way, is Hulda to home?

Harry. Yes: she's in the kitchen.

Hiram (comes down to door r.). Didn't think of it; but I guess I'll step in and tell her. She might like to step over in the morning. *[Exit door r.*

Harry. A poor excuse is better than none. So, mother, my mind is made up. No more idleness, but good hard work.

Mrs. T. So this is the surprise you had for me?

Harry. No, mother. Like Hiram, I kept my real object for a last disclosure.

Mrs. T. And, like Hiram, you are in love?

Harry. Why, mother, who told you? How did you find it out?

Mrs. T. Oh, a little bird, you know. Ha, ha, ha!

Harry. Yes, mother. And that I may rear a home for the dearest girl in the wide, wide world—

(Enter BECKY, door L.)

Mrs. T. Hush! (HARRY walks over to R., *whistling.*)

Becky. Mother seems very uneasy to-night. I think she would like to see you, aunty.

Mrs. T. (rises). I'll go to her at once.

[Exit door L.]

Harry. Mother no better, Becky?

Becky (sits at table, as before). No, Harry. The doctor says some sudden shock may restore her. That would be a miracle, for 'tis three years since she left her bed.

Harry. We will hope for the best. (BECKY has the block on which she has been drawing, in her hand.) Let me see your drawing. (Goes behind her chair, and looks over her shoulder.) Exquisite! (Puts his left hand caressing on her left shoulder.) Ah, Becky, how proud and happy you have made us all! (BECKY looks at the hand on her shoulder, and tries to draw away.) What's the matter? Do I hurt you?

Becky (with a sigh). Oh, no!

Harry. There's grace and beauty in every line of that drawing; and it tells the whole story.

Becky. What story?

Harry. Unrequited love. There's a pretty girl in a hammock. She looks very much like you, Becky. She is sad. No: that's not like you. Her eyes are fastened on the group under the tree, — a young girl and a man: I suppose he is young too, or the young lady would not keep her eyes upon the ground so. You only give a back view. But they are both in love with him. How much she looks like Alice Parks!

Becky (irritated). Alice Parks! shall I never hear the last of her?

Harry. Yes, one of these days, for she's to be married; and then she'll be no longer Alice Parks, the dearest girl in the world.

Becky (aside). He loves her! Oh, how he loves her!

Harry. Now, what do you suppose that girl in the hammock is thinking, Becky?

Becky. I could tell you in the language of the story given me to illustrate. Let me see, how does it go? "He loves her, the girl who one short week ago was a stranger to him. And I must give him up, my hero. Boy and girl, we roamed the woods together, floated down the stream among the lilies, and were so happy! From that day I have had no thought, no wish, no hope, in which he did not have a share. I believed him all my own. And now — and — now he loves another! My heart will break. (*Drops her head upon table, and sobs.*)

Harry (bending over her). Why, Becky, what is this?

Becky (jumping up, and dashing her hands across her eyes). Oh, nothing! I must put away things. (*Lifts lamp from table.*) Just set the table back, that's a good fellow.

Harry. But Becky.

Becky. Do hurry: I can't hold this lamp all night! (*HARRY takes table back to L. corner; BECKY sets lamp upon it.*)

Harry (taking her hand, leads her down c.). Now tell me, Becky, why were you crying just now?

Becky. I crying? Nonsense!

Harry. You were. Your eyes are full of tears now.

Becky. Are they? I've got ad orful cold in by head. (*Sneezes.*) Ah choo!

Harry. Becky, that won't do. You must, you shall tell me.

(*Enter TEDDY, door R.*)

Teddy. By jinks, I ain't goin' to stay out there any longer!

Becky. What's the matter, Ted?

Teddy. Hiram Small and aunt Hulda are the funniest folks! He sot down on one side the fireplace, and whittled: she sot on the other, and twirled her thumbs. She "hemmed," and he "hawed;" and then they both looked at me. (*HARRY and BECKY laugh.*)

Becky. And you took the hint?

Teddy. Didn't take nothin'. They was awful anxious 'bout me. Aunt Hulda wanted to know if it wasn't too hot for me out there, and the next minute Hiram asked me if it wasn't too cold; then she wanted to know if I wasn't getting sleepy, and he said he was afraid I shouldn't be up in time to see the ingine start if I didn't go to bed pretty soon. I got disgusted, and left.

Becky (laughs). Ah, Ted: two is company, and three is none.

Teddy. I wonder what they are doing now? (*Pushes door open a little.*) By jinks, Becky! they've got their chairs close together, and he's got his arm round her neck, and she's got her head on his shoulder. Guess she's sick: you'd better run for the camphire.

Becky (*pulls him away*). Come away, Ted: they're sparking.

Harry. That's all, Ted. Don't disturb "love's young dream."

Teddy. They sparkin'? They're old enough to know better.

Harry (*takes his hat from table*). As mother is not quite ready to go yet, I think I'll take a stroll.

Teddy (*takes his cap from sofa*). Lemme go with you?

Harry. Come along, old fellow! [*Exit door c.*]

Teddy (*following*). Let's go and stone the bullfrogs. I know where there's busters.

Becky. So Alice Parks is to be married, — "The dearest girl in the world!" (*Sighs.*) She will have the dearest fellow in the world; and of course they will be well mated.

(*Enter Mrs. T., door L.*)

Mrs. T. (*wiping her eyes*). Mother has dropped to sleep again.

Becky (*puts arm around Mrs. T.'s waist*). Aunty, you've been weeping.

Mrs. T. Yes, Becky: I couldn't help it. Harry is going to leave us.

Becky. Harry going away?

Mrs. T. Yes, Becky. I know it is for the best; but I shall miss him sadly. He is going to Boston to study law.

Becky (*aside*). I see, — to be nearer Alice Parks.

Mrs. T. His father's coldness is driving him away, and I have so longed to see them united!

Becky. And you shall. Harry shall not leave this place without a reconciliation.

Mrs. T. Who can bring them together?

Becky. The neglected little girl whom you took to your bosom, and made a helpful woman of; the girl whom he befriended, whom he loves better than his own child; the girl whom your son saved from death.

Mrs. T. You, Becky?

Becky. Yes, I! — at least I'll try; and that, you know, in a good cause, is like placing the foot on the threshold of success. I routed this redoubtable Captain once, when he thought himself secure in his stronghold of obstinacy; and the next time we meet I'll find some way to bring him to my feet.

Mrs. T. Ah, Becky, 'tis a serious undertaking.

Becky. And a glorious triumph if I succeed. To lift the cross you have borne so meekly, from your shoulders; to restore Harry to his old place; to make the Captain happy in spite of himself, — why, it's just splendid! I long to set about it.

Mrs. T. But how? when?

Becky. This very night. There's no time like the present. (*Looks toward window.*) There's a light in your sitting-room: he must be there. (*Snatches her hat from sofa.*) You stay with mother until I return, and I'll run over and attack the enemy at once.

Mrs. T. Heaven prosper you, child! Be prudent and brave. [*Exit door L.*]

Becky. Like the Spartan youth, I will return with my shield, or on it. (*Goes up c. Enter CAPT. T., door c. BECKY comes down R., folds her arms, and stands with her back to him.*)

Capt. T. (speaking as he enters). Ah, Becky, here you are! I haven't seen you all day; and I couldn't go to sleep without a sight of my little will-o'-the-wisp. How's this?—not a word, not a smile, for the old man?

Becky (turning). Capt. Thompson, you are a member of the church, a deacon: you should know what is right. Tell me, should I love the wicked, or hate them?

Capt. T. Hate 'em! Hate 'em like pison!

Becky. Then, Capt. Thompson, I hate you!

Capt. T. Hate me? What have I done?

Becky (fiercely). Every thing that is bad. You have scattered your riches for good; but the dearest, best treasure Heaven bestowed you have squandered on an evil passion. You have made a fond mother's heart bleed; and you have bitterly wronged a proud and noble son.

Capt. T. (furious). Silence! You dare accuse me?—you, a little jade I saved from the workhouse! Becky Sleeper, are you mad?

Becky. I have spoken the truth. Your son—

Capt. T. 'Tis false! I have no son. And, if I had, who are you?

Becky. Becky Sleeper, whom you saved from the workhouse. Very manly to boast of it, wasn't it?

Capt. T. Once for all: I will not hear that forbidden name mentioned—

Becky. In this house 'tis a name as much honored as that of his father. He saved me from a watery grave, quite as noble an act as to have saved me from the workhouse. But then he has never mentioned it.

Capt. T. (*draws a fierce breath, then checks himself, bows*). I beg your pardon. 'Twas a thoughtless speech, which I regret.

Becky (*bows*). Thank you! Now we will proceed. When will you ask Harry home?

Capt. T. Never!

Becky. Oh, yes, you will! Think a moment. Some philosopher has said that a man's body undergoes an entire change every seven years; why not his feelings as well? It's just seven years since you drove him away. Now open your arms, and take him back, and your being has undergone an entire change. Don't you see?

Capt. T. Never! He wilfully disobeyed me: I'll never forgive him.

Becky. So did I—many a time; and you've forgiven me.

Capt. T. Becky, no more of this. Don't you see what a furious passion I'm in?

Becky. A wicked passion, born of a sinful hate towards the son who has honored the name you gave him.

Capt. T. Becky. (*Approaches her with clinched hand raised to strike her; stops, lets it fall upon his forehead.*) Heaven help me! what would I do? (*Staggers to arm-chair l., falls into it, covers his face with his hands, and sobs.*)

Becky (*after a pause slowly approaches him*). Dear Captain, I am sorry if I have spoken too harshly; but I have a dear mother in that room, whose pale, sad face lights up with joy when I approach. She has

borne her trials so meekly, so patiently, that her presence has come to fill my heart with a holier love than ever it knew. Over her bends another mother, whose heart is saddened at the thought that ere many days she must part with a son who is her life; her pride. Feeling all this, I have dared to speak with the hope that I might awaken the paternal affection that has so long slumbered in your dear old heart. If you still think I have done wrong, I will leave you. (*Pause.*) Shall I? (*CAPT. T. turns his head away, then slowly extends his right hand. BECKY seizes it, kisses it, then sits on stool near his chair.*) Oh, this is just splendid! You're not angry with me now? (*CAPT. T., still keeping his head turned away, shakes it energetically.*) No? Then I'll tell you a secret. You won't tell, will you? (*CAPT. T. shakes his head.*) Honor bright?

Capt. T. Honor bright.

Becky. You remember when we went to Boston? Didn't we have a jolly time? (*CAPT. T. nods his head.*) I told you I met a young girl at the engraver's, — Miss Alice Parks. (*CAPT. T. nods.*) Well, she's a dear friend of Harry's, your Harry, Captain. I shouldn't wonder if one of these days she should become his wife.

Capt. T. (sitting straight). Become his wife? Humbug! What are you thinking of, Becky?

Becky. Well, all I know, he calls her "the dearest girl in the world," and she calls him her dear friend, and they write to each other; and that's the way lovers do, don't they?

Capt. T. He marry that girl! I'd like to see him attempt it.

Becky. Why, Captain, she's a splendid girl; and, if they love each other (*sighs*), I'm sure it's only right that they should marry. And then Harry's so good! it would be wicked to prevent his happiness. You won't, will you, Captain?

Capt. T. I'll put a stop to that. He sha'n't marry that girl: I won't have it.

Becky. Why, how can you stop it?

Capt. T. I'll find a way.

Becky. He would hate me if I made trouble between him and you; and I love him so dearly! (*Puts her hands to her eyes, and sobs.*) Don't, Captain, don't! You'll break my heart.

Capt. T. (*putting his arm about her, and drawing her head to his breast*). There, child, don't cry. I won't interfere. (*Aside.*) The little girl loves him herself. Ah! if that could be brought about, she would be my own daughter. (*Aloud.*) I must be getting home. (*Rises.*) Come up and see me to-morrow.

Becky (*rises, places her hand on his arm, and looks up into his face*). Shall I come alone?

Capt. T. (*draws a deep breath, turns his head away, then turns to BECKY, with feeling*). No, Becky; not alone. Bring him with you, — bring Harry home. (*Holds out his hands to her.*)

Becky (*throws her arms about his neck*). Oh, dear, dear Captain — But stop; you must ask him yourself.

Capt. T. I?

Becky. Yes: he'll not come unless you do. He's as obstinate as — Well, he came honestly by it. Luckily he's close at hand, and you shall extend an invitation this very night.

Capt. T. But, Becky —

Becky. Don't say a word. Delays are dangerous. Don't stir till I return. You won't, will you?

Capt. T. (hesitating). N—o.

Becky. Honor bright?

Capt. T. Honor bright.

Becky. All right. (*Runs up and out c. door, shouting*) Harry, Harry!

Capt. T. The little witch! she has fairly conquered me. And I must meet the boy at last, and humble myself before him. (*Fiercely.*) No, I'll not do that. He has been to blame. Let me remember that, and meet him as a wronged father should. Hark! I hear his step. He'll find no penitence in me. (*Enter HARRY, door c.*) For Becky's sake I'll take him back, but it shall be as the stern, wronged parent I am.

Harry (advancing). Father —

Capt. T. (turns quickly). O Harry, my boy! Come home! (*Seizes his hand.*) I've been a bad father to you. Take me back, and I'll try to do better.

Harry. Dear father! (*Puts his arm about him. They go to sofa, and sit.*)

(*Enter BECKY, door c.*)

Becky. It's all right. Oh! isn't this just splendid? (*Runs to door L.*) Aunt Rebecca! (*Enter Mrs. T., door L.*) See there! (*Points to sofa.*)

Mrs. T. (hugging her). Dear child, you've conquered. (*Goes to sofa, kisses the CAPTAIN, and sits beside HARRY. BECKY places her thumbs under her*

arms, and struts over to R., singing, "See, the conquering hero comes.")

(Enter TEDDY, door C., running.)

Teddy. O Becky! (Runs down, catches her in his arms, and, lifting her off her feet, whirls her round.)

Becky. Why, Ted! are you crazy?

Teddy. Crazy! I'm stark, staring mad. You can't think, you've no idea. He's come, he's come!

(Enter Mrs. S., door L.)

Mrs. S. (tottering forward with a cry). Oh! where is he?

Becky (starts toward her; party on the sofa rise).
Mother!

Mrs. T. Delia!

Mrs. S. Oh, I knew he would come! I saw the moonlight on his sails as he rounded the point. Hark! I hear his step.

(Enter CAPT. SLEEPER, door C.)

Capt. S. Delia, wife! Home, home again.

Mrs. S. My husband! (Runs into his arms.)

Becky. My father!

Teddy. Yes, it's our old dad, safe and sound.

Capt. T. Cy Sleeper, by all that's glorious! (All go towards CAPT. S.)

Capt. S. Stand back, friends, she's fainted. (Carries his wife to sofa, and places her on it.)

Mrs. T. I will see to her, Cyrus. (Goes to sofa, and busies herself about Mrs. S., rubbing her hands, smoothing her hair, and like attentions. CAPT. S. comes down stage.)

Capt. S. Ay, ay! that's tender work for a sailor's rough hands. Well, Paul, old boy, how are you?

Capt. T. (L. c. *shaking hands*). Cyrus, old fellow, welcome home!

Harry (L). Welcome! (*Shaking hands.*)

Capt. S. (*turns to BECKY, R.*). And this is my little girl I left behind me?

Becky (*running into his arms*). O father!

(*Enter HULDA, door R.*)

Hulda. Land of liberty sakes! if there ain't Cyrus Sleeper! Where on airth have you been these eight years?

Capt. S. (*takes her hand*). You're looking well, Hulda. Ain't married yet?

(*Enter HIRAM, door R.*)

Hiram. No; but things are looking mighty promising. Well, I snum! if that ain't Cyrus Sleeper! How de do? 'Bout given you up.

Capt. S. (*shaking hands*). Never give up the ship, Hiram.

Capt. T. Give an account of yourself, Cyrus.

Capt. S. All in good time. I've seen all sorts of luck; but, thanks to "the sweet little cherub who sits up aloft to look out for the life of poor Jack," here I am again, safe and sound.

Hulda. But why on airth didn't you write?

Capt. S. I did write, more than five years ago, a letter a yard long; and mighty hard work it was.

Hulda. But we never received it.

Capt. S. Because I never got a good chance to send it (*takes letter from pocket*): so I brought it myself.

Hulda. Did ever anybody see such a man! But why —

Capt. S. Avast there, Hulda! My wife's questions must be answered first.

Hulda. You'll find her in that room. She hasn't left her bed for three years.

Mrs. T. You are mistaken, Hulda. She is here, and really better.

Hulda (goes to sofa). My sakes! did ever anybody see the beat of it? (*CAPT. T. and CAPT. S. talk together c. HARRY and BECKY are together L. HIRAM and TEDDY together R.*)

Teddy. By jinks! I forgot something. (*Crosses to HARRY.*) Say, Harry, when I was down to the post-office to-day, old Postage-Stamps give me this letter for you. (*Gives letter. HULDA comes down R., and joins HIRAM. CAPT. S. takes a chair, and sits by his wife. CAPT. T. goes to table. Mrs. T. joins him there. TEDDY goes up stage, and stands beside CAPT. S.*)

Harry (opening letter, c.). Ah, here's a surprise! (*Looks at letter thoughtfully.*)

Becky (comes to his side). What's the matter, Harry?

Harry. Oh, nothing! I was only thinking.

Becky. Indeed! Then perhaps I'd better retire. I wouldn't for the world interrupt your *new* occupation. (*Laughs.*)

Harry. That's right! laugh, Becky. It's an old

occupation that's very becoming to you. It reminds me of the days when we were both so young and happy. We were great friends then, Becky.

Becky. I hope we are good friends now.

Harry. Of course we are. But now you are quite a woman, full of cares, yet a brave, good, noble little woman.

Becky. Thanks to those who trained the vine once running to waste. What I am I owe to those who loved me. What I might have been without their aid, not all the riches in the world could have prevented.

Harry. True, Becky. By the way, I've a letter from an old friend will interest you. Oh, such startling news!

Becky (sighs). From Alice Parks?

Harry. Yes. You know what an interest I take in that young lady's welfare, and you shall share my delight. Look at that. (*Hands letter. BECKY takes letter. There drop from it two cards fastened with ribbon. HARRY picks them up, and hands them to her.*)

Becky. O Harry, she's married!

Harry. Certainly. Mr. George Woodfern and Miss Alice Parks, after a long and patient courtship, have united their destinies. The designing young woman, having engraved herself upon the heart of the young engraver, the new firm is ready for business.

Becky. O Harry! I'm so sorry!

Harry. Sorry! For what, pray?

Becky. Sorry for you, Harry. They will be happy; but you — you — you loved her so dearly; didn't you?

Harry. Sorry for me? Well, I like that. Ha, ha,

ha! Loved her? Why, Becky, what put that into your head?

Becky. Why, Harry, you wrote to her, and she wrote to you. And I told the captain I thought you were engaged.

Harry. Oh! you told him, did you? No, Becky. I esteem that young lady highly; but love her, make her my wife! I never had the least idea of it. My heart is engaged elsewhere.

Becky. Indeed! I never heard of it.

Harry. That's my misfortune, then. (*Puts his arm about her waist, and takes her hand.*) I have always loved a dear old playmate, — one whom I have watched grow into strong and beautiful womanhood, — one whom I would not wrong with the offer of my hand until I had fully proved my power to win my way in the world. Do you know her name?

Becky (*drops her head upon his breast*). O Harry, Harry! I'm so glad, so glad!

Harry. Becky. I was right about the young lady in the hammock. (*Leads her to CAPT. T.*) Father, your daughter!

Capt. T. Bless my eyes! (*Kisses BECKY.*) Well, well! We beat the Parks girl, after all.

Mrs. T. (*embraces BECKY*). Ah, Harry! I found you out long ago.

Capt. T. Cyrus, old boy, there's been poaching on your grounds.

Capt. S. All right. If my dove must go, it's but a new branch of "our folks."

Mrs. S. O Cyrus, I am so happy! I thought you would never come: it was such weary waiting.

Capt. S. Well, well, sweetheart! No more parting. I made a fortune five years ago, lost it through a rascally partner, and tried again, and regained all I had lost. So down comes the old house, and up goes a palace of gold if you want it.

Teddy. By jinks! Dad has come home rich. I'll have a double runner.

Hulda. Well, Cyrus, what's the most precious sight you've seen since you left?

Capt. S. (hand on his wife's head). My dear old sweetheart, with the glad welcome in her eyes. (*Looks at HULDA.*) A dear old girl, after years of waiting, on the road to peaceful happiness.

Hiram (tucks HULDA's arm under his). That's so — if that boiler don't burst to-morrow.

Capt. S. (looks at BECKY). A dear girl, happy with the lad she loves best. (*HARRY takes BECKY's arm.*)

Capt. T. And an old friend who has turned from the error of his ways. Don't leave me out, Cyrus. We're here, a united family.

Capt. S. A realization of the old song of the miners' camp, —

“Afar, afar, on a shining shore,
We turn the earth for its golden ore,
To find at last, when we backward roam,
Most precious of all are ‘our folks’ at home.”

(*Keep positions.*)

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