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The Misses Pringle's
Leap Year

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No. 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Massachusetts

The Misses Pringle's Leap Year

A Comedy in Two Acts

By
AMARYLLIS V. LORD

BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

1912

PS 635
Z9 L 845

The Misses Pringle's Leap Year

CHARACTERS

MISS BETSY PRINGLE,
MISS PRISCILLA PRINGLE,
MISS BARBARA PRINGLE, } *three maiden sisters.*

MRS. D.
MRS. W.
MRS. G.
MRS. L.
MRS. B.
MRS. H. } *ladies of the sewing society.*

LUCINDA LEE, *a servant maid.*
DEACON SMITH, *an apparition.*

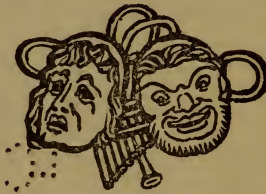
Mary Bowman

PLACE.—The Misses Pringle's living-room.
TIME.—The present.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Late in the afternoon.

ACT II.—Next afternoon about 3:30 P. M.



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The Misses Pringle's Leap Year

ACT I

SCENE.—*The Misses Pringle's living-room. Ladies of Sewing Society discovered. It is late in the afternoon and ladies are having tea and gossiping a little before their departure.*

MRS. H. Well, it beats all that you haven't any of you heard of Amelia Hawkins' engagement to Deacon Sikes. I supposed every one within a radius of ten miles knew about that.

MRS. W. Yes; but how'd she get him? I never thought there was anything uncommonly clever about Amelia, and every one knows the Deacon is the bashfullest man in town.

MRS. H. Easy enough to solve, when the critter proposed to him herself. You know the Deacon was always so 'fraid of hurting any one's feelings, so I s'pose he said "yes," just because he didn't know what else to say.

MRS. G. Do you mean to tell me Amelia Hawkins up and popped the question to the Deacon herself?

MRS. D. Well, and why not? I suppose it being leap year she thought she'd—well—take a leap; and, land knows, she never would have had the opportunity if she hadn't asked for herself.

(All the other ladies look at each other, cast their eyes upward and exclaim, "Oh, my!")

MRS. B. Why, I don't think that's such a dreadful thing to do after all. She very likely needed some one to tend the fires, bring up the coal, and run errands. I think she did a very sensible thing.

THE MISSES PRINGLE *(together)*. It must be a great help.

MRS. L. Yes, I've often thought what a lonely life it must be for you three sisters all alone here by yourselves with only your cats and the servants; and of course you can't make

companions out of them. I should think you'd just die to have some one to scold to, if nothing more.

MISS BETSY PRINGLE (*putting handkerchief to face*). Well, to tell the plain truth, it *is* rather lonely.

(*The other sisters give MISS BETSY a withering look.*)

MRS. L. Now, it's too bad; you've hurt her feelings. Come, it's getting late and we must be going.

(MISS BETSY rings bell for maid, who comes in; takes the cups and saucers away; then brings the ladies' wraps, which they put on and, thanking their hostess for a pleasant afternoon, take their departure. The sisters are left alone.)

MISS PRISCILLA PRINGLE (*turning to MISS BETSY, with fire in her eyes*). Well, Betsy Pringle, you've mortified us to death. What on earth ailed you this afternoon? To think that after all these years of single blessedness and contentment, you should express yourself in such an unseemly manner, to say the least. Why! I wouldn't exchange the privilege and liberty I have of being my own mistress for a seat in the White House.

MISS BARBARA PRINGLE. Right you are, Priscilla. Ketch me to be any man's slave. No, siree!

MISS BETSY. Yes, 'n' it's all very well for you two to talk, but I notice you both are always trying to shine up to Deacon Smith, whenever he's anywhere around and you get half a chance. And just because I complain once in a dog's age of being a little lonely, you think it's an awful thing. But there's just one thing about it. I don't intend to live and die an "old maid," if I can help it. So there!

MISS PRIS. Well, Betsy, I little thought I should ever live to see the day you would complain of being lonely and hankering after a man. Haven't you enough work to do without a man to clean up after?

MISS BETSY. But, Priscilla —

MISS PRIS. Don't Priscilla me, Betsy Pringle. Don't you suppose I know a thing or two about the men? Wasn't I over to Mrs. Moors' house last Friday? And wasn't she mending her husband's socks? Couldn't even stop long enough to make me a cup of tea. Though, land sakes alive, I didn't want it or expect it for that matter.

MISS BAR. Priscilla is right, Betsy, and I hope you didn't mean anything by what you said this afternoon about being lonely. Why! I wouldn't marry the best man in the world. Not if he got right down on his knees to me. No, sir-ree! Not me.

MISS BETSY. But supposing you loved some one very much and he ——

(MISS PRIS. and MISS BAR. both laugh.)

MISS PRIS. Hear the girl talk. "Love"? Ha! Ha! What do you know about love? Guess you must have been reading some of those poetical poems by Moore, or—some other trash. "Love"? Huh! I'll tell you what love is. If it's a man in love, make up your mind he's figuring on getting some one to do his washing, ironing, cooking and mending. And do it for nothing, too. Some one to build the fires, mend his old socks, sew buttons on his shirts and take care of him generally. On the other hand, if it's a woman in love, she's figuring on getting some one to take care of her, because she ain't got gumption to take care of herself, or make her own bed. There's Lizzie Perkins lays in bed mornings and makes that fool of a husband of hers get up and get his own breakfast; leaves the dishes for him to do at night after he gets home from work. (MISS BETSY quietly leaves room.) Huh! Don't tell me. I know what I am talking about, and if I wasn't a woman of a very few words, and one that never talks about her neighbors, I would tell you the way Hiram Wetherby treats (MISS BAR. quietly leaves room) his wife. He makes her tend the furnace, feed the hens, and bring in the eggs—(looking around and seeing both sisters have gone) and— and —— Well, that's what I call sisterly love.

(Gathers up sewing and leaves room by one door as MISS BAR. enters the other.)

MISS BAR. (having entered, listens at both doors, goes over to table, takes out paper and ink and writes). "Dear Deacon Smith:—You will, I hope, pardon my presumption for addressing you thusly. But I assure you, you have always been most dear to me, and as there are certain things allowable—this being leap year—I take the liberty of thus proclaiming you 'my affinity' before the whole world." (Aloud.) There! It appears to me that ought to bring him. "My heart yearns for

you night and day, and, knowing your many good qualities, sunny disposition, and forgiving nature, I gather up hope you will receive this epistle in the spirit written. Be mine, dear Deacon, for my heart bursts for you, and I know I can make your declining years happy. If you consider my proposal favorably, call to-morrow afternoon at 3:30 and wear a red rose in the lapel of your dear coat. Yours devotedly till death do part, Barbara Pringle." There! It's done. It's leap year, and I know the dear Deacon loves me but lacks the courage to propose. Oh, dear! "Be still, my fluttering heart." But I must go and mail this before Priscilla or Betsy sees it. Oh, my! Oh, my! I should dread the consequences if they ever knew.

(Goes out of one door to mail the letter, as MISS PRIS. enters the other. MISS PRIS. sits down at table in deep thought.)

MISS PRIS. Well, I guess I gave it to those two sisters of mine pretty slick. P'raps they think I don't know a thing or two, but *I do*. They are both shining up to Deacon Smith, and *I* intend he shall marry me. *(Goes to the door and listens.)* I know what I'll do, I'll write him a letter. *(Takes pen, ink, and paper and writes.)* "My dearly beloved Deacon:—" (I'll dearly beloved Deacon him when I get him.) "How my poor heart throbs when I think of you. Your dear face is always before me day and night. Dear Deacon, this being leap year, I know you will pardon me, for my love o'erflows, and I cannot hold out any longer to the eloquent pleading of your eyes, which your tongue refuses to utter. Be mine, dear Deacon, and my youth and beauty will be for you alone. Yours with love, Priscilla Pringle. P. S. Call on me, dear one, to-morrow at 3:30 P. M. and wear a white rose as a token of our love." There! That's over with. But I dread to think of the consequences if he should refuse me. But how *can* he refuse me? *(Goes over to mirror.)* Am I not beautiful? I am not old, only in my prime, and must get some one to take care of me in my reclining years.

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE.—*The Misses Pringle's living-room, about 3:30 P. M., the following afternoon.*

(*Curtain rises on MISS PRIS. and MISS BAR. seated at their knitting or sewing. Both are dressed in their very best. They both keep glancing at each other, and then at their work.*)

MISS BAR. Well, Priscilla Pringle, what on earth are you looking at me so for?

MISS PRIS. Why, I was—just wondering what ever possessed you to be so dressed up this afternoon in your—Sunday-go-to-meeting gown. Do you expect the parson to call?

MISS BAR. Meb-be I do—and—meb-be I don't. 'Pears to me you, yourself, seem to be carrying about as much style as you are able to; trying to put on about as much as any one around here. Pray tell me who do you expect?

MISS PRIS. Huh! I guess, Barbara Pringle, I've got a right to dress up a little if I want to.

Enter LUCINDA LEE, with hands up to her face and howling. Both ladies rush to her and exclaim.

MISS PRIS. } (together). Why, Lucinda, what's the matter?
MISS BAR. }

LUC. (*crying*). Dis yer poor nigger's been 'sulted.

MISS PRIS. } (together). Insulted? Why, what do you
MISS BAR. } mean?

LUC. 'Deed I has, missie.

MISS PRIS. } Well, tell us just what the trouble is, Lucinda.
MISS BAR. }

LUC. My poor heart's busted. I'se been rejected, I has. (*Cries hard and gesticulates. The sisters pat her on shoulder, trying to soothe and ask her to tell them all about it.*) Well, I tells yer jes' how it happened. But jes' shure's you is borned, I never puts no more faith in any man living nohow. De odder day I was jus' glancing at dat dar paper what de boy leffs at de house—and suddenly widout any warning my eyes jus' fo-cus demselves on one particular phonograph. And what you specks I sees? Somefin' what I feels way down deep in my heart was

jes' meant for dis yer poor lonely nigger.—“To all lonely females what dis may afflict.” “Dis am to certification dat youse may hab a husband for jes' de axing.” “Dis am leap year,—an' all youse hab to do, young folkses, is to make de proposition to de one you lub the best.” An' de good Lord knows I always did hab berry beautiful opinion toward Mr. Johnstone. You know his wife's been dead mos' three weeks. So I takes de great deliberateness to meet him on my way from market dis yer morning, and den I ups and axes him dat great momentous question. (*Cries harder than ever.*)

MISS PRIS. } But what did he say, Lucinda?
MISS BAR. }

LUC. He say, “I tanks you berry much, Miss Lee, for you sympathy and high honor dat you confer on me,—but—really I'se jes' erbout ready to fall into de arms of Miss Belinda Davis, who axed me after meeting last night. (*Cries again.*) If I'd only seen dat dar paper one day sooner, I'd got de best of dat dar Belinda. But you jus' wait. When I meets her, I'll scratch her eyes out. Yes, I will.

(*The sisters finally succeed in quieting LUC., and once more are seated at their work.*)

MISS PRIS. Well, where do you suppose Betsy is all this time? I don't believe I've seen her since nine o'clock this morning, and here it is after three in the afternoon. I think you ought to talk to her pretty strongly, Barbara, as you are the oldest, about going out like this and not telling us where she is going.

MISS BAR. It certainly is not like the child to remain away so long, but I am afraid you were a little too harsh with her yesterday; she didn't eat any breakfast this morning, and most likely has gone off in a tan-trum.

MISS PRIS. Well, she'll get over it, I dare say. But it really does strike me that Betsy hasn't quite seemed herself lately. Seems to be sort of absent-minded and thinking of something else a good part of the time, rather than listening to our conversations.

(*The door-bell rings. The sisters commence smoothing down their gowns, patting their hair, and appearing very expectant. LUC. ushers in MRS. L.*)

MRS. L. Dear Priscilla and Barbara, I hope you'll excuse me for rushing over in such a manner, but I've just heard the

most astonishing news, and I couldn't wait a minute longer. I had to come right along without any ceremony, not knowing, under the circumstances, whether my company would be agreeable or not, or whether you had rather be alone.

MISS BAR. Why, you surprise us. We haven't heard anything; what do you mean?

(*Bell rings again. MRS. D. appears.*)

MRS. D. Oh, dear! Oh, my! I never was so surprised in all my life. I came right along just as soon as I could get here, and didn't even stop to comb my hair. I am all in a tremble. I don't believe you knew anything about it yourselves up to this time, or you surely wouldn't have kept it from *me*.

MISS PRIS. What on *earth* can you mean by all this excitement?

(*Bell rings again. MISS BAR. starts up from her chair.*)

MISS BAR. (*aside*). This surely must be the Deacon.

(*MRS. W. appears.*)

MRS. W. Well, well, of all the shocks I ever received in my life. (*Stops and sees the other ladies.*) Why, how do you all do? And how shall we ever break the news to Priscilla and Barbara? For I don't believe they know a thing about it. Now, my dears, you will try and be brave and bear up all you can under this dreadful catastrophe. Remember, we ladies of the Society will surely stand by you, and tender you our sympathy, and comfort you in every way we can; won't we, ladies?

LADIES (*all nodding heads and muttering*). We will. Yes, we will.

(*Bell again rings and LUC. attends MRS. G.*)

MISS BAR. But, for mercy sake, tell us what it is, and don't keep us in suspense any longer. Is any one *killed*? Or poisoned?

MRS. G. Poor Priscilla! Poor dear Barbara! Have they told you the terrible news?

OTHER VISITORS (*with fingers at lips*). Sh! Gently, gently, Sister G.

MISS PRIS. Ladies, I insist upon your telling us now what all this means. I can't stand this suspense any longer. Has

anything happened to Betsy? (*Aside.*) Oh, why don't she come?

(*Bell rings and MRS. B. appears.*)

MRS. B. Oh, Priscilla! Oh, Barbara! Wasn't it perfectly awful of Betsy? I came right over because I *knew* you would need my sympathy.

MISS PRIS. } But what on earth has Betsy done?
MISS BAR. }

(*Bell rings.*)

LADIES (*together again*). Sh! Sh!

(*MRS. H. appears.*)

MRS. H. Well, this is a pretty how do you do. Don't you dare tell me, Priscilla Pringle, or Barbara either, that you didn't know anything about Betsy's affairs when we were all here yesterday, for I'll never believe it.

MISS PRIS. } But what has the child done?
MISS BAR. }

MRS. H. Done? Well, I should think she'd done enough. I never thought one of the Pringles would make such a fool of herself. My! But what a mess there'll be in the papers.

(*Both sisters with handkerchiefs up to their faces are weeping.*)

MISS PRIS. Ladies, if you have any feeling at all in your hearts, tell us what Betsy has done.

(*Ladies all nod at one another, whisper together, and finally say, "Betsy Pringle was married this morning to—Deacon—Smith."*)

MISS PRIS. } (*starting and exclaiming*). Deacon Smith?
MISS BAR. }

MRS. H. Yes, Deacon Smith.

(*Both sisters collapse, and cause great excitement as MISS BETSY and DEACON SMITH appear in the doorway, their faces all smiles.*)

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OUR CHURCH FAIR A Farcical Entertainment in Two Acts

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Twelve females. Costumes modern; scenery unimportant. Plays an hour and a quarter. A humorous picture of the planning of the annual church fair by the ladies of the sewing circle. Full of local hits and general human nature, and a sure laugh-producer in any community. Can be recommended.

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MRS. JACKSON, <i>the president of the society.</i>	MRS. ADDISON, <i>very inquisitive.</i>
MRS. BRETT, <i>on the dinner committee.</i>	MRS. RIDGELY, <i>sensitive.</i>
MRS. LEWIS, <i>the minister's wife.</i>	MRS. OTIS, <i>on the dinner committee.</i>
	MRS. THOMPSON, <i>decidedly close.</i>
	MRS. DREW, <i>just married.</i>

THE RIVAL CHOIRS

An Entertainment in One Scene

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Seven males, four females. Costumes eccentric; scenery unimportant. Plays one hour. A novelty in musical entertainments, introducing the old choir and the new in competition. A novel setting for a concert, offering an interesting contrast between the old music and the new. Lots of incidental fun, character and human nature. Sure to please. Originally produced in Meriden, Conn.

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Price, 25 cents

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THE TIME OF HIS LIFE

A Comedy in Three Acts

By C. Leona Dalrymple

Six males, three females. Costumes modern; scenery, two interiors, or can be played in one. Plays two hours and a half. A side-splitting piece, full of action and a sure success if competently acted. Tom Carter's little joke of impersonating the colored butler has unexpected consequences that give him "the time of his life." Very highly recommended for High School performance.

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CHARACTERS

MR. BOB GREY.

MRS. BOB GREY.

TOM CARTER, *Mrs. Grey's brother.*

MRS. PETER WYCOMBE, a "personage."

MR. PETER WYCOMBE, a "pessimist" with a digestion.

DOROTHY LANDON, *secretly engaged to Tom Carter.*

MR. JAMES LANDON, SR., *Dorothy's father; of a peppery disposition.*

UNCLE TOM, *an old colored butler from the South.*

OFFICER HOGAN, *of the Twenty-Second Street Police Station*

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A Farce in One Act

By Robert C. V. Meyers

Four males, four females. Costumes modern; scene, an interior. Play thirty minutes. A clever parlor play, similar in idea to the popular "Obstinate Family." Sure to please.

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A Comedy in One Act

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Two males, three females. Costumes modern; scene, an interior. Plays twenty minutes. An easy piece of strong dramatic interest, originally produced in Vaudeville by Christy Clifford. Free to amateurs; royalty required for professional performance.

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Novelties

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Twenty-two males and twenty females are called for, but one person may take several parts and some characters may be omitted. The stage is arranged as a country store and post-office in one. Costumes are rural and funny. Plays a full evening. A side-splitting novelty, full of "good lines" and comical incident and character. One continuous laugh from beginning to end. Strongly recommended for church entertainments or general use; very wholesome and clean.

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MISS PRIM'S KINDERGARTEN

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By Jessie A. Kelley

Ten males, eleven females. No scenery or curtain needed; costumes introduce grown people dressed as children. Plays an hour and a half. A modern, up-to-date version of the popular "District School," full of laughs and a sure hit with the audience. All the parts very easy except the Teacher's, and as it is possible for her to use a book, the entertainment can be got up with exceptional ease and quickness. Can be recommended.

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THE VISIT OF OBADIAH

A Farce in Two Acts

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Thirteen females. Costumes modern; scene, an easy interior, the same for both acts. Plays an hour. A clever and original play, suited for school or college performance. Full of incident and offers a great variety of character and great opportunity for pretty dressing. Irish and negro comedy parts.

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A Comedy in One Act

By Maude B. Simes

Six females. Costumes, modern; scene, an easy interior. Plays twenty-five minutes. A bright little boarding-school sketch, at once amusing and sympathetic; tone high and quality good. Confidently recommended to young ladies as an effective piece easy to get up.

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New Plays

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By Courtney Bruerton and W. S. Maulsby

Six male, nine female characters. Costumes modern; scenery, an interior and an easy exterior. Plays a full evening. An excellent comedy with the true college atmosphere but with its scenes away from actual college life. A breezy lot of college girls in camp lose their chaperon for twenty-four hours, and are provided by a camp of college boys across the lake with plenty of excitement. The parts are all good and of almost equal opportunity, the situations are very funny and the lines full of laughs. This is sure to be liked by the young people for whom it is intended, and is strongly recommended for high-school performance. *Price, 25 cents.*

CHARACTERS

GEORGE HIGGINS, <i>a Tuft's A. B.</i>	Ernest S. Swenson
JACK ABBOTT, } <i>Tuft's sub-freshmen, camp-</i>	Stanley M. Brown
FRED LAWTON, } <i>ing with Higgins</i>	Arthur J. Anderson
RAYMOND FITZHENRY, <i>a Harvard student</i>	Arthur T. Hale
DICK NORTON, } <i>off-hill engineers</i>	Ernest A. Larrabee
TOM CROSBY, }	Ferdinand Bryham
MARJORIE TYNDALL, <i>George's cousin; a Smith girl</i>	Helen J. Martin
ALICE BENNETT, }	Dorothy F. Entwistle
AGNES ARABELLA BATES, } <i>Jackson girls</i>	Edith H. Bradford
RUTH FRENCH, }	Marjorie L. Henry
BLANCHE WESTCOTT, }	Beatrice L. Davis
MRS. HIGGINS, <i>the chaperon. George's mother</i>	Effie M. Ritchie
MRS. SPARROW, <i>a farmer's wife. (Not in the original cast.)</i>	
LIZZIE, } <i>her daughters.</i>	
MANDY, }	

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The Girls' Camp at Sherwood, 7 A. M.

ACT II.—The Fellows' Camp at Sherwood, 8 A. M.

ACT III.—Same as Act I, 10 A. M.

A BRIDE FROM HOME

A Vaudeville Sketch in One Act

By Willis Steell

Two male, two female characters. Costumes modern; scene, an interior. Plays twenty minutes. A capital sketch of Hebrew life and character, combining good comedy with genuine pathos. Moves very swiftly and is very effective. Can be strongly recommended for either vaudeville use or for amateur theatricals. *Price, 15 cents.*

New Plays

THE SISTERHOOD OF BRIDGET

A Farce in Three Acts

By Robert Elwin Ford

Seven males, six females. Costumes modern; scenery, easy interiors. Plays two hours. An easy, effective and very humorous piece turning upon the always interesting servant girl question. A very unusual number of comedy parts; all the parts good. Easy to get up and well recommended.

Price, 25 cents

GADSBY'S GIRLS

A Farce in Three Acts

By Bertha Currier Porter

Five males, four females. Costumes modern; scenery, an exterior and an interior. Plays an hour and a half. An exceptionally bright and vivacious little piece, full of action. Gadsby's adventures with the fiancées of three of his friends are full of interest and fun. All the parts good. Well suited for High School performance.

Price, 25 cents

THE TIME OF HIS LIFE

A Comedy in Three Acts

By C. Leona Dalrymple

Six males, three females. Costumes modern; scenery, two interiors, or can be played in one. Plays two hours and a half. A side-splitting piece, full of action and a sure success if competently acted. Tom Carter's little joke of impersonating the colored butler has unexpected consequences that give him "the time of his life." Very highly recommended for High School performance.

Price, 25 cents

THE VILLAGE SCHOOL MA'AM

A Play in Three Acts

By Arthur Lewis Tubbs

Six males, five females. Costumes modern; scenes, an interior and an exterior, or can be played in two interiors. Plays two hours or more. An excellent comedy-drama, combining a strong sympathetic interest with an abundance of comedy. The parts are unusually equal in opportunity, are genuine types of rural character, truly and vigorously drawn and easily actable. No dialect parts, but plenty of variety in the comedy rôles and lots of amusing incident. An exceptionally entertaining piece, full of movement and action, and without a dull moment. Can be strongly recommended.

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By the Author of "Mr. Bob"

THE NEW CRUSADE

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Rachel Baker Gale

Twelve females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays one hour and thirty minutes. A very amusing satire of the servant girl question, brimful of telling incidents and effective lines. All the parts are good and of nearly equal opportunity, and practically play themselves. Well rehearsed, it is a sure success and goes with a scream. Irish, negro and Swede character parts and a "tough" girl. Strongly recommended for ladies' clubs. Can be played only on payment of a royalty of \$5.00 to the author.

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CHARACTERS

MISS MORRIS, *nothing if not businesslike.*

MRS. COGSWELL-BROWN, *who believes in coöperative housekeeping.*

MRS. POTTER-HEWITT, *who looks small, but is not.*

MRS. RAYMOND, *who advocates "The New Crusade."*

MRS. ARCHIBALD TRACEY, *in search of a maid and experience.*

BRIDGETT MAHONEY, *in search of "an ould gintleman."*

MARY MACGUIRE, *who likes "the theyatre in the winter toime."*

AUGUSTA OLSEN, *who comes from "Sveden for big monay."*

CASSIE CLAY, *who never "takes suggestions from anybody."*

JENNIE BURCH, *who never "has time for afternoon tea."*

MATILDA JOHNSON, *who likes "slaughtermobiles and a choffer."*

MERRY, *the settlement girl—who's always "on de level."*

COATS AND PETTICOATS

A Comedy in One Act

By Rachel Baker Gale

One male (played by a woman), seven females, and if desired, sixteen girls for chorus. Costumes, modern; scene, an interior. Plays forty-five minutes. A very lively and amusing piece introducing fancy dresses, music and dancing. All the parts of about equal opportunity. Irish comedy part and two capital "old maids." Very funny and not difficult. Complete with music for the Suffragettes' song and march and the Old Maids' song and march. Very strongly recommended.

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AN EASY MARK

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By Innis Gardner Osborn

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