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THE SUFFRAGETTES'  
CONVENTION

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# The Suffragettes' Convention

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and One Male

By

JESSIE A. KELLEY

*Author of "The Pedlers' Parade," "The Village  
Post-Office," "Taking the Census in Bing-  
ville," "The Tramps' Convention," etc.*



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# The Suffragettes' Convention

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## CHARACTERS

- MRS. JOHN YATES, *presiding officer.*  
MRS. SILAS CURTIS, *suffragette speaker.*  
MRS. EBEN ALTMAN, *suffragette speaker.*  
MRS. ELDON KEENER, *anti-suffragette.*  
MRS. OSCAR DAYTON, *anti-suffragette.*  
MRS. JONAS HARDING, *anti-suffragette.*  
MISS ROSABELLE HYACINTH, *engaged.*  
MISS PRISCILLA PRUDENCE, *would like to be engaged.*  
MISS ANNA HELDER, *great on style.*  
MRS. CHARLES BATES, *anti-suffragette.*  
MRS. RUSSELL SAGER, *suffragette.*  
MRS. FRANCIS WOOD, *suffragette.*  
SILAS CURTIS, *who becomes an ardent advocate of woman suffrage.*
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## COSTUMES

Miss Hyacinth should be well dressed in up-to-date manner, but in excellent taste; Miss Helder extremely stylish apparel, hobble skirt, immense hat, much false hair, etc.; Mrs. Yates, severe attire, very plain mannish shirt-waist with man's collar and tie, skirt also very plain, mannish hat; Priscilla Prudence in grotesque attire with hair twisted tightly into a small protruding knot behind, very small hat.

The rest may be in ordinary costumes, if desired, although it always adds to the ludicrousness of the performance if absurd costumes are worn. The suffragettes should carry banners or wear sashes with the words "Vote for Women," "Woman Suffrage Forever," etc.

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## NOTES

The players should be careful to face the audience at all times, speaking slowly and distinctly. Practice the story telling. Many a good story is spoiled in the relating. Give jokes slowly that audience may get the point and remember that conundrums will usually bear repeating. Miss Prudence has a strong part and can make a great deal of fun by the actions and remarks which show her soul-absorbing desire for a man. Silas, even when not having anything to say, should keep himself in evidence by putting head out of door often, making grimaces, nodding head, clapping hands, smiling or acting as if trying to suppress laughter, dodging back when fearful of being detected, then appearing again cautiously. He might even tiptoe out softly when the women are deeply interested in the speaker, and slyly touch one of the ladies, causing great consternation. Innumerable ways will suggest themselves to make this part a side-splitter. The women should act as they naturally would at such a time if a man's voice were heard repeatedly and could not be located:—be surprised, amused, angered, excited, indignant, frightened. Put vim into it all. The suffragettes are ready at all times to criticize the anti-suffragettes

and vice versa; many black looks, nudges and whispered criticisms being exchanged. Throughout the opening remarks, before Mrs. Yates succeeds in calling them to order, all should appear to be busily engaged in conversation, standing around in knots of twos or threes, but express the conversation by gestures, lip motions, etc., in order that there may be no noise to prevent the audience from hearing the remarks. Use local names wherever possible in stories, jokes and conundrums. Put all the action possible into everything.

# The Suffragettes' Convention

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SCENE.—*The scene represents a hall suited for convention purposes, chairs arranged for the ladies, a desk or stand of some sort for the presiding officer, and a closet or wardrobe of some sort at back of stage for SILAS CURTIS. There may or may not be a curtain. The players may all be standing around stage as curtain rises or they may file in if there is no curtain. There is much confusion at first, all talking at once; then out of the din gradually are heard the disconnected remarks of the various women.*

MRS. RUSSELL SAGER (*shaking hands with* MRS. FRANCIS WOOD). Let me see—your name is Wood, isn't it? And how is Mr. Wood?

MRS. W. He is very well just now, thank you.

MRS. S. Any kindlings?

MRS. CHARLES BATES (*to* MISS ROSABELLE HYACINTH). Your literary circle is making a study of Browning now, I hear.

MISS HYACINTH (*gushingly*). Yes, indeed.

MRS. B. What have you learned about the wonderful poet so far?

MISS HYACINTH. Why, we've discovered that he's just too cute for anything.

MISS ANNA HELDER (*to* MRS. JONAS HARDING). Just see that cat of a Dayton woman eye my new dress.

MRS. H. (*to* MRS. OSCAR DAYTON). I don't see how Rosabelle Hyacinth does have so many new dresses. Her father can't be making much on the job he's got.

MRS. SILAS CURTIS (*to* MRS. ELDON KEENER). Rosabelle looks pretty to-night, doesn't she?

MRS. K. Yes, but she makes up something awful. She's got a dreadful yellow skin.

MRS. EBEN ALTMAN (*to* MRS. D.). That was a pretty girl with you last night.

MRS. D. Yes, that's Birdie Downey.

MRS. A. Birdie? Why do you call her Birdie?

MRS. D. Because she's pigeon-toed, has crow's feet, her mother calls her a goose, her father has feathered her nest, and she has a bill with everybody.

(MRS. JOHN YATES *raps for order, but no attention is paid.*)

MRS. S. Oh, I just love to travel.

MRS. W. Why do you love to travel?

MRS. S. To see things, of course.

MRS. W. You can see things without traveling; try Welsh rarebit and mince pie. It's cheaper.

MISS PRISCILLA PRUDENCE (*to* MRS. B.). I saw you coming home from a funeral yesterday. Who was dead?

MRS. B. Why, my old friend, Mrs. Smith.

MISS P. Smith—Smith—there are lots of Smiths around here; which one was it?

MRS. B. The one in the hearse.

(MRS. Y. *raps repeatedly, but to no avail.*)

MRS. H. (*to* MRS. W.). Who are those people who moved in next house to you?

MRS. W. I can't find out a thing about them. They keep to themselves and don't seem to have anything to do with anybody.

MRS. H. Don't they have any callers?

MRS. W. I've watched that house carefully for a week, and the only caller I've seen was the garbage man.

MRS. H. Why don't you ask him about them?

MRS. W. I did, finally, but he couldn't tell me much. Just said, "Shure, ma'am, I don't know who they're after bein', but I do know that they certainly do be havin' swell swill."

(MRS. Y. *tries again to call them to order.*)

MRS. K. (*to* MRS. H.). Anna Helder thinks she is one of the four hundred.

MRS. H. Well, she looks more like one of the fifty-seven.

MRS. K. Fifty-seven! What do you mean?

MRS. H. Heinz—fifty-seven varieties—of pickles.

MRS. C. (*to* MRS. A.). Has your new parlor suite come yet?

MRS. A. Will you believe me, they brought it at ten o'clock at night, and I sent it right back?



MRS. C. Why did you do that?

MRS. A. Why? Do you think I am going to pay two hundred dollars for a parlor suite and have it sent out after dark so none of the neighbors can see it when it is brought in? Not if I know it!

(MRS. Y. *raps repeatedly for order.*)

MRS. Y. Will the ladies please come to order?

(*Women continue talking. MRS. Y. sighs, groans, shakes head in despair.*)

MRS. B. (*to MRS. S.*). You know my sister?

MRS. S. Yes, indeed.

MRS. B. She was taken suddenly ill the other night, and the doctor couldn't seem to help her any. She was in dreadful shape.

MRS. S. What did you do? I saw her out yesterday.

MRS. B. I got her a new pair of corsets, and they put her back in great shape right off.

(MRS. Y. *raps again. Tries to speak, but in vain.*)

MISS P. (*to MISS HYACINTH*). How did you like those collars you sent away for? They said you'd never wear them out, didn't they?

MISS HYACINTH. They were perfectly horrible. I wrote back to them at once and told them they were perfect frights, and that I wouldn't be seen on the street with them.

MISS P. Did they send the money back?

MISS HYACINTH. No, they wanted to know what I was kicking about. Asked if they didn't guarantee I wouldn't wear them out—doors.

(MRS. Y. *pounds repeatedly; finally secures silence.*)

MRS. Y. Ladies, we *must* proceed to the important business which awaits us. You know our procession was much delayed owing to the fact that there were several millinery stores on our route, and (*sarcastically*) of course the ladies had to stop to look in the windows, so I will make my opening remarks very brief. (*Oratorical manner, with many gestures.*) We are engaged in a glorious work—we are to free the women of this country—to free them from the shackles which have bound them for centuries. You know how earnestly I believe in this

great work, but I regret to say there are still some of our misguided sisters (*antis nudge one another ; whispered remarks, etc.*), who have not yet seen the light, so I have invited them here to-night to hear our eloquent speakers, hoping that their eyes may be opened to their wonderful privilege and duty. (*More nudges, etc.*) The time is coming, and coming soon (*voice very loud and high*), when women shall have the vote. We are not animals, we are not criminals, we are not lunatics, we are not children, and we will vote. There are pessimists (*looking at antis*) who say we'll never get the vote, but they remind me of the old lady who was watching the trial of the new trolley car. It took a good deal of time and labor to get it started, and the old lady, watching every movement with great interest, kept saying, "It'll never go. It'll never go." Finally it started and sped off down the track out of sight. The old lady with amazement written all over her face, but with conviction in her voice cried out, "It'll never stop. It'll never stop." Ladies, we are going to get the vote and we are never going to stop until we do get it. I want the papers to give the utmost attention possible to our proceedings that the news may be spread broadcast over the country.

MRS. A. (*rising*). Madam President, may I ask what plans you have made for keeping the reporters alert?

MRS. Y. I have arranged that carefully. I had it announced that early in the proceedings we should go into executive session.

MRS. A. Very good, indeed. They'll be on hand.

MRS. H. (*rising*). Madam President, you seem very proud to call yourself a suffragette. Pray tell me what a suffragette is.

MRS. Y. A suffragette is simply a person who is trying to overcome the tradition that women can't throw straight. (*MRS. H. sits down.*) Ladies—co-workers in our noble cause—and others—Mrs. Curtis has kindly consented to speak to us on the vital question, "Shall Women Vote?" I ought to explain that Mrs. Curtis, because of a delay in delivering her baggage, has not received the dress she intended to wear. She has, however, kindly agreed to appear this evening without her dress. (*Suppressed laughter, etc.*) No, no, I didn't mean just what I said. I mean that Mrs. Curtis will appear with what she has on.

(*Sits down quickly and fans violently.*)

MRS. C. Ladies of a common cause—downtrodden sisters,

the statement is made that a woman's voice is stronger than a man's.

(SILAS sticks head out of closet door.)

SILAS. That's because she gives it more exercise.

(Women look around in amazement, but SILAS has gone back and they can see no one.)

CHORUS. Was that a man? Where is he? Did you ever?  
etc.

MISS P. (*rising*). That sounded like a dear, noble man's voice. Where can he be? I should like to clasp him to my bosom.

MRS. Y. He must have gone. Pray proceed, Mrs. Curtis. No doubt it was the janitor.

MRS. C. As I was saying, a woman's voice is stronger than a man's, and her mind—her mind is cleaner and purer—yes, purer and cleaner.

(SILAS puts head out cautiously.)

SILAS. That's because they change their minds so much oftener.

(Dodges back quickly. Consternation; chorus of exclamations; some rise and look around.)

MRS. Y. I cannot understand this.

MRS. C. I will pay no attention to it. (*Oratorical manner, growing excited.*) As your presiding officer has remarked, we *are* engaged in a glorious work, we *are* marching boldly forward with the firm determination of breaking the shackles that bind our fellow women and make them slaves. (*Yells.*) Soon the mountains and the valleys will echo and reëcho with our shouts for freedom. I say what is our country coming to—and echo answers, What?

MRS. K. (*rising*). Madam Speaker, did I understand your question to be, What is our country coming to?

MRS. C. That is what I said.

MRS. K. And you say echo answers, What?

MRS. C. (*curtly*). That is what I said.

MRS. K. Then all I can say is that there must be something wrong with the acoustic properties of this hall. Who ever heard of an echo answering like that? (*Sits.*)

*(Antis smile, while suffragettes scowl, whisper, etc.)*

MRS. Y. *(rising)*. I beg you, Mrs. Curtis, to take no notice of such insulting remarks, but to continue your most eloquent speech. *(Sits.)*

MRS. C. *(giving antis a withering look)*. The time has come when women must be allowed to vote. We have waited a long time. There are still some men and, I blush to say it *(looking at antis)*, some women who sneer at our movements. There are even those who say our ranks are mostly recruited from those who are so old they have given up all hopes of getting a man.

MISS P. *(rising)*. I can testify that that is incorrect, for I can state from personal experience that I have not yet given up hopes. *(Sits.)*

MRS. C. Which proves conclusively, ladies, what erroneous statements are made. Still, why should women wish to marry? *(Excited.)* They have no rights! They cannot vote, they cannot go to the polls. They must slave over the wash-tub and the cook-stove while their husbands go to clubs. Think, my hearers, of the poor neglected wives all alone in great, gloomy houses, rocking the cradles of their sleeping babes with one foot and wiping away their tears with the other.

*(SILAS puts head out.)*

SILAS. That's quite a trick. Like to see her wipe her tears with her foot.

*(Dodges back, clapping hand over mouth to suppress laughter.)*

MRS. Y. Where is that man? Let us find him.

*(Women jump up, look under chairs, behind doors, etc.)*

MRS. S. I believe it's just a trick of those mean antis.

*(MRS. Y. raps for order; women sit down.)*

MRS. Y. We are sorry to have you so interrupted, Mrs. Curtis, but I think the villain must surely have departed now, as we cannot find him. Pray go on, Mrs. Curtis.

MRS. C. I say, Is it right? Is it just? Well, I guess not. I say no *(screaming and pounding on desk)*, and if I had the voice of fifty hundred thousand claps of thunder rolled into one I would thunder forth, We will be free. We will have the vote.

( *Sits down, wildly applauded by suffragettes, while the antis preserve a frigid silence.* )

MRS. Y. (*rising*). We thank Mrs. Curtis for her optimistic words, and we are going to have the vote, but let us not put off our efforts until to-morrow, for although yesterday, to-day was to-morrow, and to-morrow to-day will be yesterday, nevertheless, yesterday to-morrow would be the day after to-morrow, because to-day would be to-morrow yesterday and to-morrow will be to-day to-morrow, or would have been the day after to-morrow yesterday—or in other words, to-morrow never comes. The subject is now open for discussion.

MRS. D. (*rising*). The men have made out to govern this country ever since it was discovered by Robinson Crusoe, and I guess they will for a spell longer, so you folks might as well keep still. What would you women do in time of war if you had the suffrage?

MRS. Y. Just what a good many of our men do—stay at home and urge others to go and fight.

MRS. D. Well, I'm against it because—well, just because.

MRS. Y. You are stealing our thunder.

MRS. D. How is that?

MRS. Y. Aren't you saying you're against it because?

MRS. D. Yes.

MRS. Y. Well, that's our reason for—because.

MRS. D. Huh, because is every woman's reason. I don't believe women want to vote, anyway; they just think they want it. I believe it's just as Uncle Walt says in the *Post*. I have it here, so I'll read it for the benefit of (*sarcastically*) my poor, misguided sisters. (*Reads or recites.*)

### THE GREAT PRIVILEGE

“Put on your Sunday bonnet, May—you know this is election day and we must go and vote.” So spake the husband, combing hash from out his whiskers and mustache, and putting on his coat. “I hope you'll like the noble boon,” he said, in tones of loud bassoon. “For it you've worked and prayed; for it you've squirted briny tears and skirmished round for twenty years and quite an uproar made. So let us hasten to the polls and vote for skates who spend their rolls to capture all the snaps.” “I will not vote to-day,” she said, “I want to dye my blue dress red; I'll vote next year perhaps.” We're all just grown-up girls and boys who hanker for new sets of

toys and will not be denied; and when we get our precious boons they are not worth their weight in prunes, and so we let them slide. Them's my sentiments too.

*(Sits down loudly applauded by antis, frowned on by suffragettes; whispers, nods, etc., by all.)*

MRS. H. (*rising*). Talk about poor, downtrodden wives! I know some of these suffragettes who leave all the dishes for their poor, tired husbands to do when they get home at night. Can they find any authority for that in the Scriptures? Doesn't it say, "She looketh well to the ways of her household. She worketh willingly with her hands. She riseth while it is yet night and giveth meat to her household." Doesn't this prove conclusively that woman's place is in the home and that she should attend to those duties? (*Sits.*)

MRS. W. (*rising*). If the lady will pursue her Scriptural studies a little further she will find these words: "I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down," which *I* say proves conclusively that men should do the dishes. Poor, tired husbands indeed! Here's a poem I clipped from a paper which shows which is the poor, tired creature. (*Reads or recites.*)

### DOES MA WISH SHE WAS PA?

"I wish I had a lot o' cash,"  
 Sez pa, one winter's night;  
 "I'd go down South an' stay a while  
 Where days are warm an' bright."  
 He set an' watched the fire die,  
 Seemed lost in thoughtful daze,  
 Till ma brought in some fresh pine-knots  
 An' made a cheerful blaze.

"I wish I had a million shares  
 O' stock in Standard Oil,"  
 Sez pa; "I wouldn't do a thing."  
 Ma made the kettle boil,  
 An' mixed hot biscuits, fried some ham  
 An' eggs (smelt good, you bet!),  
 Fetched cheese and doughnuts, made the tea,  
 Then pa—set down an' et!

"I wish I was a millionaire,"  
 Sez pa; "I'd have a snap."  
 Next, from the lounge, we heard a snore;  
 Pa—at his ev'nin' nap!  
 Ma did the dishes, shook the cloth,  
 Brushed up, put things away,  
 An' fed the cat, then started up  
 Her plans for bakin' day.

She washed and put some beans to soak,  
 An' set some bread to rise;  
 Unstrung dried apples, soaked 'em, too,  
 All ready for her pies;  
 She brought more wood, put out the cat,  
 Then darned four pairs o' socks;  
 Pa woke an' sez, "It's time for bed;  
 Ma, have you wound both clocks?"

Poor, tired husbands indeed! That's a sample of them.

*(Flounces down in seat.)*

MRS. S. (*rising*). Yes, they're all pesky lazy. I saw Mr. Harris sitting on a stump in his yard one day when I was passing, so I stopped and asked him how he was getting along. "Oh, pretty fair," says he. "I had some trees to cut down, but a cyclone came along and blew them all down and saved me the trouble, and then lightning set fire to the trees and saved me the trouble of burning them." Then he yawned and stretched and said, "Now, I'm just sitting here waitin' for an earthquake to come along and shake my potatoes out of the ground."

MRS. W. That's just the way they do things.

MRS. Y. Miss Helder has a few words to say to us on this subject, I know.

MISS HELDER (*rising and coming to desk, much confused and embarrassed*). Mr.—er—er—Mr.—er—Mr. Chairman—when I—when I left—er—er—(*arranging hat*) when I left home this evening—er—er—er—(*feeling of belt in back*) when I left home this evening only two people—er—er—er—only two people on earth (*feeling of hair*), my mother and myself—er—er—er—my mother and myself knew what I was going

to—er—er—say (*twisting handkerchief*), but, well now—er—er—perhaps mother knows, but—er—er—I'm sure I don't.

(*Returns to seat hurriedly, fixes hat and hair, pulls at dress.*)

MRS. B. (*rising*). And still they say women should vote. (*Raises voice.*) What is the woman of to-day, anyway? She is simply an animated being whose waist begins just below her neck, her hips have been planed off even with the rest of her body. She is usually buttoned up the back and around her neck she wears a section of barbed wire covered with lace. (*Looks at MISS HELDER.*) She wears on her head a blonde haystack of hair, and on top of this a central dome with rings about the same size as those of Saturn. She is swathed in her gown like an Indian pappoose, and on the ends of her feet are dabs of patent leather. She walks on stilt-like heels with the expertness of a tight-rope dancer. The pores of her skin are full of a fine white powder. This is the fashionable woman of to-day, and she wants the vote. Is she *fit* to vote? I say no.

(*Sits. Applause by antis. Black looks from suffragettes.*)

MRS. K. (*rising*). And I say no as long as such incidents as these happen. The other day in a car I saw a woman open a satchel and take out a purse, close the satchel and open the purse, take out a dime and close the purse, open the satchel and put in the purse. Then she gave the dime to the conductor and took a nickel in exchange. Then she opened the satchel and took out the purse, closed the satchel and opened the purse, put in the nickel and closed the purse, opened the satchel and put in the purse, closed the satchel and locked both ends. Is she ready for the vote? No, I say, no. Here's a poem I brought to read to these poor, misguided suffragettes. (*Reads or recites.*)

Oh, woman, lovely woman —  
 Sweet embodiment of grace —  
 Don't you think that on the rostrum  
 You are sadly out of place?  
 Don't you think that you look better  
 In the quiet of your home  
 Than when around the universe  
 You undertake to roam?



Don't you think when on the platform  
 You attempt to ape the men,  
 That the effort almost certainly  
 Suggests the crowing hen?  
 Do you think, oh, lovely woman,  
 That this fury, fume and fuss,  
 Will bring emancipation, or  
 Cut any ice with us?

Your tongue, oh, sweet enchantress,  
 We respectfully suggest,  
 Makes the weary still more tired  
 And the wicked long for rest.  
 Thou hadst otherwise been perfect —  
 Of all the virtues been the sum —  
 Had heaven in its wisdom  
 Only made thee deaf and dumb.

So when, angelic creature,  
 In the fullness of disgust,  
 You come to the conclusion  
 That you've got to talk or bust,  
 Don't unload it on the populace,  
 For decency forbids,  
 But stay at home and give it to  
 Your husband and the kids.

(SILAS opens door.)

SILAS. That's the talk!

MRS. C. That horrid man has come back.

MRS. Y. We must find him. (*All hunt.*) It sounded as if it were in this closet. (*Several try door, but SILAS holds it shut.*) There is no man in the room. There must be a ventriloquist here. (*Looks at artis.*) Ladies, be seated. We will ignore it and go on with our next number, How Shall We Secure the Vote? Mrs. Altman will now speak to us on that subject.

MRS. A. (*rising and going to desk*). It is a pleasure, ladies, to see so many here assembled to demand the rights which we never have had, and never shall have, unless we make a stand and show the tyrannical lords of the universe that we won't be trampled under foot any longer. I see by the papers that

women in England are not only talking, but working. Are we going to be behind our English sisters? (*Cries of "Never, never! No!" etc., from suffragettes.*) Let us learn a lesson from their enthusiasm. Let us emulate the example of these noble women. Let me read to you a little poem which shows their ardor. (*Reads or recites.*)

### VOTES FOR WOMEN

The shades of night were falling fast  
 As thro' an English city passed  
 A girl who wore—it looked quite nice,  
 A sash that bore this strange device —  
 "Votes for Women!"

Her eyes flashed fire, her mouth beneath  
 Revealed a row of pearly teeth,  
 And like a silver trumpet rung  
 The accents of her native tongue—  
 "Votes for Women!"

"Oh, stay," the cabman cried, "and rest,  
 Do not proclaim with so much zest!"  
 A half-brick caught him on the eye,  
 He fell, and murmured with a sigh —  
 "Blimee! Votes for Women!"

At Westminster she saw the light  
 'Neath which M. P.'s talk half the night;  
 In the clock tower the said light shone,  
 She twigged and answered with a groan —  
 "Votes for Women!"

"Don't try to pass," her husband said,  
 "The street is lined up right ahead  
 And London cops are deep and wide,"  
 But still that clarion voice replied —  
 "Votes for Women!"

At break of day as prisonward  
 The savage cops, with one accord,  
 Muttered an oft-repeated swear,  
 A voice cried through the stilly air —  
 "Votes for Women!"

There in the courtyard cold and gray  
 They sentenced her at break of day,  
 And from the judge's lips there fell  
 A sentence terse that spelt her knell —  
 "Forty bob or ten days."

(*Folds up paper.*) She was a martyr to a noble cause. Oh, for some martyrs on this side of the Atlantic.

MRS. S. It's easy enough to talk, but what are we going to do?

MRS. A. That's just what I'm coming to. In England I've heard that there's a law that females shall be supported by their nearest male relatives, so the women all left their work and went to live with their relatives saying if they could not vote they would not work, which very quickly changed the views of even the most deadly male enemies of woman's suffrage. We may have to resort to some such thing as that here if milder measures fail, but I think a little firmness and decision in the home is all that is necessary. Just inform your husbands that you refuse to cook any more meals for them until they vote for woman suffrage. That'll fetch them mighty sudden. You can starve a man into anything.

MRS. Y. That wouldn't do in my case, for my husband is a good cook and can cook for himself.

MRS. A. Then you must try another plan. Lock him up in a dark closet or tie him down cellar with the clothes-line. I have known those methods to work wonders in changing a man's views.

MRS. W. (*rising*). I call such actions disgraceful. Poor husbands don't have any peace as this woman's suffrage is dinned into their ears morning, noon and night till they must wish in their secret hearts that a woman had never been born.

(*SILAS puts head out.*)

SILAS. I speak for you for my second wife.

MRS. A. That dreadful man again!

(*All hunt again. Chorus of exclamations and suggestions.*)

MRS. Y. I believe this place is haunted. There is certainly no man here in bodily form. Be seated, ladies.

Miss P. (*rising*). I would like to know how those of us who have no husbands can help secure the vote?

(MRS. A. *rests chin on hand a second and thinks.*)

MISS HYACINTH. Why do so many women rest their chins on their hands when they are trying to think?

MRS. B. To hold their mouths shut so they won't disturb themselves, of course.

MRS. A. Can't you get a man to pop the question, Miss Prudence?

MISS P. No, it's as hard as pulling teeth.

MRS. A. And yet I hear both operations are often performed without gas.

MISS P. (*with hand on heart, uplifted eyes*). Love would work a great transformation for me.

MISS HYACINTH. I know it does in my case. When the gas is lowered there is a great transformation act—the leather rocker is quickly transformed into a spoon-holder.

(*Laughter.*)

MISS P. I don't understand why widows very seldom have any trouble getting a second husband, and I can't get even one.

(*SILAS at door.*)

SILAS. Because dead men tell no tales.

(*Groans of despair and inquiring looks.*)

MRS. Y. I am convinced now that it is a spirit. You notice he said dead men tell no tales.

MRS. W. Speaking of widows, I'd like to know the difference between a grasshopper and a grass widow?

MISS P. There isn't any difference. They both jump at the first chance.

MISS HYACINTH. What is it a man never has, never had, and never can have, but can give a lady?

CHORUS. Don't know. Tell us, etc.

MISS HYACINTH. A husband, of course.

MISS P. Oh, if only a man would give himself to me! (*Crosses hands over breast.*) What a pleasure it is to have a man at your feet if it is only a bootblack. A woman's heart is like the moon, there is always a man in it. I don't see why these married women want the vote. Wouldn't they vote the same way as their husbands?

MRS. A. Yes, if they first tell him how to vote.

MRS. W. That's easier said than done. I told my husband the other day that by the end of the century woman would have the rights she'd been fighting for. "I don't care if she does," says he. "Do you mean it? Have I at last brought you round to my way of thinking? Won't you really care?" says I. "Not a bit, not a bit; I'll be dead then," he said.

*(Laughter.)*

MRS. A. Can't some of the ladies give Miss Prudence a few points on how to make a man propose?

MRS. C. Why does she want a husband? She's better off without one.

MISS P. Why did you marry?

MRS. C. I had a cat. It died, and I was lonesome.

MRS. B. *(rising)*. Just watch your opportunity, Priscilla, and grasp it. I was in a restaurant with Mr. Bates and he says to me, "Will you have a little lobster?" "Oh, Charles, this is so sudden," I said as I fell into his arms, and I announced the engagement next day.

*(SILAS at door.)*

SILAS. Stung! Poor chap!

*(More exclamations.)*

MISS HELDER. Why do they call a man in love a lobster, I'd like to know.

MISS HYACINTH. Because he has a lady in his head, of course.

MISS P. What kind of a husband would you advise me to get?

MRS. H. *(rising indignantly)*. You get a single man and let the husbands alone.

MISS HELDER. I wish they would use a new phrase and not always talk about the "blushing bride."

MRS. B. Well, when you see the sort of men girls have to marry it's enough to make them blush.

MRS. D. I never could see why a woman should take the name of the man she marries.

*(SILAS at door.)*

SILAS. She takes everything else, so she might as well take that.

MRS. K. (*rising and looking around*). I don't believe that is any ghost.

MRS. Y. If it's a man in the flesh I'd like to use the broomstick on him for a few minutes.

MISS P. I'm getting scared. Do you know, I was alone the other night when I saw a horrid-looking man. I just lifted up my skirts like this (*raising skirt*) and ran.

MRS. A. Did you catch him?

MRS. S. (*has been writing with fountain pen; giving pen a shake*). This fountain pen reminds me of some husbands—expensive, can't be depended upon, won't work and half the time it's broke.

(*SILAS puts head out.*)

SILAS. 'Tain't like a woman. A fountain pen will dry up and a woman won't.

(*Exclamations, sighs, groans.*)

MRS. W. There are some good husbands. I'd like to ask why a good husband is like dough?

MRS. K. A good husband like dough?

MRS. W. Yes. Because a woman needs (kneads) him.

MISS HELDER. Do you know that brakemen and clergymen are in much the same business?

MISS P. How do you make that out?

MISS HELDER. Don't they both do a good deal of coupling?

MISS P. Oh, how I long to be coupled!

MRS. A. Can't you give Miss Prudence some enlightenment, Miss Hyacinth? I hear your engagement has just been announced.

MISS HYACINTH (*rising*). I am so happy—ever since my engagement to George the whole world seems different. I do not seem to be in dull, workaday America, but in —

MISS HELDER. Lapland. (*Laughter.*) You really ought to pull down the blinds, Rosabelle. The neighbors aren't blind, if love is. I don't believe in kissing any more. It isn't sanitary. Germs and microbes lurk in every kiss.

MISS HYACINTH (*indignantly*). Well, they will never do away with kissing, so what are you going to do about it?

MRS. A. I should advise that at least you sterilize every kiss, or if this is not possible, take a sanitary gargle after every fifth kiss. Can't you tell Miss Prudence how he proposed?

MISS HYACINTH. He said I was the only girl he ever loved.

MISS P. Oh, why doesn't some one tell me that?

MISS HELDER (*rising*). Huh, that's what a man told me once, and I dismissed him at once, telling him never to return until he had ceased to be a bungling amateur.

MISS P. Why didn't you send him to me?

MISS HELDER. He came again in six months and I said: "Am I still the only girl you ever loved?" "I cannot tell a lie," says he; "you are simply the best one of the bunch."

MRS. H. (*sneeringly*). Suppose he told you that you were worth your weight in gold?

MISS HELDER. Indeed, he wasn't such a back number as that. He told me I was worth my weight in radium.

MISS P. Are you engaged to him now?

MISS HELDER. No; he took me to the aviation meet and I wanted him to carve our initials on the gas bag, but he wouldn't, so I broke the engagement.

MISS P. (*excitedly*). Where does he live? Was he broken-hearted? Perhaps I can heal his poor heart.

MISS HELDER. He threatened first to buy a revolver and blow out his brains, but I told him not to go to that expense, just to get a pinch of snuff and sneeze and that would do it in his case.

MRS. A. That was rather insulting.

MISS HELDER. Not as bad as he said to me. Told me he guessed he was lucky to get rid of me, that I was only a summer girl, anyway.

MRS. A. Just what is the definition of a summer girl?

MISS HELDER. He said that a summer girl is a rack to stretch shirt-waists on—inside is a compartment for lobster salad, ice-cream and chocolates, while outside is an attachment for willow plumes, lace gowns and diamond rings. (*Sits down.*)

MRS. A. We are getting away from our subject. Miss Hyacinth, what did he do after he proposed?

MISS P. Oh, do tell. This is so absorbingly interesting!

MISS HYACINTH (*twisting ring*). Oh, he sighed and I sighed.

MRS. H. Must have been a circus.

MISS HYACINTH. No, only a side (sighed) show. Then he wanted to take my picture, said I was sweet enough to eat, and I asked him if that was why he wanted to put me on a plate. (*Sits.*)

MRS. K. Mush and molasses! There'll be a change. Makes me think of a rhyme I used to know. (*Recites.*)

Before the maiden married him  
 And got him in her power,  
 To sew a button on his coat  
 Would take her just an hour.  
 But things are very different now,  
 For when her aid he seeks,  
 To sew that button on his coat  
 It takes her several weeks.

MRS. A. I hope you have received some enlightenment from our discussion of this subject, Miss Prudence, but my experience has been that the woman who can support a husband in good style doesn't generally have much trouble finding a husband to support.

MRS. C. (*rising*). Perhaps some of these present who are so anxious to enter matrimony ought to hear this story. It may prove a warning. An archbishop was administering confirmation and asked a nervous little girl what matrimony was. "It is a state of terrible torment which those who enter are compelled to undergo for a time to prepare them for a brighter and better world." "No, no, that's the definition of purgatory," says the priest. "Perhaps she's right, perhaps she's right," replied the archbishop. "What do you and I know about it?"

MRS. Y. Some of us *know* she was right.

MISS P. I'd gladly take the risk.

SILAS (*at door*). You'll never get the chance, so don't worry.

MRS. Y. Ladies, what shall we do? Do let us hunt again. (*Another search, with suggestions and exclamations.*) This is the strangest thing. We might as well proceed.

MISS HYACINTH (*rising*). George cut this out of the paper and wanted me to read it to you. (*Reads.*)

#### HOW SHE HAS CHANGED

She does not look like once she did,  
 A change we cannot fail to note;  
 The bloom of youth has come upon  
 The woman who demands the vote.  
 Remember what she used to be?  
 An ancient damsel with a face  
 That would upset the old town clock  
 When she spoke in a public place;



An old poke bonnet, grim black dress  
 And side curls that defiance screamed ;  
 Of straight front corsets, marcel waves  
 And picture hats she never dreamed.  
 She used to shout a wild harangue  
 And pound the table with her fist,  
 As she demanded women's rights  
 And placed all men on Satan's list.  
 Of course she did her best  
 But somehow men refused to fall  
 For her insurgent arguments  
 Delivered in the old Town Hall.  
 How different a creature is  
 The dainty, modern suffragette,  
 With pleasant smile and piles of hair,  
 Surmounted with a trim aigret !  
 Experience has made her wise ;  
 She's not defiant any more,  
 And, planning her franchise campaign,  
 She first goes to the dry-goods store.  
 Her arguments are of the kind  
 She knows will jolly men along ;  
 She fixes it so they can't fail  
 To listen to her siren song.  
 She doesn't hire the old Town Hall  
 And rain abuse and satire reel,  
 But at the quiet fireside now,  
 She makes her eloquent appeal.  
 She doesn't call unpleasant names,  
 And doesn't fret or fume or fuss ;  
 She's going to win out some day  
 For she certainly looks good to us.

I know George will vote for woman suffrage if I want him to.  
 Woman's influence over man is wonderful.

SILAS (*putting head out*). Huh !

MISS HYACINTH. I've just been reading of a man who had reached the age of forty and had never learned to read or write. He met and loved a woman, and for her sake he made a scholar of himself in two years. (*Sits.*)

MRS. S. (*rising*). That's nothing. I knew a man who was a profound scholar at forty, then he met a woman, and for her sake he made a fool of himself in a day. Don't you be too sure

of your husband voting as you want him to. It's one story before and another after they're married. Here's another one of your *man* poems—shows how deceitful the male creatures are, and what they plan to do when they have you safely landed.

(*Reads.*)

### THE FEMALE PERIL

When Bella came back home from coll.,  
She vowed it was her special mission  
To practice as a female pol-  
Itician.

I told her the career was rough,  
But Bella didn't care a button ;  
Though tender, she at times is tough,  
Like mutton.

So Bella joined the Suffrage cause,  
With brickbats and a stout umbrella,  
And broke some window panes (and laws),  
Oh, Bella !

Prison, I thought, will make her quail ;  
Alas ! I soon perceived my folly,  
She merely said she found the gaol  
Quite jolly.

It nerved her to a new attack ;  
Fresh schemes within her head had risen,  
And soon I wished my Bella back  
In prison.

The vote itself will barely do,  
She makes a higher bid for freedom,  
And wants her sex admitted to  
M. P. dom.

Now, though all this upsets my gorge,  
I cannot ask her yet to drop it.  
But when I've married her, by George,  
I'll stop it !

(*SILAS opens door and claps.*)

MISS HYACINTH. George wouldn't do that.

MRS. S. (*scornfully*). Oh, no, George wouldn't. (*Sits.*)

MRS. A. I will only say in closing my remarks what the serpent said after Eve had been created and stood before

Adam's eyes. "What do I see?" cried Adam. "Your finish," hissed the serpent as it glided off into the grass. So I say we see to-day the finish of man's age-long tyranny.

*(Sits, applauded by suffragettes.)*

MRS. W. *(rising)*. I would like to ask the speaker why it was that the serpent didn't give the apple to the man?

MRS. A. *(rising)*. Because it knew very well that the man would be selfish enough to eat it all himself, but that unselfish woman would go halves.

MRS. W. Men are fools anyway. They climb a tree to shake the fruit down when, if they waited long enough, it would fall down; they go to war and kill one another when, if they only waited, they'd die naturally, and they run after the women when, if they didn't do so, the women would run after them.

MISS P. *(looking over shoulder)*. I don't see many running after me.

MRS. Y. Miss Prudence will now favor us with a song. *(Miss P. sings some love song; applause.)* The next number on our program is, What Reforms Shall We Make When We Have the Vote? Mrs. Sager will open the discussion, then we hope to hear the views of all present.

MRS. D. *(rising)*. I would like to say before leaving the last subject, that if women went to Congress, it would simply be a case of a House of Mis-Representatives. *(Sits.)*

MRS. H. *(rising)*. And no woman will ever be President of the United States.

MRS. Y. I'm not so sure of that.

MRS. H. No, there never will be a woman candidate, because the candidate must be over thirty-five years of age. That settles that. *(Sits.)*

MRS. Y. Mrs. Sager.

MRS. S. There are so many reforms that we women will make that I hardly know where to start, but we certainly can check the frightful extravagance that is going on in this country. Let us encourage thrift. The chief cause of poverty and distress in this town is lack of thrift. You talk of the wolf at the door. He never comes to my door.

SILAS *(at door)*. I s'pose he's afraid he'd get skinned if he did. *(Usual looks of consternation.)*

MRS. S. I will not be insulted. That is no ghost. It is some of these cats of women. *(Looks at antis.)*

MRS. Y. I'm sure it isn't, Mrs. Sager. Let us take no notice of it. Pray proceed.

MRS. S. There's a good deal of truth in the old saying, "See a pin and pick it up, all the day you'll have good luck."

MRS. B. (*rising*). I rise to object to that statement. One day I saw a pin in the street, and remembering the old adage which has just been quoted, I stooped to pick it up, my eye-glasses fell and broke on the street, my corset string also broke, the buttonhole in my collar gave way, I nearly lost my false teeth, and a gust of wind took my hat and swept it away up the street. I got the pin, but I'll never do it again.

(*Laughter.*)

MRS. S. Exceptions do but prove the rule. The next reform I would speak of is a law that should provide a way for fitting all women for some occupation so that if worst came to worst they could keep the wolf from the door.

MISS HELDER. I can do that with my singing. I am sure I need never fear the wolf coming to my door.

MISS HYACINTH. The wolf would never come near if he could hear, but suppose he should happen to be deaf? (MISS HELDER *scowls at* MISS HYACINTH.) Why are you giving me such a hateful look?

MISS HELDER. You certainly have a hateful look, but I didn't give it to you.

MRS. Y. (*rapping for order*). Mrs. Sager, go on with your most helpful remarks.

MRS. S. Every woman should know how to drive nails. So many times a nail is needed around the house. I, myself, can drive nails like lightning.

SILAS (*at door*). That's right. Lightning never strikes twice in the same place.

MRS. S. I will not stand such insulting remarks, ghost or no ghost.

(*Sits down, fanning violently and looking at antis suspiciously.*)

MRS. Y. That ghost is certainly a very saucy one, but we will let it know that it takes more than one man's ghost to break up a suffragette meeting. Perhaps Miss Helder will favor us with a solo next. That will quiet our nerves.

(MISS HELDER *sings, preferably a suffragette song.*)

MISS HELDER. What kind of a voice would you call mine?

MISS P. I should never call it. I should let it sleep.

MISS HYACINTH. Isn't the paint and power thick on her face?

MRS. H. Little grains of powder,  
Little drops of paint  
Make a girl's complexion  
Look like what it ain't.

MRS. Y. Mrs. Sager's remarks about the further education of women certainly meets my approval, and still some men would like to take our girls away from the co-educational colleges. When they do this, as they threaten, what will follow? (*Voice pitched very high.*) What will follow, I demand?

SILAS (*at door*). I will.

MRS. Y. Well, I'm glad at least to know that pesky ghost isn't a woman hater.

MRS. K. I saw your husband on the street last week, Mrs. Altman.

MRS. A. Did you notice his new teeth?

MRS. K. No, he had his mouth closed.

MRS. A. Then it wasn't my husband.—Oh, dear, my husband is an awful hard man to please.

MRS. C. He wasn't always that way.

MRS. A. How do you know?

MRS. C. Couldn't have been very hard to please—married you, didn't he?

MRS. W. Your husband used to do a good deal of sewing, Mrs. Altman. Does he sew much now?

MRS. A. No, he won't even mend his ways. Men are curious creatures.

MRS. S. Yes, a man is like a watch—known by his works.

MRS. W. And by the hours he keeps.

MRS. B. And by the spring in him.

MISS HELDER. And by his being sometimes fast.

MRS. H. And by the way his hands go up.

MISS HYACINTH. And by his not always going when you want him to.

MISS P. I'd never want him to go.

MRS. Y. (*rapping for order*). The question for discussion is, What Reforms Would We Inaugurate If We Had the Ballot? We are ready for suggestions.

MRS. C. (*rising*). We are making great strides. We have

the noiseless baby carriage, now we need the noiseless baby. That will take time. One reform I would advocate would be that women should hold all offices now held by men. We are working in gradually; we have women doctors, lawyers, etc., but I think we should have women policemen. (*Sits.*)

MRS. D. (*rising*). How can you, in your wildest flights of fancy, imagine an old maid policeman? If she did arrest a man, would she take him to the station house? Miss Prudence, would you take a man to the station house?

MISS P. No, indeed; I'd go with him to the minister's house.

SILAS (*at door*). Worse punishment.

(*Groans, sighs, etc.*)

MRS. D. That shows how women policemen would observe the laws.

MRS. B. (*rising*). Our laws are like the ocean—the worst trouble is caused by the breakers. Women policemen are not a success. They tried it over in Colgate. A telephone message had been received that there was a burglar in a certain house. The lady cop responded quickly.

MRS. Y. That's more than a man police ever did.

MRS. B. After a brave struggle she arrested the burglar. "Don't dare to resist or I will shoot," she said. (*Acts out.*) "Don't shoot, lady; I won't resist, but I jest wanted ter tell yer dat in de fracas yer hair got mussed and yer hat is over yer ear." "Gracious me!" says she, "I could never think of going to the station house like that. Wait here till I find a mirror." While she was finding the mirror he *found* the way to escape. Home is the place for a woman. (*Sits.*)

MISS HYACINTH. Did you know they were going to vaccinate all the police of the city?

MRS. Y. No need of that. A policeman never catches anything.

MRS. C. (*rising*). Women should surely be employed in all post-offices, at any rate.

MRS. Y. Why so, Mrs. Curtis?

MRS. C. Because they understand managing the males.

MRS. S. (*rising*). They could never be judges.

MRS. C. I'd like to know why.

MRS. S. They'd pronounce a sentence one day and change it the next.

MRS. H. (*rising*). I believe with Mrs. Bates that home is

the place for women. These suffragettes! What about their children? Now, I have a model son; he doesn't use liquor, he never chews or smokes and he is never out after supper.

MRS. C. How old is your son, Mrs. Harding?

MRS. H. He'll be three months old to-morrow.

MRS. A. I suppose you have picked out a profession for him.

MRS. H. Yes; we are going to make a doctor of him.

MRS. A. Why did you choose that?

MRS. H. Because he always seems so pleased when folks stick out their tongues.

MISS HELDER. Dr. Rogers is digging a well in his yard. He went out to look at it the other day and fell in. Folks said it served him right; it was a doctor's business to tend to the sick and let the well alone. (*Laughter.*) He's a wonderful surgeon. He took the lung out of a man.

MRS. W. That's nothing. Mrs. Jones left her husband and took the heart out of him.

MRS. Y. We are getting away from our subject. Perhaps Mrs. Dayton can give us some points on this subject. What are your boys doing now?

MRS. D. (*rising*). The year old one is still in the milk business, and the oldest one is a director in a bank.

MRS. Y. He's pretty young to be a director.

MRS. D. He directs postal cards.

MRS. K. Haven't you a boy about fourteen?

MRS. D. Yes; he's in the plumbing business—learning to hit the pipe.

SILAS (*with pipe in mouth*). I'd like to have a few whiffs myself.

MRS. C. It's shocking the way boys smoke nowadays, and even girls. Does your daughter smoke, Mrs. Altman?

MRS. A. No, she has promised me that she will not touch tobacco until she is of voting age, so I promised I would put a hundred dollars in the bank during each year of her minority. That will give her a nice little capital to start her career as a stateswoman.

MRS. B. Shall you give her a coming-out ball?

MRS. A. No, she's such a strong suffragette she will probably keep me busy giving bail.

MRS. B. My daughter is to enter society and I don't believe there is another girl in this place who has been so thoroughly schooled and enjoyed so many advantages. She has

had her appendix removed, spent a year in a sanatorium, gone abroad three times for exhaustion, three times for nervous prostration, has eloped with the chauffeur, been proposed to by three fake counts, and has played in vaudeville. I certainly have done my duty in educating my daughter.

MRS. C. When women vote they'll put a stop to such doings.

MRS. W. (*rising*). I think husbands need training as much as children, and I should like to see some drastic laws passed about men leaving the theatre between the acts. Only last night when we were at the theatre my husband says, "I hear an alarm of fire. I must go and see where it is." He came sneaking back after a while and said, "It wasn't a fire after all." "No, nor water either," says I.

MRS. K. Could you detect by his breath that he had been drinking?

MRS. W. No, the story he told took his breath away.

MRS. S. (*rising*). I heartily endorse Mrs. Wood's idea that stringent laws are required in that line. My husband had promised me not to drink for a year, but the last time we went to the theatre he started to go out after the first act. I reminded him of his promise, but he said he only promised for a year and two years elapsed between the first and second acts.

SILAS (*at door*). Isn't it time to pass the refreshments?

MRS. Y. Is our ghost getting hungry? Perhaps we can starve him out.

MISS P. I very seldom go to the theatre. I always *try* to retire before midnight. I don't like to lose my beauty sleep.

MISS HELDER. Really, Miss Prudence, you should try harder. You certainly don't get enough.

MRS. K. Were any of you ladies at the theatre the other night when the lights went out?

CHORUS. I wasn't. No, etc.

MRS. S. Was there a panic?

MRS. K. There would have been if it hadn't been for the presence of mind of an usher. He began to kiss the back of his hand very loudly so folks thought if there was any kissing going on they'd sit still.

MISS P. I wish I'd been there.

SILAS. Gee, don't I?

MRS. H. (*rising*). Why don't you teach your husbands to obey you? I'd like to see my husband go out between the acts. He never disobeyed me but once.



MRS. D. That is quite remarkable.

MRS. H. Not so very. You ought to see the scar. He had his feet up on a chair the other day, and I told him to take his feet right off. He looked me square in the eye and said, "Mrs. Harding, there is only one person in the world that I allow to talk to me like that." I didn't know but I'd have to give him another scar; but he said, as he removed his feet, "And that person is you, my dear." Make and enforce your own laws about husbands.

MRS. B. (*rising*). I don't seem to be very successful. I tried to break my husband of cigarette smoking—pretended to faint.

MISS HELDER. Did it scare him so he never indulged again?

MRS. B. No, the beast smoked half a dozen while he was waiting for me to come to. (*Sits.*)

MRS. D. My husband never smokes.

MRS. K. (*sneeringly*). Suppose you think your husband is an angel?

MRS. D. Not yet, but I still have hopes. Black is very becoming to me.

MISS HYACINTH (*rising*). I think a law should be passed forbidding managers of theatres to expect a girl to remove a *new* hat. I had a lovely new hat with a big willow plume. It was just too sweet for anything; but when I wore it to the theatre the other night a horrid man back of me asked me to take it off.

MISS HELDER. Just like the selfish creatures!

MISS HYACINTH. I pretended not to hear him, and in a few minutes he had the impertinence to ask again. Then I turned to him and said, "There's no demand for my doing so." What did the beast do then but roll up his overcoat, sit on it, then put his hat on. In a moment everybody around was yelling, "Take that hat off." I thought they meant me, so I had to remove it. Wasn't that a mean trick? (*Sits.*)

MRS. Y. They should have had on the program what I saw in one place. "All ladies over forty years of age please keep their hats on." Every lady in the house was hatless.

MISS HELDER (*rising*). I should be in favor of a law reducing the price of opera tickets. They ask such preposterous prices. I paid fifty cents for a ticket, and stood in the orchestra aisle. The manager came along and said that price was only for standing room in the gallery. "What do you

charge for standing room down here?" I asked. "One dollar," says he. "Then I'll stand on one foot during the rest of the performance," and I did.

SILAS (*at door*). Just like a hen!

MRS. K. My husband told me the other day that we must both economize, so I agreed—told him he could shave himself, and I'd cut his hair. That makes me think, did you ladies know that Mrs. Robinson died while her husband was in Europe?

MISS HYACINTH. Yes; George met him at the wharf and told him.

MRS. K. Wasn't it an awful shock to him?

MISS HYACINTH. It didn't seem to be. He exclaimed, when George told him that his wife had died very suddenly, "Oh, don't make me laugh. My lips are chapped."

MRS. W. Just like the beasts!

MRS. Y. (*rapping*). Let us return to the subject.

MRS. W. (*rising*). I'd like to see a law passed abolishing all men's clubs. I asked my husband the other night if it were absolutely necessary for him to go to the club. "Not absolutely necessary," replied he, "but I need the rest." I'd abolish every club in the land.

MRS. S. (*rising*). I used to hate them, too, but since I have heard what interesting subjects they discuss, I'm in favor of them.

MRS. Y. What do you know about their subjects?

MRS. S. Mr. Sager was very late getting home the other night, and I was prepared to give him a good curtain lecture, but when I heard the reason for his being so late I just didn't. They were discussing female beauty, and he said as he had the most beautiful wife in the town of course he was authority on the subject. (*Scornful looks from other women.*) No, I think some clubs are all right. (*Sits.*)

MRS. C. (*rising*). I wish to say that I consider Mrs. Sager an easy mark. I am told that she even allows her husband to carry a latch-key. (*Sits.*)

MRS. Y. Are we rightfully informed, Mrs. Sager?

MRS. S. (*rising*). Yes, I do let him carry a latch-key, I must admit, but it doesn't fit the door. I just let him carry it to humor him. He likes to show it to his friends, you know, and make them think he is independent. (*Sits.*)

MRS. Y. Perhaps those little concessions do help to bring our day of freedom nearer.

MRS. K. (*rising*). I would like to inquire what the hus-

bands say when you suffragettes get home so late from your meetings?

MRS. A. (*rising*). My husband threatens sometimes to go home to his mother. (*Sits.*)

MRS. C. (*rising*). My husband says he is going to get a divorce if I don't give up this suffragette business. He says he doesn't mind doing the cooking, washing the dishes, and even taking care of the children, but he won't stand having pink ribbons run in his night-shirt to fool the baby. Unreasonable! (*Sits.*)

MRS. K. Have you heard that Mr. Goddard is suing for a divorce because his wife goes through his pockets?

MRS. S. There'd be a good many divorces if all husbands sued on those grounds.

MRS. K. I asked my husband what he would do if he woke up and found me going through his pockets, and he said he'd get up and help me look if there was any chance of finding money.

MRS. D. (*rising*). He wasn't so cruel as my husband. He woke up when I was looking over his pockets and asked what I was doing, so I told him I was only sewing on a button that was off. He got right out of bed, found three buttons on his coat, two on his vest and six on his underclothes that were about ready to drop off, sat there and made me sew them on, me just freezing and he telling what a loving little woman I was to crawl out of bed a cold night to sew buttons on his clothes. (*Sits.*)

SILAS (*at door*). Ha, ha! That's the best joke I've heard for a long time.

MRS. Y. That spirit again! He's been quiet so long I thought he must have returned to his underground abode. Are there any more suggestions about husband training? I think Mrs. Dayton surely needs a few.

MRS. W. Firmness is all she needs. Why didn't she give him a scar like Mrs. Harding? Wood used to try to bulldoze me, but he's got all over it. This is the way that Wood went home before he took a wife. (*Reels across stage and back.*) He was on deck for joy rides or whatever else was rife. He was out late six times a week and led a frisky life. But now he comes straight home like this (*walking quickly and very straight*), and stays there you can bet. He's had to learn a thing or two he never will forget. He dares not stay out late because he's wed a suffragette.

SILAS (*at door*). Poor cuss!

MRS. Y. We shall have to leave this subject. Are there any other reforms to suggest?

Miss P. (*rising*). I should like to have laws passed forbidding the wearing of such looking dresses and hats. (*Looks hard at MISS HELDER.*) It is a disgrace to our sex. It's a positive danger to ride in the street cars now. I was riding in a car last night and a lady, if you could call her that, got on and bowed to an acquaintance. The end of the quill in her hat jabbed a poor dear, darling man in the face (I longed to kiss him), gouged out an eye, and his eye stuck on the end of the quill. "Excuse me, madam, I'd like my eye if you don't mind," he said. "How dare you speak to a strange lady? I'll have you arrested for trying to flirt with me," was the answer he got. It's high time we did a little progressing on the dress question. It is ruinous to health as well as a menace to others. If we dressed as we should we'd soon be as strong as a woman I met the other day. She had just had typhoid fever, was convalescing, so she was working over to Howard's digging post holes while she was getting back her strength. Don't know what she plans to do when she gets well. Every time a stylish woman changes her dress some one has to be Johnnie on the spot to hook or unhook her. They remind me of a clock—all face and figure, no head to speak of, very hard to stop after it is wound up, and has a striking way of calling attention to itself at every hour of the day. (*Again looks at MISS HELDER.*) Let us remedy this evil by our vote. Look at the hobble skirt. It reminds me of an umbrella poorly rolled up.

SILAS (*at door*). Umbrellas can be shut up and they can't.

MRS. K. Why is a woman like an umbrella?

MRS. D. Because she's made of ribs and attached to a stick.

MRS. K. No.

MRS. S. Because nobody ever gets the right one.

MRS. K. No.

MRS. W. Because she fades with age.

MRS. K. No.

MRS. A. Because she's a good thing to have in the house.

MRS. K. No, I'll tell you why a woman is like an umbrella. She's accustomed to reign (rain). See?

MISS HELDER (*rising*). I object to Miss Prudence's remark. I don't believe the gown that fastens up the back brings out any more cuss words than Dr. Mary Walker's collar buttons.

MISS P. How much better it would be if we dressed like Eve.

MISS HELDER. What would have been the use of Eve's wearing clothes when there was no other woman to be jealous of them?

MISS P. Then look at the false hair some women wear. Why do they put the hair of another person on their heads? I'm sure I wouldn't. Look at my hair, all my own.

*(Turns so all may see. Laughter.)*

MISS HELDER. Why do you put the skin of another animal on your feet, I'd like to ask, Miss Prudence? Why don't you go barefooted? *(Sits.)*

MRS. Y. I agree with Miss Prudence that there should be a reform in dress. I dress as much like a man as possible, and the proudest moment of my life was when I fell over the side of a ship and a sailor called out, "Man overboard!"

MISS P. I want to say in closing my remarks on dress that lemons do not always come wrapped up in tissue paper. Lemons come to some men nowadays wrapped up in princess gowns or hobble skirts. *(Sits.)*

MRS. Y. What other reforms would this meeting like to endorse?

MRS. K. *(rising)*. I'd like to have cleaner money. There was a frightful loss of life at my house this morning when I accidentally burned a dollar bill. Ten thousand microbes went to their death instantly. *(Sits.)*

SILAS *(at door)*. I'd risk the microbes.

MRS. C. *(rising)*. I would pass laws for stricter examinations for druggists. I am always very particular to inquire carefully before I order anything in a drug store. It is a matter of life and death. The other day I went into Mr. Hunt's store and asked Mr. Allen, who works there, if he was a chemist and druggist. He said he was. "Have you been in the business a number of years?" "I have." "Understand the business thoroughly?" "I do." "Registered?" "Yes." "That your certificate over there?" "Yes." I walked over, read it, and it seemed to be all right, so I ordered five cents worth of tooth powder sent up to the house, but I don't know yet if he was properly qualified. Let us have stricter laws for druggists. *(Sits.)*

MRS. H. *(rising)*. Is there a Christian Scientist in this room?

MRS. S. I am a Christian Scientist.

MRS. H. Would you mind changing seats with me? I feel a draft.

MRS. S. Certainly. There is no draft. It is simply an error.

(*They change seats.*)

MRS. Y. Any other reforms?

MRS. K. (*rising*). I think before women are fit to vote they should learn to show more politeness to their own sex. Woman is woman's best friend, after all. Even when she is getting married, doesn't a man give her away and her maids stand up for her? (*Raises voice.*) Who has done the most to elevate woman? Who, I say, has done the most to elevate woman?

SILAS (*at door*). The man that invented those high French heels.

MRS. Y. Our ghost is growing witty.

MRS. K. What is it that binds us together and makes us better than we are by nature?

SILAS (*at door*). Corsets!

MRS. K. Oh, if I could only get my hands on that ghost, if ghost he be. Let us be helpful to one another. Let us tell one another of our faults.

MRS. C. (*rising*). I would like to say that I tried that once.

MRS. K. How did it work?

MRS. C. We haven't spoken since. (*Sits.*)

MRS. K. Perhaps you did it in a rude manner. I am surprised every day to see how polite women can be to men and how rude to one another. Just yesterday I saw two women coming from opposite directions. One was looking in a store window, the other was watching something across the street. They ran into one another. Both scowled and glared. One said: "You clumsy thing, do you want the earth?" "I should think you did," the other replied.

MRS. W. They ought to have been looking where they were going. Just like a couple of women!

MRS. K. There it is—always maligning your sex. A little further down the street one of these same women ran into a young man. She smiled and said, "I beg your pardon," in her sweetest tones. He replied, tapping his hat, "Don't mention it, please."

MRS. B. (*rising*). That makes me think of Mr. Austin. He's dreadfully absent-minded. The other day he ran against

a cow. He raised his hat and said, "I beg your pardon, madam," before he discovered it was a cow. Then he began to think deeply again with head down and stumbled against Mrs. Alger. Without looking up he said, to her amazement, "Is that you again, you brute?"

(*Laughter.*)

MISS P. (*rising*). We should be kind to men and women both. As I was coming here to-day I saw, lying in a drunken stupor, a poor fellow man. Men and women hurried by him with merely a curious glance, but as I passed the thought came to me that he was still a man—a man—perhaps a loved husband and father. So kneeling, I brushed aside the hair from his face and brow and kissed him.

SILAS (*at door*). Terrible punishment, but it served him just right.

MISS P. I'd even kiss that ghost if I could find him.

SILAS. Gosh, it's getting dangerous here!

MISS HELDER (*rising*). I think women are just too mean for anything. I met Mrs. Harlow on the street car and offered to pay her fare, and would you believe me, the mean thing let me.

MRS. H. (*rising*). I don't think women are one bit more hateful than men. I used to typewrite for an old bald-headed crank of a man who was never suited with anything. One morning he was specially ugly and yelled out, "Look at my desk! Is that the way to keep my desk?" "But you told me never to touch your desk," I said. "Well, I told you not to disturb my papers, but look at this sheet of postage stamps. I don't want *them* here." "Where shall I put them?" I asked. "Put them anywhere," he growled; "anywhere out of my sight." So I just gave them one good lick with my tongue, stuck the whole sheet of postage stamps on his old bald head and left the job. (*Sits. Laughter.*)

MRS. A. (*rising*). I find that men are usually polite to all women except their own wives. I was riding in an electric car the other day where a woman was standing, trying to hold on to a strap. I said to the man sitting next to me, "Why don't you get up and give that lady your seat?" He laughed so that he could hardly speak; finally he managed to say, "That is a joke on you. That ain't no lady. That's my wife." (*Sits. Laughter.*)

MRS. D. (*rising*). I think one of the first laws we women

should make would be one compelling men to give women their seats in a car. (*Sits.*)

MISS HYACINTH (*rising*). Have you heard the joke on Miss Helder?

MISS HELDER. I'll never speak to you again if you tell that, Rosabelle Hyacinth.

MISS HYACINTH. Oh, it's too good to keep.

CHORUS. Tell us. Do tell, etc.

MISS HYACINTH. We entered a car where every seat was taken, so Anna whispered to me, "I'm going to get one of these men to give me his seat. You just watch me." She looked over the men, selected a middle-aged gentleman, walked up to him and began (*acting out*), "My dear Mr. Jones, how glad I am to meet you! I haven't seen you for ages. Will I accept your seat? I am awfully tired. Thank you so much." The gentleman looked, listened, quietly arose and gave her his seat, saying, "Sit down, Bridget, my girl. Don't often see you out on washing day. Of course you are tired. How is your mistress?" But Anna decided she didn't care for that seat.

SILAS. Ha, ha! That's a good one.

MRS. S. That ghost is getting on my nerves.

MISS HELDER (*rising*). I do hope when women vote everything will be made sweet and dainty for them. This clipping is just my idea of how things should be. (*Reads.*)

### A FASHIONABLE FUNCTION

There'll be a band in every booth  
 To play all day, you bet,  
 And tables small, with chocolate cake  
 And tea and favors set,  
 And members of the press on hand  
 Their gems and gowns to note,  
 And print their names and photographs,  
 When women vote.

The ballot, daintily engraved,  
 Will be a pretty sheet  
 In lovely pastel colors pale,  
 With sachet powder sweet.  
 Gilt paint will give the ballot box  
 A new and brilliant coat,  
 And bows of ribbon tie it up,  
 When women vote.



The rabble will no longer be  
 Admitted as of yore,  
 Each guest will have to show a card  
 To lackeys at the door.  
 And foremost in the social swim  
 A candidate must float,  
 If he would be a nominee,  
 When women vote. (*Sits.*)

MRS. A. Fol-de-rol. I don't care about the fixings if we only get the vote. We'd soon have women getting man's wages then.

SILAS. Don't they, now? My wife gets all mine.

MRS. Y. (*in awed whisper*). Ladies, do ghosts have wives?

(*Shaking of heads. "Don't believe so," etc.*)

MRS. H. They say there is no marrying in heaven.

MISS P. Oh, dear, there's no hope for me in the other world then!

MRS. Y. Are there any other reforms the ladies would like to mention before we proceed to the next number?

MRS. K. (*rising*). I'd like to see some laws passed reforming store management. It's perfectly awful. I went to a counter in Rice's the other day and asked for a pair of shoe-strings, some hairpins, half a dozen handkerchiefs and a belt buckle. I had only twenty minutes to get my car, and the clerk stopped chewing gum long enough to tell me that I would find the shoe-strings on the tenth floor, the hairpins on the third, the handkerchiefs at the extreme rear of the eighth, and the belt buckles in the basement.

MRS. C. Of course you got your train?

MRS. K. Yes, next day. (*Sits.*)

MRS. B. Things are high enough. They might at least make it convenient to get them.

MISS HYACINTH. Some things are very cheap now.

MRS. B. I should like to know *one* thing that is cheap.

MISS HYACINTH. You can get all the perfumery you want for a cent (*scent*).

MISS HELDER. I found a bargain in a beautiful embroidered handkerchief for five dollars.

SILAS. Five dollars! Gee, that's a lot of money to *blow* in.

MRS. Y. Let us have one more search for that creature.

If it is a man I'd like the satisfaction of finding him. (*All search again.*) It must be a spirit that melts into thin air after speaking.

MRS. H. (*rising*). Speaking of bargains, have you ladies been to the sale at Macy's?

MRS. S. Yes, I went. Didn't they have the greatest bargains?

MRS. W. My, but wasn't it a jam? The cars were packed, the streets were packed, the store was packed.

MRS. H. Have you seen the piece of poetry one of our gifted townswomen wrote about it?

CHORUS. I didn't see it. I saw it, etc., etc.

MRS. H. It was in the paper, and I cut it out. I think I have it in my bag. (*Hunts a second.*) Yes, here it is. (*Reads.*)

### THE CHARGE OF THE BARGAIN BRIGADE

Half a block. Half a block.

Half a block onward.

Packed into trolley cars

Rode the Six Hundred.

Maidens and matrons hale,

Spinsters tall, slim and pale,

On to the Bargain Sale

Rode the Six Hundred.

Autos to right of them,

Hansoms to left of them,

Flying machines over them

Rattled and thundered.

Forward through all the roar,

On through the crowd they bore

To Macy's Cloak and Suit Store,

Rode the Six Hundred.

When at the mart of trade,

Stern-faced and unafraid,

Oh, the wild charge they made!

All the clerks wondered.

Theirs not to make reply,

Theirs not to reason why,

Theirs but to sell and pacify,

All the Six Hundred.

On bargains still intent,  
 Homeward the buyers went,  
 With cash and patience spent  
     And friendship sundered.  
 What though their hats sport dents,  
 What though their gowns show rents,  
 They have saved dollars and cents.  
     Noble Six Hundred. (*Sits.*)

MRS. C. (*rising*). I think our minds should be occupied with weightier matters, and I move you, Mr. Chairman, that we proceed to the next number on our program.

SILAS. Are they never going home? I'm getting sick of it.

MRS. Y. I suppose you have heard the story of the German who took out his first naturalization papers. As he was leaving the court room they noticed he was scanning very closely the official envelope which enclosed the document. In a few days he appeared at the court room again and smilingly said to the clerk of the court, "Vell, here I vos." "Glad to see you," replied the clerk, "but would you mind telling me who you are and why you are here?" The man looked much surprised, drew out the official envelope and pointing to the printing on the corner of it read, "'Return in five days.' So here I vos." (*Laughter.*) In view of the fact that there has been so much said about women not knowing how to register, I thought it might be wise to have a little practice at this meeting. Mrs. Curtis, will you be the registrar? (*Mrs. C. takes seat at small table with pencil and paper.*) Now, Mrs. Wood, will you kindly be the one who wishes to register? Just walk up to Mrs. Curtis as if you really were going to register. (*Mrs. W., after some whispering and delay, walks up to table.*) Now do just exactly as you would do if it were the real thing.

MRS. W. Is this where voters register?

MRS. C. Yes, this is the place.

MRS. W. Well, I guess I'll let you put my name down.

MRS. C. Very well, madam; your full name, please.

MRS. W. Land sakes! Do I have to give you all of it?

MRS. C. Yes.

MRS. W. And tell my real age, too?

MRS. C. Certainly.

MRS. W. It's a shame to expect a woman that doesn't look a day over thirty-five to have to say she's fifty, but that's it if you've got to know.

MRS. C. Where were you born?

MRS. W. Goodness sakes! Any need of telling that?

MRS. C. That is one of the necessary questions.

MRS. W. Well, I was born about two miles north and three miles west of Sidney, on the old Quaker road that runs ——

MRS. C. That will do. What precinct are you in?

MRS. W. Precinct? What on earth is a precinct?

MRS. C. Don't you know what a precinct is, and don't you know what assembly district you're in?

MRS. W. Land! No, indeed.

MRS. C. Then you'd better learn. Here, sign your name.

MRS. W. This place?

MRS. C. No, on this line.

MRS. W. I can't write with my glove on.

MRS. C. Take it off then.

*(After some delay MRS. W. gets name signed.)*

MRS. W. It seems to me there is an awful lot of red tape or whatever you call it about this registering business. I declare, if you have to go through all this rig-a-ma-role I don't know as I want to vote.

MRS. C. Now raise your right hand while I swear you.

MRS. W. Swear me! And you a church-member!

MRS. C. I want you to take the oath.

MRS. W. Well, it's all true, every word of it, and if you ——

*(SILAS, who has had head out much interested in the proceedings, gives a terrific sneeze, then dodges back quickly into the closet.)*

MRS. Y. That settles it. No ghost could sneeze like that. We are going to find that man.

*(All search.)*

MRS. D. *(trying closet door)*. I believe he is in here. Come and help, and we'll open it if we have to pull it off the hinges.

*(Several pull at door which flies open; two grab SILAS; the others rush at him, all, except MISS P., trying to strike him. He falls down; they yank him to his feet, giving him several shakes.)*

MISS P. Oh, it's a man, a real live man! Don't hurt the dear thing! Oh, don't kill him! Give him to me!

SILAS. Oh, no! no! Kill me first!

MRS. A. It's Silas Curtis! Have you anything to say for yourself, you villain? (*Strikes him with broom.*)

SILAS (*holding up hands to ward off blows*). Spare my life and let me go home to my wife who is sick.

MRS. C. (*grabbing him by the collar*). That's a lie. I'm sick, am I? (*Gives him a shake.*) There, take that for hiding in the closet like a sneak and then lying. Thought you were funny, didn't you? You won't think it's so funny when I get you home. Are you in favor of woman suffrage now?

SILAS. No, I am not.

(*Mrs. C. shakes him and throws him on the floor.*)

MRS. C. Did you say you wasn't in favor of woman suffrage, Silas Curtis?

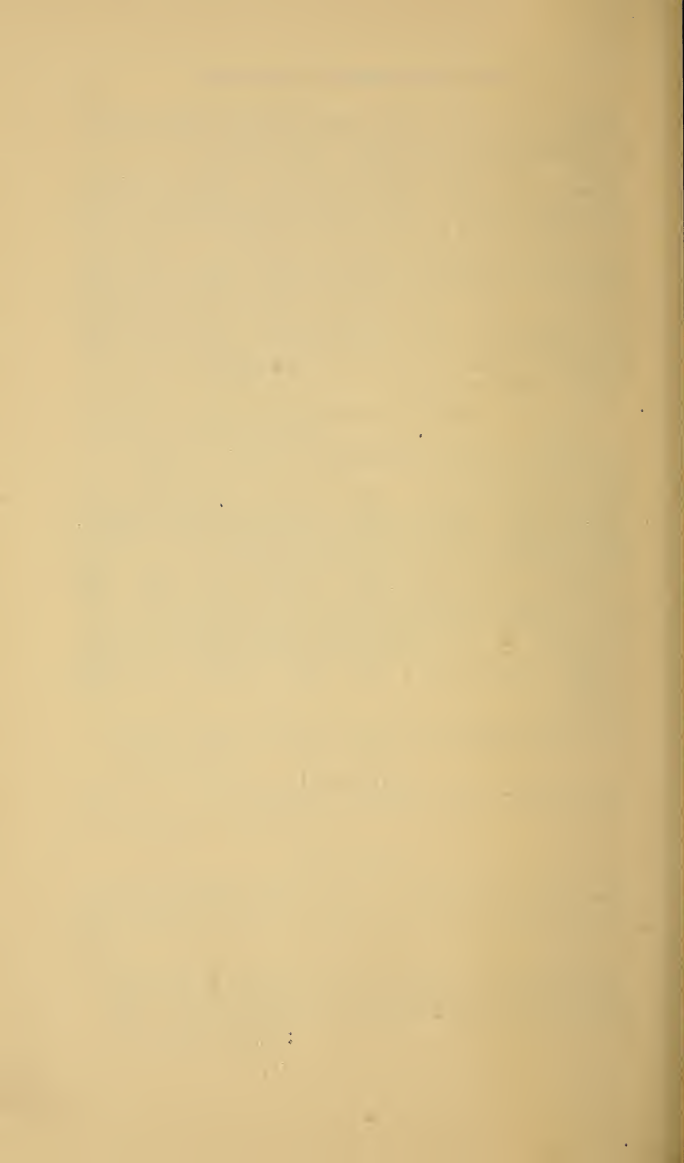
SILAS (*scrambling up*). You must have misunderstood me, my dear wife. I am in favor of woman suffrage; allus hev been and allus will be. (*Waves hands over head.*) Hooray for woman suffrage! Woman suffrage forever!

MRS. C. (*giving him another shake*). Very well. Now march straight home and wash the dishes you sneaked off and left, then go out in the barn and sleep in the haymow.

CHORUS. Go, and be thankful we didn't kill you outright.

SILAS. Thank you, I am, ladies. Hooray for woman suffrage!

CURTAIN



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## New Plays

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A Comedy in Five Acts

*By William Shakespeare*

Arranged for School Performance

Thirteen male, three female characters. Costumes appropriate; scenery of no importance. Plays two hours. An arrangement of this well-known play for schools, simplified so far as possible in its division into scenes, and cut and rearranged for the use of male actors only, so far as this is possible. The rollicking fun of this play has been too long disregarded, and its great suitability for school performance by boys will be at once seen. Some care will be called for in the matter of costuming it, but this labor will be well repaid.

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*Price, 15 cents*

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## New Plays

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A Comedy-Drama in Four Acts

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Seven males, three females; two male parts can be doubled. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays two hours. An unusually sympathetic play, well suited to amateurs. Clean and easy to get up. Recommended to high schools. All the parts are good.

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#### CHARACTERS

(As originally produced December 9, 1910, in the Opera House, Natrona, Pa., for the benefit of the Ladies' Industrial Society of the Natrona Presbyterian Church.)

EBEN LOVEJOY, of Hillside farm . . . . .	C. S. Bird.
JIM JONES, a farm hand; good as gold . . . . .	Edward Lemon.
WALTER WAYNE, the new schoolmaster . . . . .	Roy Cook.
STEVE HAMMOND, a ne'er-do-well; Eben's nephew . . . . .	Edward Dean.
SI STAPLES, landlord of the Hillside Hotel . . . . .	Jacob Carr.
JABEZ ELDER, a member of the schoolboard } . . . . .	Thomas Lardin.
A TRAMP, who makes good . . . . .	
MRS. LOVEJOY, Eben's wife, who believes in Jim . . . . .	Agnes Bird.
LUCY LOVEJOY, her daughter, whom you can't help loving . . . . .	Mabel Snebold.
CORA HARLOW, the Lovejoys' "help"; a born tease . . . . .	Mary Larson.

#### SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Sitting-room at Hillside Farm.

ACT II.—The Lovejoys' Kitchen.

ACT III.—Office of the Hillside Hotel.

ACT IV.—Same as Act I.

### ALL ABOUT ADAM

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Alice C. Thompson

One male, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays one hour. A very easy and effective play of that much wanted class that calls for more women than men. Just a sweet, clean little play suited to any one that wants something nice and wholesome.

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Three males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior. Plays thirty minutes. A capital little piece narrating the incidents of an interrupted proposal. All parts good; one very effective stuttering character. Clean, bright and amusing. Can be recommended for schools.

Price, 15 cents



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## Novelties

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An Entertainment in One Scene

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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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## New Rural Plays

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### VALLEY FARM

#### A Drama in Four Acts

*By Arthur Lewis Tubbs*

Six males, six females. Scenery, two interiors and an exterior. Costumes modern. This play is powerfully emotional, but is relieved by plenty of humor. An admirable play for amateurs, very sympathetic in theme, and with lots of good parts. Hetty is a strong lead, and Perry Deane and Silas great parts; while Azariah, Lizy Ann Tucker and Ver-bena are full of fun. Plays a full evening.

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### WILLOWDALE

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