

1885
29 B1435



PRICE 15 CENTS

PS 635

.29

B1435

Copy 1

WHISKERS



Helen F. Bagg

THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY

· SHOEMAKER'S
BEST SELECTIONS

For Readings *and* Recitations

Nos. 1 to 27 Now Issued

Paper Binding, each number,	o	o	o	30 cents
Cloth " " "	o	o	o	50 cents

Teachers, Readers, Students, and all persons who have had occasion to use books of this kind, concede this to be the best series of speakers published. The different numbers are compiled by leading elocutionists of the country, who have exceptional facilities for securing selections, and whose judgment as to their merits is invaluable. No trouble or expense is spared to obtain the very best readings and recitations, and much material is used by special arrangement with other publishers, thus securing the best selections from such American authors as Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, Lowell, Emerson, Alice and Phœbe Cary, Mrs. Stowe, and many others. The foremost English authors are also represented, as well as the leading French and German writers.

This series was formerly called "The Elocutionist's Annual," the first seventeen numbers being published under that title.

While the primary purpose of these books is to supply the wants of the public reader and elocutionist, nowhere else can be found such an attractive collection of interesting short stories for home reading.

Sold by all booksellers and newsdealers, or mailed upon receipt of price.

The Penn Publishing Company

226 S. 11th Street, Philadelphia

W H I S K E R S

A Farce in One Act

BY

HELEN F. BAGG

Author of "WHY NOT JIM?" "THE FASCINATING
FANNY BROWN," etc.



PHILADELPHIA
THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY

1912

PS 635
Z9 B1435

COPYRIGHT 1912 BY THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY

\$ 0.15
© U. S. 31026
No. 1

Whiskers

CHARACTERS

MISS SARA ADAMS	. . . . .	<i>A rich spinster</i>
MABEL	. . . . .	<i>Her elder niece, the bride</i>
INEZ	. . . . .	<i>Her younger niece, the maid of honor</i>
FRANCES PAGE	}	. . . . . <i>The bridesmaids</i>
EVELYN BIRCH		
ETHEL ROSS		
ANNA	. . . . .	<i>The colored maid</i>
JOHN PHELPS	. . . . .	<i>A rich old bachelor</i>
CHESTER PHELPS	. . . . .	<i>His nephew, the groom</i>
PARKER GLEN	. . . . .	<i>The best man</i>

TIME OF PLAYING :—One Hour.

STORY OF THE PLAY

On account of a family quarrel Chester Phelps has not seen his millionaire uncle since babyhood. On the day Chester is to marry Mabel Adams Uncle John comes to the bride's house disguised in black whiskers and asks permission to see the ceremony. Mabel's Aunt Sara hides him in a closet. Chester is evading jury duty, and fears that the sheriff, "a fat man with black whiskers," will find him. The bridesmaids think Uncle John is a burglar after the wedding presents. Chester and the best man think he's the sheriff, and they gag and bind him to prevent his interfering with the wedding. Aunt Sara rescues him and explains. Uncle John is ruffled, but admires his nephew's spirit. "I insist upon being allowed to give away the bride." Wedding march and general satisfaction.

CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

MISS SARA. About forty-five, richly dressed for a house wedding in daytime.

MABEL. About twenty-two. At first appearance is all dressed for her wedding except her gown. She wears kimono or dressing-gown. Appears afterward in white wedding dress, white shoes, veil, and carrying flowers.

INEZ. About twenty. Dresses in pink, as "maid of honor."

FRANCES, EVELYN and ETHEL are pretty girls of any age. They are the bridesmaids. Frances should be the tallest of the three; Evelyn is small and dainty; Ethel is the youngest. They are dressed in lacy white gowns, big white hats, white slippers and stockings.

ANNA, colored maid, any age. Wears maid's costume of black dress, white apron and cap.

PHELPS. Middle-aged, stout. Wears dark glasses and a pair of black false whiskers, of the sort that may be easily removed. Dark clothes.

CHESTER. About twenty-five; wears frock coat, gray trousers, silk hat, white tie, gloves. At first entrance clothes are very dusty.

PARKER. About twenty-five; wears at first entrance motoring togs and goggles, and carries two suit-cases. Appears later in frock coat, etc., like Chester's costume.

PROPERTIES

For Anna: Boxes of flowers; basket tied with white ribbons, and containing a cake.

For Evelyn: Small chair; long white ribbons.

For Mabel: Comb.

For Ethel: Lamp.

For Miss Sara: Atomizer.

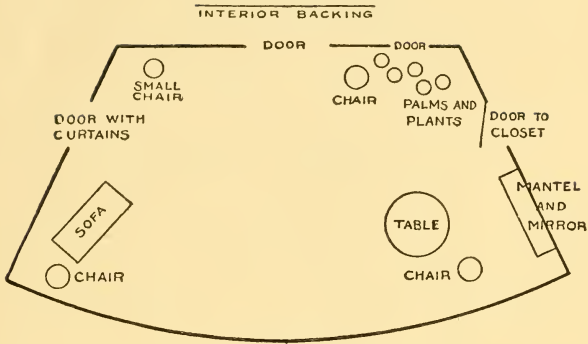
For Parker: Two suit-cases; ring in box.

For Chester: Cigarette, whisk-broom, note-book, pencil, dollar bill.

For Phelps: Black false whiskers.

Other properties: Auto horn, bell, wedding presents, some wrapped, some unwrapped; one present should be a gravy ladle; pair of scissors.

SCENE PLOT



SCENE.—The “den” at “Restview,” Miss Adams’ home. Large open doorways at c., and up r. ; the latter with portières. Up l. c. door leading to conservatory. Up l. door to telephone closet. Mantel with mirror down l. (The mantel may be omitted, but there should be a mirror in the room.) Table down l. c. Sofa and chairs as indicated ; the chair up r. should be a very light one. Other furnishings as desired. There should be a lamp on the table.

Whiskers

*Time: September. Mabel's wedding day.
Place: Miss Adams' home, Restview.*

SCENE.—*The “den” at Restview. At C., a large doorway, open; at R., another large doorway, curtained; at L., a small door, leading to a closet, closed, in which is a concealed telephone; L. C., entrance to a conservatory, half concealed by palms and plants. FRANCES PAGE, EVELYN BIRCH and ETHEL ROSS, bridesmaids, are discovered as the curtain rises. FRANCES is standing before the mirror adjusting her hat. EVELYN is seated R., tying a couple of bows in some long white ribbons, which are to be stretched for the wedding procession. ETHEL is standing before a small table, L., on which are heaped a number of lately-arrived wedding presents, some wrapped, some lying loose.*

ETHEL (*holding it up*). Another gravy ladle! It must be awfully exciting to be a bride.

EVELYN. Oh, I don't know. I think the bridesmaids have most of the fun.

FRANCES. Fun! I guess you wouldn't call it fun if you had to walk up the line with an usher fully four inches shorter than you were! I don't see why they can't grow a few tall men nowadays!

ETHEL. Well, I'm not looking for much fun out of this affair! Here I am, wearing a No. 2 shoe when my whole being calls out for a 3—just because Mabel changed her mind at the last minute and insisted on our having white slippers.

(She limps to a chair and sits holding one foot up and surveying it piteously.)

FRANCES (*turning to the table*). Mabel surely has been lucky. I never saw handsomer presents. The rooms upstairs are full of them.

EVELYN. I should think they'd have a detective to watch them, or at least a policeman—especially when there have been so many burglaries lately in Elmwood.

ETHEL (*contemptuously*). What's a policeman? Why, a clever burglar will walk off with your things right under a policeman's nose! (EVELYN *shivers and glances around apprehensively*.) Why, I heard this morning—— (Enter ANNA, C., *with her arms full of boxes*.) Good gracious, Anna, not more presents?

ANNA (*with a grin*). No, ma'am. Dese yere's de flowers fo' you-alls to carry. Dey jes' come. (She dumps them on sofa R. The girls rush for them. EVELYN *puts ribbons on table*. ANNA *rescues two of the boxes*.) Dese yere b'longs to Miss Mabel an' Miss Inez.

(The girls open the others, taking out huge bouquets of pink roses. ANNA goes off at C., *with the other boxes*.)

FRANCES. How perfect! I will say for Chester Phelps that he always does things beautifully. That's one of the things I liked about him when he was engaged to me.

(The other two exchange amused glances behind her back as she returns to mirror.)

EVELYN. It must make you feel quite odd, Fanny, to be bridesmaid at his wedding, after being engaged to him yourself.

FRANCES (*placidly*). It does. Very odd.

ETHEL. The sort of feeling one has at a rummage sale when you see all your old things being snapped up by some one else.

FRANCES. Not at all. Chester and I are very good friends. He never would have suited me as a husband; I must have a man to whom I can look up.

ETHEL. Isn't that rather a large order?

FRANCES (*severely*). I mean in character. Chester Phelps is entirely too frivolous and inconsequential for me. He'll do very nicely for Mabel. I'm sure I hope they'll be quite happy.

EVELYN. Well, Chester thinks so, anyhow. I never saw a man more in love.

FRANCES (*coldly*). Really!

EVELYN. And as to his being frivolous, my brother George says that he's one of the rising young men of Elmwood, and that he has a splendid future.

ETHEL. He has a millionaire uncle, at all events.

FRANCES. Who has never spoken to him since he was a boy.

EVELYN. You mean old Mr. Phelps, who lives in that big stone house out by the park? I've heard of him.

FRANCES (*putting flowers on sofa*). Yes, he quarreled with Chester's father about something, and has never had anything to do with the family since. Chester doesn't expect anything from him. He says he is the most peculiar old man in the world.

ETHEL (*stepping to the door c. as an auto horn toots outside, and looking off l.*). There's Parker Glen—and if there isn't Inez on the veranda to meet him! If that's not a case, I miss my guess.

EVELYN. Well, you know they say that one wedding always makes another.

ETHEL (*limping across the stage slowly*). I don't care what it makes, if they'll only have it and get through with it. If I have to wear this shoe much longer they'll have to carry me up the aisle on a stretcher.

EVELYN. Cheer up, dear, think how becoming your gown is.

ETHEL. Humph—that's all very well for you—yours fit! There's nothing I know of that'll squeeze the joy out of life quite so quickly as a shoe one size too small. I'm going up-stairs and take them off till this show begins.

(*She hobbles off c., turning r.*)

(*Enter INEZ and PARKER GLEN at r. PARKER carries two suit-cases.*)

PARKER (*setting down suit-cases with a sigh of relief, and mopping his brow*). Hullo, girls!

INEZ (*running to sofa*). Oh, the flowers have come! Aren't they lovely?

EVELYN. Anna took yours and Mabel's up-stairs.

FRANCES. I'm going up to put mine on. Hasn't Chester come yet?

INEZ. No.

FRANCES (*starting to go*). Well, I always said Chester Phelps would be late to his own wedding, and now I believe he's going to be. Come on, Evelyn.

(*Exit both at c. PARKER takes off his coat and goggles.*)

INEZ (*indignantly*). To hear that girl talk you'd think she had been engaged to Chester ten years instead of ten days!

PARKER. Maybe it seemed like ten years. Say, where is Chester, anyway?

INEZ. Parker Glen, what do you mean?

PARKER. Nothing, only he told me to stop for him in the car and bring him along.

INEZ. Well?

PARKER. Well, I did, and they said at the house that he'd been gone two hours. Now, where the dickens has he gone?

INEZ. Why, Parker, you don't think —

PARKER. There wasn't anything for him to do. He bought his railroad tickets yesterday, and I've got the license in my pocket. I hope he hasn't got stage fright at the last minute.

INEZ (*in horror*). Parker Glen, you do think of the most horrible things! What time is it?

PARKER (*glancing at his watch*). It's eleven-thirty, and the ceremony's fixed for twelve. I hope he hasn't forgotten all about it.

INEZ. Forgotten about it!

PARKER. Well, I've heard of fellows forgetting their weddings, and Chester's as absent-minded as the deuce.

INEZ. Absent-minded! Parker, do you suppose he's lost the ring and gone after another?

PARKER. No, I don't, because I've got it in my pocket. Want to see it?

INEZ (*coming to him*). Of course I do.

PARKER (*going through his pockets*). At least I did have it.

INEZ. Parker!

PARKER (*finding it*). Ah, here it is! You don't catch

me forgetting things. (*He opens the little box, she looking on in fascinated interest.*) Neat, eh?

INEZ. Oh, Parker, isn't it lovely?

PARKER. I picked it out for him.

INEZ (*admiringly*). I thought it looked like your taste.

PARKER (*shutting the box with a snap and putting it in his pocket*). Oh, come now, quit jollying me. I don't like it.

INEZ (*innocently*). Jollying you?

PARKER. Yes. Making out that you think I'm the whole cheese, when you don't care a hang for me.

INEZ. I do care a hang for you.

PARKER. No, you don't. Here I've been begging you all summer to marry me and have a double wedding —

INEZ. A double wedding! No, thank you! One wedding is all my nervous system will stand at a time. If I survive this one I may consider your—your —

PARKER. Oh, that's right—laugh about it. It's funny, isn't it? (*Laughs a forced laugh.*)

INEZ. I'm not laughing. You know I can't marry you and leave poor Aunt Sara all alone. It would be brutal.

PARKER. Nonsense. She'd never miss you. She's got her clubs and her settlement, and her suffragette movements and —

INEZ. Don't you make fun of my aunt —

PARKER. I'm not making fun of her. I think she's bully; but you can't stay with her forever, you know.

INEZ. Well, I can't leave her now while her hay fever is so bad—that's certain.

PARKER. How about when her hay fever is over?

(*Puts his arm around her.*)

INEZ (*shyly*). I—I —

(*He is about to kiss her when MABEL appears in the doorway at C. MABEL is dressed for the wedding, all except her gown, and has thrown a dressing-gown around her. She looks very much excited, has a comb in her hand, being evidently not quite through with her toilet.*)

MABEL. Parker Glen, what are you doing?

PARKER (*as INEZ jumps away*). Praying for frost.

(INEZ giggles.)

MABEL. Humph! Where is Chester?

PARKER. That's what I want to know.

MABEL (*alarmed*). Why, Parker —

INEZ (*to PARKER*). Hush! (*To MABEL.*) Parker stopped for him in the car, dear, but he had started. I suppose he had an errand he wanted to do.

PARKER. That's it, of course.

MABEL. Errand! Parker Glen, you're hiding something from me.

PARKER. Me?

INEZ. Why, Mabel dear, how could —

MABEL (*sinking into a chair up L.*). Something's happened to Chester, and you won't tell me!

INEZ (*to PARKER*). Now see what you've done!

PARKER. I?

INEZ. Yes, you. Now, Mabel —

MABEL (*wildly*). Oh, I knew something dreadful was going to happen ever since Chester dropped the looking-glass Uncle Josiah sent us, and broke it! (*Tragically.*) Oh! was it the automobile?

(*PARKER tramps up and down with his hands in his pockets while INEZ tries to calm MABEL.*)

INEZ. Nothing has happened, darling, he's all right—he —

MABEL (*indignantly*). Then what did Parker mean by telling me that it had?

PARKER. Gosh!

MABEL. But why doesn't he come? Oh, something must have happened! (*Sobs again.*)

PARKER. Shall I 'phone over to the house and see if he's come back?

MABEL. And have every telephone girl in town know that I'm hunting him up? No, indeed. I'd die first.

PARKER. Oh, very well.

INEZ. I'll tell you —

(*She pauses as a peculiar whistle is heard off. MABEL rises.*)

MABEL. Oh, it's Chester! (*Whistle repeated. PARKER runs up to door C., and looks off L.*) He's safe! He's safe!

PARKER. Well, I'll be darned. He's climbing in the window. Come on in here and explain yourself.

(PARKER comes down c. CHESTER PHELPS' head in tall silk hat appears slowly around edge of door c. He looks about anxiously.)

MABEL. Oh, Chester!

CHESTER (*finger on his lips*). Hush!

(He comes in, looking behind him anxiously, the three watching him in amazement. He is covered with dust. He comes down front.)

MABEL. But, Chester, what does it mean? Why are you coming in like a—a —

PARKER. Porch climber?

INEZ. And what in the world has happened to your clothes?

CHESTER (*in a hollow tone*). Has—has the sheriff been here?

INEZ. The sheriff!

MABEL (*indignantly*). Of course not!

CHESTER (*dropping into a chair; they gather around him anxiously*). Thank heaven!

PARKER. I say, old man, where have you been all morning? I stopped for you —

CHESTER (*solemnly—glancing at his trousers*). I have been in the coal bin since nine o'clock this morning.

PARKER. } In the coal bin!

INEZ. }

MABEL (*putting her hand on his shoulder*). Darling, are you sure you're not out of your head?

CHESTER (*irritably*). No, I'm not sure. I've had enough this morning to put me out of my head. Are you sure that there hasn't been a fat man with a bushy black beard hanging around here this morning? (*Sits on sofa R.*)

MABEL (*soothingly*). No, dear, of course not.

(PARKER and INEZ gaze at each other in consternation.)

INEZ (*to PARKER*). Parker, is there any disease that begins by seeing fat men with black bushy beards?

PARKER. If there is, I never had it!

MABEL. But, Chester, why should the sheriff come here?

CHESTER. To arrest me!

MABEL. But ——

CHESTER. Oh, it's all my confounded absent-mindedness. (*The others glance at each other and shake their heads hopelessly. MABEL sits by him on sofa, comb in hand, her face expressing great alarm. INEZ has sunk into a chair L. PARKER stands C., with his hands in his pockets.*) Two weeks ago I was drawn on a jury, to appear to-day—this morning at nine o'clock, before Judge Short. I meant to have it changed to some time next month. I've got a friend who might have worked it for me all right—a lawyer chap, but I had so many things on my mind that I forgot all about it, and it never entered my head till this morning at breakfast.

MABEL. But why didn't you telephone the judge that you had an important engagement and couldn't come?

CHESTER (*disgustedly*). What do you think a subpoena is, anyhow? An invitation to play "bridge"?

PARKER. You might have gone and tried to get him to excuse you. They'll do that sometimes.

CHESTER. It was nine o'clock then, and when I came to look at the papers—I hadn't taken the trouble to read them before—I found that it was Judge Short before whom I was to appear.

INEZ. Well?

CHESTER. Then I knew it was all up. Judge Short hates me. You see, his name was up for membership at the Country Club last spring, and I was one of the three who blackballed him. Some fool let it out, and the judge has had it in for me ever since. It would be just nuts for him to break up this wedding.

MABEL. Oh, Chester, how could you do anything so rash as to blackball a judge? You might have known you'd need him some day.

CHESTER. Well, he's a stupid old bore. I belonged to a club with him once, and he used to drive me crazy, buttonholing me to listen to his fool stories, and I made up my mind I wasn't going to stand for it again. I couldn't foresee a calamity like this. Nobody could. (*He springs up and begins tramping up and down.*) I decided to dress, to prepare for the wedding as though nothing had happened, and to come here and tell you everything. The first man I saw when I turned the corner of this street was Johnson—the sheriff, a fat old party with black whiskers.

MABEL. } Oh!
INEZ. }

CHESTER. He didn't see me; I bolted down an alley and ran for home; I got in through the cellar door and hid in the coal bin, and I've been there ever since.

MABEL (*as he sinks on sofa again*). You poor darling! What an awful time you've had!

CHESTER. Awful!

PARKER. But what are you going to do about it? I suppose you know that you're to be married in less than half an hour, and that the guests will be coming any minute?

CHESTER. I'm going through with it if I'm arrested in the middle of the ceremony and taken to the penitentiary.

MABEL. Chester, they couldn't put you there?

CHESTER. I don't know what they can do. That's the beauty of a modern education. Teaches you absolutely nothing useful. It may be a hanging offense for all I know.

MABEL. Oh, Chester!

CHESTER. It would be just peaches and cream to that old idiot to send me from the altar to the gallows!

(*Walks up and down again followed by MABEL waving the comb frantically.*)

INEZ (*to PARKER*). Parker Glen, you must think of something to help him out of this, or I'll never speak to you again.

PARKER. What do you want me to do? Murder the sheriff?

INEZ. I want you to use your brain—if you have one. There must be a way somewhere.

CHESTER (*dismally*). There is. I can give myself up.

MABEL (*clinging to him*). Darling, no, think of me!

CHESTER. I am thinking of you. How can I let you tie yourself to a felon?

MABEL (*wildly*). I'd rather be tied to anything than to have all those people come here expecting a wedding and find me without anybody to get married to. I—I couldn't stand it. (*He embraces her.*)

PARKER. I have it! 'Phone the minister to hurry up and get it over with before anything happens.

INEZ. Splendid! I knew you'd think of something.

MABEL. Yes. Parker, hurry and 'phone. He's West

(PARKER goes to 'phone, which is in closet at L. An auto horn toots outside. CHESTER is very nervous, and MABEL soothes him. INEZ runs to door C., looking off R.)

PARKER (at closet door). The first guest, by Jove!

(He enters closet.)

INEZ. It's the Montmorencys! Lucky for us you're not expected to receive your guests at a wedding.

PARKER (heard at 'phone). West 678.—No, if I'd wanted 786 I'd have said so.—I'm in control of my faculties. What? Now look here — Yes, I'm holding it.

(Another horn sounds.)

INEZ. The Truedales.

PARKER. Is this the Rev. Howe's residence? Is he there? What? Oh, very well. (Rings off. Comes out of closet.) He started for this house half an hour ago in his car.

INEZ. He's had a puncture!

CHESTER. Just my blamed luck!

MABEL. A minister ought to be ashamed to run an automobile. It's positively immoral.

PARKER. It simply resolves itself into a question of which gets here first—the minister or the sheriff—the altar or the penitentiary.

INEZ. Parker!

CHESTER. Yes, laugh! It's funny for you. That's all a best man's for nowadays—to tie white bows on trunks and make a fool of himself generally. He used to be expected to make himself useful, but of course —

PARKER. Cheer up, old man, maybe the minister will get here first, and we'll get you off before they can nab you.

CHESTER. Yes, you're awfully clever. I have to come back some time, don't I?

PARKER. Well, you can pay your fine then, like a man.

(Another toot.)

INEZ (still at door C.). The Middletons!

CHESTER. Fine? How much money do you suppose a man has when he comes back from a wedding trip?

INEZ (coming down). As for you, Parker Glen, if you

expect to have anything to do with this affair at all, you'd better go up-stairs and dress. I don't suppose you intend to walk up with me in those things!

PARKER. By George, I forgot. (*Grabs suit-cases.*)
Bye, old man, don't let 'em nab you while I'm gone.

(*Dashes off c. MABEL suddenly realizes that her own toilet is scarcely bride-like.*)

MABEL. Oh! I can't leave you like this, dear.

INEZ. He can hide in the telephone closet if anybody comes. There are a lot of cloaks and things in the end of it so he can cover himself all up.

CHESTER. Thanks.

INEZ. Come. We mustn't let Aunt Sara know that anything's gone wrong. It would worry her. But——

(*INEZ drags her away. As they go off at c. MISS SARA ADAMS enters c. She is a large, handsome woman of about fifty, beautifully gowned for the wedding. She has an air of authority which shows her to be in the habit of managing her household very thoroughly.*)

MISS SARA. My dear child! Not dressed, and the guests arriving? This will never do.

INEZ. She'll be ready in five minutes, aunty. Don't get excited; remember your hay fever.

(*The girls run off c. MISS SARA comes down. CHESTER seizes a whisk-broom from table and begins brushing himself furiously. Clouds of dust arise and MISS SARA sneezes wildly. He stops.*)

CHESTER. I—I beg your pardon, aunty—I seem to have a little dust on me.

MISS SARA. You seem to have a great deal of dust on you. Doesn't anybody look after your clothes at home?

CHESTER. Oh, yes, once in a while.

MISS SARA. Well, it's lucky you're marrying a sensible girl, Chester, who'll take care of you properly.

CHESTER (*nervously*). I hope she'll have the chance.

MISS SARA. What?

CHESTER. I mean, I hope nothing will happen to upset the wedding—you know.

MISS SARA (*in amazement*). What could happen to upset the wedding at this hour?

CHESTER (*darkly*). Oh, lots of things. Fellows die suddenly, sometimes.

MISS SARA. Chester Phelps! Don't you feel well?

CHESTER. Oh, yes, perfectly, just nervous; horribly nervous.

(*Another horn toots. MISS SARA goes to door c.*)

MISS SARA. The Thompsons! The ridiculous display that those people indulge in! (CHESTER *sits down, takes out note-book and begins to write. Another horn.*) The van Sprays! Dear me, where can Mr. Howe be? I detest unpunctuality; and in a minister it's unpardonable.

CHESTER. Don't be hard on him, aunty. Something may have happened to him. You've no idea how many things can happen to a fellow nowadays.

MISS SARA. Chester, what is the matter with you?

CHESTER. Nothing—nothing at all!

MISS SARA. What are you doing?

CHESTER (*putting the note-book in his pocket*). Nothing—nothing—just jotting down a few—well—a few—you know, aunty, I want Mabel to have everything I've got, in case I—I'm taken suddenly.

MISS SARA (*in horror*). Taken suddenly! Chester Phelps, have you been near anybody who's got anything catching? (*Comes down c.*)

CHESTER. I? No, of course not. I only want to be on the safe side—I——

(*Enter ANNA, c.*)

MISS SARA. The safe side! Do you mean to tell me——

ANNA. A gentleman, miss, to see you.

CHESTER (*jumping up in a panic*). Where is he?

ANNA. At de side do'. He wanter see Miss Sara by herse'f.

MISS SARA. He's a book agent, of course. Tell him I'm out.

(*CHESTER wipes his brow.*)

ANNA. He done see de folks comin' in, honey; he

know yo'-alls to home. He say it's mos' perticler dat you should see him alone.

CHESTER. Alone!

MISS SARA. The impudence of these people is beyond anything! Well, send him in. I suppose it's the quickest way to get rid of him. (*Another horn is heard. MISS SARA goes up to door c.*) The Hendersons and the Townleys. Where can that minister be?

(CHESTER beckons to ANNA. She comes to him. He gives her a dollar.)

CHESTER (*in a whisper*). Anna!

ANNA. Yassir?

CHESTER. That man—the book agent—was he a fat man with a bushy black beard?

ANNA (*grinning*). Yassir, dat's him, sah—jes' de spit-tin' image! (CHESTER gives a groan and without a word bolts out of the room at R. ANNA stares at him and MISS SARA turns just in time to see him.) Fo' de Lawd!

(Exit ANNA, shaking her head. MISS SARA comes down front.)

MISS SARA. Well, if that's the effect matrimony has on people, I thank my stars I had sense enough to stay single! (*Enter JOHN PHELPS, a short, fat man, with an enormous pair of black whiskers.*) Well, sir, what do you want? If it's books, I've got enough to last me the rest of my life—if it's sewing-machines, I don't use 'em—if it's butter—

PHELPS. It's not, ma'am, I assure you. (*He removes the black whiskers. MISS SARA gives a little shriek.*) Don't be alarmed, ma'am. They are not—not indigenous to the soil, so to speak.

MISS SARA (*indignantly*). Who are you?

PHELPS (*glancing around apprehensively*). Hush! I'm John Phelps; Chester's uncle.

MISS SARA (*sinking on sofa R.*). What!

PHELPS. I've come to the wedding, ma'am. He didn't invite me, but I've come.

MISS SARA. Then why in the name of common sense couldn't you come to the front door? And why—those?

PHELPS (*drawing up chair and sitting*). Listen, ma'am, and I'll tell you. You've heard that Chester's family and I

don't get on? Chester's father married a Jackson. I can't abide the Jacksons, never could. I've never had anything to do with 'em since. But I've always kept my eye on Chester. He's a fine boy. This is strictly between you and me, ma'am, as I can see you are the sort of woman who can keep a secret. I mean to leave him a good bit of my money one of these days.

MISS SARA. Dear me, how splendid of you, Mr. Phelps.

PHELPS. Nonsense, he's all Phelps, you know. No Jackson about him; he's a boy of spirit—I like him. But I don't want him to know it.

MISS SARA. No?

PHELPS. Not for the world. He'd tell the family, they'd think I was coming around—the Jacksons would gloat. I won't have any Jacksons gloating over me till I'm in my grave. I made up my mind to come in disguise, so I bought these whiskers and I thought maybe you would let me stay in a corner somewhere so that I could see the wedding without being seen.

MISS SARA. In a corner!

PHELPS. Yes, I hate weddings. I hate fuss and feathers. Besides, I have hay fever dreadfully. I'm likely to be taken with a horrible spell of sneezing just at the crucial moment. I daren't risk it.

MISS SARA. You have hay fever, too?

PHELPS. Too?

MISS SARA. I am a victim—a fellow-sufferer, Mr. Phelps. From the fifteenth of September till frost I suffer the tortures of the—what you may call 'ems!

PHELPS. Strange! Mine always begins on the afternoon of the twelfth!

MISS SARA. The twelfth! What a coincidence! But I have a remedy——

PHELPS. I've tried 'em all.

MISS SARA (*rising and going up c.*). Oh, but this one is wonderful! I've been taking it all day, and I've only had fifteen fits——

(*She pauses as she waits for a sneeze, her features working convulsively.*)

PHELPS (*alarmed*). Fits, ma'am? Do you mean to say that my nephew is marrying into a family where they have fits?

MISS SARA (*as the sneeze refuses to materialize*). Of sneezing, sir. If you will wait I will run up-stairs and fetch you some of it right away.

PHELPS (*detaining her*). Don't leave me here alone. Suppose Chester comes in and sees me? Suppose it gets into the newspapers that I, John Phelps, attended the wedding of a man who was half Jackson—suppose —

MISS SARA. Don't worry—go into the conservatory and wait. (*Points to door up L. C.*) No one will think of going in there. I won't be a moment.

PHELPS (*wringing her hand*). Miss Adams, how can I thank you for your kindness, your consideration, your —

MISS SARA. By being good to Chester and Mabel.

(*She goes off at c. He stands a moment watching her.*)

PHELPS. A fine woman! A magnificent woman! If the niece is like her, Chester is a lucky dog! (*The auto horn toots again. He starts nervously.*) Dear me, more people! I hope none of them will find their way in here. I hope Chester won't come in. Perhaps I'd better take Miss Adams' advice and retreat into the conservatory. Remarkably sensible and attractive woman.

(*He goes into the conservatory up L. C.*)

(*Enter ANNA at c., with a big basket tied with white ribbons. She deposits it in a chair with a grunt of relief.*)

ANNA. Dere's a cake from old lady Johnson. My lan', pears lak dese yere presents am nevah gwine stop arrivin'. Seems lak when folks gits married, nowadays, dey don' have to buy no mo' tings fo' de res' ob dey lives. (*She looks around the room with a grin.*) Dey sho is somefin' powerful stimulin' 'bout er weddin'! I reckon when dat party starts er marchin' in wif de music playin', dis yere niggah's gwine to have to hol' on tight ter keep from jinin' in de percession!

(*She starts to march, solemnly, across the stage; suddenly there is a loud sneeze from the conservatory. ANNA stops instantly, a look of fright coming into her face. Just then, EVELYN, FRANCES and ETHEL come in at c. ETHEL is still limping, and all of them appear much excited over something.*)

FRANCES. You must have imagined him, Ethel.

ETHEL (*indignantly*). Oh, very well, if you think I could imagine a man in a tall silk hat climbing in that very window in broad daylight! Besides, I heard him whistle!

EVELYN. Whistle!

ETHEL. Yes, a low, awful kind of a whistle like you read about in pirate stories—a whistle to tell his gang that he'd gotten in, probably.

EVELYN. Merciful heavens!

ANNA (*with a groan, falling on her knees down L.*). Dey done come at las'! Oh, Lawdy, Lawdy!

FRANCES. Anna, what's the matter?

ANNA. Dey's a man hid in dah, honey. (*Points to door L. C.*) I done heard him sneeze jes' befo' you-all come in.

ETHEL. It's my man! I told you I didn't imagine him!

ANNA (*wringing her hands*). He's a night doctah, honey—he sho' is.

EVELYN. What's a night doctor?

ANNA. Lawd, honey, don' yo' know what night doctahs is? Hit's one ob dem young medicinal students what goes prowlin' roun' an' kidnaps po' niggahs fer to use 'em in de 'sectin' room. Lawdy, I jes' knew one ob 'em was gwine get me some time. (*She breaks into a wail.*)

FRANCES (*severely*). Nonsense, Anna, don't be a fool! It's a burglar after the wedding silver. What did he look like, Ethel?

ETHEL (*sinking onto sofa and taking off her shoe*). I didn't see his face—but his whistle was awful!

EVELYN. What shall we do? If we tell the girls they'll be frightened to death. The wedding will be ruined.

ANNA. Look hyah, don' yo'-all do nuffin' to spile dis weddin'. Hit's powerful bad luck ter spile er weddin'.

ETHEL. I don't suppose you want the family to be murdered in cold blood, and all those lovely presents stolen, do you?

ANNA. Oh, Lawdy, chile, don' talk lak dat!

FRANCES. The thing to do is to say nothing to any one, but to telephone the police. By the time they get here, the wedding will be over, and they can arrest the man. I shall do it myself at once. (*Crosses to 'phone closet.*)

EVELYN. But, Frances, suppose he hears you?

FRANCES. He can't, if he's in the conservatory. But if

you're afraid you'd better arm yourself with something and be ready for him. (*A bell rings; they all jump.*)

ANNA. Dat Miss Mabel wantin' me —

ETHEL. Well, mind you don't let her see that anything's the matter. It would be a wicked shame to frighten her now.

(FRANCES goes into closet.)

ANNA. Yassem. I ain't gwine tell nobody nuffin', but goodness knows dey ain't gwine be no mo' highfalutiness in dis yere weddin' fer me.

(Exit ANNA, C.)

FRANCES (*heard in closet*). Give me the police station.

EVELYN (*taking up a small chair up R.*). Do you suppose I could brain him with this if he made a rush?

ETHEL (*limping to the table and seizing a lamp*). Try, and if he gets away from you, I'll smash him with this!

FRANCES (*very excitedly*). Is this the police station? This is 324 North Avenue: Miss Adams' house—yes—where the wedding is. Say, there's a man here.—What? There usually is at a wedding? Look here, don't you be impertinent to me, young fellow, or I'll report you. My father is an alderman. There's a strange man hidden on these premises, and we think he's after the silver. We want you to send a policeman up —

ETHEL. Two policemen! He's a desperate-looking wretch!

FRANCES. Two policemen—big ones—yes—just as soon as you can. (*Pause.*) What? Oh, how awful! (*She comes out of telephone closet.*) Girls, he said there was a dreadful robbery last night at the other end of town and they slugged the man of the house and broke his arm! He said the robber was still at large!

ETHEL (*putting down the lamp and limping to sofa R.*). Well, he isn't—he's in our conservatory!

EVELYN (*going to door C.*). More people!

ETHEL. And for all they know they've come to assist at a murder instead of a wedding.

FRANCES. That's the beauty of keeping your wits about you. Now, if it hadn't been for me —

ETHEL. You? Why, all you did was to telephone the

police. I risked my life leaning out of an up-stairs window watching him climb in. Suppose he'd shot me?

FRANCES. You'd better say, "Suppose I'd fallen out of the window on him and killed him?" You were scared to death—you know you were.

ETHEL. Well, how about you? I don't suppose you ——

FRANCES. I was not in the least frightened. I ——

(A tremendous sneeze is heard from the conservatory. The three rush together in the middle of the room, ETHEL, shoe in hand, FRANCES, holding her tightly, EVELYN, with her hands covering her eyes.)

ALL. Oh!

(Just at this moment MISS SARA enters at C., atomizer in hand; the girls jump apart.)

MISS SARA. Why, girls, what is the matter?

FRANCES. N-nothing, Miss Sara; we ——

EVELYN. We were just—just ——

ETHEL *(trying to put on her shoe, standing on one foot)*. Just wondering why the minister didn't come.

MISS SARA. The minister has come. He's in the library putting on his robes. We'll form the procession just as soon as Mabel is ready. She's so excited, poor child, that she can't do a thing for herself.

EVELYN. But where's Chester?

MISS SARA. I don't know where he is. He bolted out of here a few minutes ago like a crazy man. I dare say he's in the library with Mr. Howe. I wish some of you would go and tell him we're nearly ready.

FRANCES *(quickly)*. I'll go.

EVELYN. So will I.

(They go off R. ETHEL follows slowly.)

ETHEL. Wait for me.

(Exit all, R.)

MISS SARA *(glancing around apprehensively)*. Ahem! *(There is no response.)* Dear me, I hope he hasn't gone into the other rooms! I wouldn't have him meet Chester in his nervous condition for the world—it might ruin the

boy's chances. (*Goes up toward conservatory.*) Mr. Phelps! (*Enter PHELPS, L. C.*) Oh, you're still here!

PHELPS. Yes, and sneezing my head off! There's goldenrod in that room somewhere!

MISS SARA. Goldenrod! Impossible! I never allow it in the house.

PHELPS. It's there—somewhere. Some fiend has hidden it there. I can't stand it. I'll go out with the other guests. I'd rather meet a thousand Jacksons than stay in a death-trap like that! (*Puts on the whiskers and glares at her.*)

MISS SARA. Now, Mr. Phelps, don't agitate yourself. See, I've brought the remedy. (*Holds out the atomizer.*) Five sniffs every fifteen minutes, and —

PHELPS. Madam, I have no breath to sniff—I am suffocated—I tell you that place is rank with goldenrod—I —

MISS SARA. There, there, calm yourself, Mr. Phelps. You shan't go back there. Here is a splendid hiding-place for you. (*Goes to telephone closet l.; opens door.*) You can leave the door ajar, and you will see the bridal procession as it passes through the room, and then you can steal out and watch the ceremony through those portières.

PHELPS. No—no—my mind is made up. I'll go out like a man. With these whiskers I don't look like myself.

MISS SARA. You certainly do not. You look like an escaped convict. Suppose some of the Jackson family should see you in these and recognize you!

PHELPS. Suffering cats!

MISS SARA. You see, I'm right.

PHELPS. You are. You're a remarkable woman. I don't see how you have escaped being married, ma'am.

MISS SARA (*stiffly*). The people who do the work in this world, Mr. Phelps, don't have time to think of getting married.

PHELPS. Just what I have always said, ma'am—just why I'm single myself.

MISS SARA. I've been a very busy woman, Mr. Phelps. I've had two girls to bring up.

PHELPS. And remarkably well you've succeeded, ma'am, if report speaks the truth. I hope that nephew of mine is worthy of your niece.

MISS SARA. He's a splendid fellow.

PHELPS. Solid, I hope? No nonsense about him?

MISS SARA. Oh, dear no, none whatever!

PHELPS. What I dislike about the young men of the present day is their flightiness. It's a nervous generation—they have no repose—no—self-control—no——

MISS SARA. That's the truth.

PHELPS. I hope Chester's not nervous? I hate a nervous young man.

MISS SARA. Oh, dear no, not at all. (*Aside.*) And may I be forgiven for the lies I'm telling!

PHELPS. And I trust, I sincerely trust that he does not smoke cigarettes.

MISS SARA (*faintly*). No—no—he doesn't!

(CHESTER'S *voice is heard at R.*)

CHESTER. Oh, all right, I'm ready.

MISS SARA. Goodness gracious, here he is! The closet, quick—— (*Pushes PHELPS toward it.*)

PHELPS. But are you sure——

MISS SARA. Yes, yes, he mustn't see you, you know! Quick!

PHELPS (*going*). Well, if you——

MISS SARA (*pushing him in*). There you are—take the atomizer—remember, fifteen sniffs——

(*She shuts the door on him as CHESTER enters R., cigarette in mouth. He rushes up to her excitedly.*)

CHESTER. Well, why don't we begin? The minister's ready, bridesmaids are ready, I'm ready,—why the deuce can't we begin?

MISS SARA (*down L.*). Because Mabel isn't dressed. Calm yourself, Chester.

CHESTER. I can't calm myself. Here are the moments slipping away—flying—and every one maybe——

(*He breaks off, goes to door c., throws away his cigarette, comes down c.*)

MISS SARA. Well, I've heard of impatient bridegrooms before—but——

CHESTER (*coming to her*). Has he gone?

MISS SARA. Has who gone?

CHESTER. The chap who came to see you—with the black whiskers——

MISS SARA (*in much confusion*). The—the—book agent?

CHESTER (*scornfully*). Oh, yes, the book agent!

MISS SARA. Oh, yes, long ago.

CHESTER. You're sure he isn't hiding around somewhere?

MISS SARA. Gracious, Chester, what an idea!

CHESTER. Then go and get Mabel quick, and let's get it over.

MISS SARA. I don't know what's the matter with you this morning, Chester, I'm sure, but I hope for Mabel's sake you don't have them often!

(*Exit MISS SARA at c. CHESTER walks up and down, nervously, hands in his pockets.*)

CHESTER. How does she know he's gone? Just as like as not he's lurking around the premises somewhere waiting to nab me in the middle of the ceremony. "If there be any just cause or impediment." A sheriff's an impediment, I should think, if he's anything. I wonder if he —

(*There is a sound of a man whistling from the direction of c. CHESTER makes a bound for the closet, bolts into it, bolts out again with a look of horror on his face, locks the door and stands panting before it just as PARKER, in frock coat and gray trousers, enters c. followed by INEZ and MABEL, the latter in her wedding gown and veil. They stand staring at CHESTER in amazement. He, his back to the closet door, returns the stare.*)

PARKER. Well, I'm —

CHESTER. Hush! I've got him!

MABEL (*coming to him*). Who, darling?

CHESTER (*wildly, motioning her away*). The sheriff! He's in there!

PARKER (*coming down*). How do you know?

CHESTER. I felt him.

INEZ (*clinging to MABEL*). Felt him!

CHESTER. Yes. The scoundrel came here disguised as a book agent and asked for Aunt Sara. She sent him away and he hid in there. I've locked him in.

MABEL. Oh, Chester!

PARKER. What are you going to do with him?

CHESTER. What am I going to do with him?

PARKER. Yes. You've locked him in, now what are you going to do with him?

CHESTER. I'm not going to do anything with him. I've done my share ; it's up to you now.

PARKER (*going down L.*). Me!

CHESTER. Yes. What do you think a best man's for, anyhow? Just to look pleasant and jolly the girls? My idea is that he's supposed to help the groom a bit now and then.

MABEL. Of course he is.

INEZ (*going down R.*). To be sure.

CHESTER. Here I've cornered the wretch, at the risk of my life—he may be armed to the teeth, for all I know.

MABEL (*running to him*). Chester, you mustn't be so brave! I can't bear it.

CHESTER (*putting his arm around her*). I can't help it; I've always been that way from a child.

MABEL. Suppose he had killed you?

PARKER (*disgustedly*). Oh, shucks, he didn't kill him. What's the use making such a fuss?

INEZ (*crossing L. to PARKER*). Parker!

PARKER. Well, I think it's a good deal more likely that Chester killed him. I haven't heard a sound from him since we came in.

CHESTER. I—I—hope not! I only fell on him! It oughtn't to kill him just to fall on him.

PARKER. You can't tell about these fat chaps. He may have a weak heart, and Clester may have fallen on it.

MABEL. Oh, Chester!

CHESTER (*crossly*). Well, I didn't. I fell on his head. I think he bit me.

INEZ. But we must do something! We can't leave him there! He may make a fuss right in the midst of the ceremony!

MABEL. Oh, we can't have anything like that!

PARKER. He must be gagged and bound till after the wedding.

CHESTER. Well, who's going to gag and bind him? I suppose you know what it means to assault and batter an officer of the law?

PARKER. Oh, of course if you don't care about getting married——

MABEL (*dropping into a chair and bursting into tears*). Oh!

CHESTER (*caressing her*). Don't, darling, I'll—I'll brain

the wretch if it's necessary—only I think it's Parker's place to do it.

MABEL (*sobbing*). So do I. He may have a gun.

CHESTER. Of course he may.

INEZ (*angrily*). 'Then you shan't send Parker in there—I won't allow it. I won't have him shot to pieces—they can take Chester to jail first.

MABEL. You're a selfish little thing! 'To go and spoil my wedding just for Parker Glen.

PARKER. 'Tell you what we'll do. We'll fall upon him together, tie him up, gag him, and leave him in there till after the wedding, and then if he makes a fuss —

CHESTER. If he makes a fuss!

PARKER. Well, that's up to you—of course, if you — Great Scott, what's that?

(*The wedding march is heard off stage R.*)

CHESTER. Good heavens, the march! They'll all be in here in a moment. Come on.

MABEL. Chester, be careful—remember —

INEZ (*grabbing the white ribbons from table and putting them in PARKER'S hands*). 'Tie him up with these, and stuff your handkerchief in his mouth.

(*ETHEL'S voice is heard outside—in a laugh.*)

PARKER. When I say "three" —

CHESTER. Good-bye, darling.

PARKER. One—two—three —

(*Both men burst into the closet. There is a loud sound of scuffling. The march goes on—there is another laugh outside the portières R.*)

MABEL. They're coming! Oh, what shall we do?

INEZ (*running to the door R.*). They shan't unless they come over my dead body! (*Sounds from the closet. "There, you ruffian, now will you be still?"*) CHESTER and PARKER, *much disheveled—banging the door—at the same moment* FRANCES, EVELYN and ETHEL *enter at R. INEZ, in a sepulchral whisper.*) Did you do it?

(*CHESTER goes to sofa R.*)

PARKER. You bet he's good for the rest of the day, all right.

(MABEL is fanning CHESTER with her veil; he is completely exhausted.)

FRANCES. What's the matter? Everybody's waiting.

ETHEL. Where's Miss Sara?

EVELYN. Good gracious, aren't you even in line yet?

MABEL. We're waiting for —

(Enter ANNA at C., wildly.)

ANNA. Lawdy, Lawdy, de police am hyah!

(CHESTER gives a howl and starts for the door. PARKER holds him. MABEL sinks into a chair, INEZ falls on her knees, burying her face on MABEL'S lap.)

FRANCES. }
EVELYN. } The police!
ETHEL. }

CHESTER. Let me go—let me go!

PARKER. It's no use, old man, they've got us.

CHESTER (*rising*). They haven't got me, and they're not going to — (*Shakes his fist at ANNA.*) Where are they?

ANNA. In de kitchen—two powerful big ones—oh, Lawdy, Lawdy!

FRANCES (*calmly*). It's all right. I sent for them.

CHESTER. You sent for them?

FRANCES. Yes—for the man in the closet.

CHESTER (*clutching his head*). For the man in the closet! Am I going mad?

(*The wedding march is still being played.*)

ETHEL. He's a burglar. I saw him crawl in the window—he's after the silver.

CHESTER (*bursting into wild laughter*). In the window! Ha, ha — (*To ANNA, furiously.*) Where's the coal bin?

(ANNA shrinks away from him.)

MABEL. Chester, be calm!

CHESTER. Calm! When these idiots have sent for the police to land me in the penitentiary?

FRANCES. You?

PARKER. They must be gotten rid of, before they find out that he's in there.

INEZ. If we could keep them in the kitchen till after the ceremony.

CHESTER. We'll have to keep them there. Here, you. *(He grabs the cake from the basket and dumps it into the astonished ANNA'S arms.)* 'Take it, make 'em eat it—all of it. Load 'em up. Keep 'em busy—hear?

ANNA. Yassir!

(Exit ANNA, C., and enter MISS SARA, C.)

MISS SARA. Chester, what does this mean? What are you doing? What ——

PARKER. It means that there's a man hiding in that closet ——

MISS SARA *(wildly)*. Oh!

CHESTER. It's the sheriff—he's after me for dodging jury duty this morning—we, Parker and I, tied him up. They saw him, thought he was a burglar, and sent for the police. If those two policemen don't happen to like cake, I shall probably be working with a chain gang this time next week.

FRANCES. Oh!

(She bursts into tears; the other two bridesmaids console her.)

MISS SARA. You and Parker tied him up!

PARKER. And gagged him.

MISS SARA. Merciful powers!

(Enter ANNA, C.)

ANNA. Dey done say dey'd wait till atter de ceremony, Marse Chester, but to keep de do' locked tight case dey say hit's de bad man whut broke inter ole Judge Short's house las' night an' beat de judge up so's he couldn't hol' no cote dis mawnin'.

(Exit ANNA, C.)

CHESTER. No court to-day! Well, then, what's the sheriff doing here?

PARKER. But they say it isn't the sheriff.

MABEL. 'Thank heaven!

CHESTER. Then who is he? He has black whiskers.

(MISS SARA goes to the closet and throws open the door. All the girls scream. CHESTER and PARKER try to stop her. Out rolls PHELPS tied with white ribbons, a handkerchief in his mouth, and a pair of black whiskers hanging to his coat button.)

MISS SARA. Your Uncle John Phelps, and may he forgive you, for I never should —

(CHESTER doubles up on sofa R. PARKER on chair L. MISS SARA and MABEL, up C., cut the ribbons.)

MABEL. Oh, Uncle John, you must forgive us! You don't know how horribly frightened we were, and we'll never, never do it again as long as we live.

PHELPS (*rising*). No, my dear, you never will—you'll never have the chance.

MISS SARA. My dear Mr. Phelps, I assure you —

PHELPS (*coming down*). My dear lady, not a word. Serves me right for coming where I wasn't invited.

CHESTER (*jumping up*). Uncle John, if I'd thought you cared —

PHELPS. Not a word, my boy, not a word—I like your spirit—I like your courage—it takes nerve to tackle an officer of the law, as you thought you were doing. It shows that you're all Phelps—no Jackson about you. Besides, if it hadn't been for you I never should have had the pleasure of meeting the most delightful woman I have ever met. Not a word.

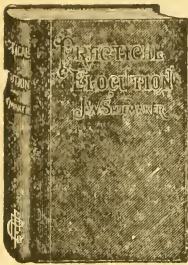
MABEL (*slyly*). Why, Aunt Sara!

CHESTER. I say, it's bully of you to —

PHELPS. Not a word—I insist upon giving the bride away. Come, my dear. Now, are we going to keep that minister waiting all day?

(He takes MABEL by the arm, pushes CHESTER toward the door R.; they all fall into position. MISS SARA wipes her eyes, smilingly.)

Practical Elocution



By J. W. SHOEMAKER, A. M.

300 pages

Cloth, Leather Back, \$1.25

This work is the outgrowth of actual class-room experience, and is a practical, common-sense treatment of the whole subject. It is clear and concise, yet comprehensive, and is absolutely free from the entangling technicalities that are so frequently found in books of this class.

Conversation, which is the basis of all true Elocution, is regarded as embracing all the germs of speech and action. Prominent attention is therefore given to the cultivation of this the most common form of human expression.

General principles and practical processes are presented for the cultivation of strength, purity, and flexibility of Voice, for the improvement of distinctness and correctness in Articulation, and for the development of Soul power in delivery.

The work includes a systematic treatment of Gesture in its several departments of position, facial expression, and bodily movement, a brief system of Gymnastics bearing upon vocal development and grace of movement, and also a chapter on Methods of Instruction, for teachers.

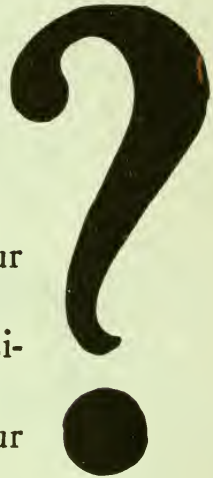
Sold by all booksellers, or sent, prepaid, upon receipt of price.

The Penn Publishing Company

226 S. 11th Street, Philadelphia



- Do you want to be an Orator
Do you want to be a Teacher
of Elocution
Do you want to be a Public
Reader
Do you want to improve your
conversation
Do you want training in Physi-
cal Culture
Do you want to increase your
power in any direction



A CATALOGUE GIVING FULL INFORMA-
TION AS TO HOW ANY OF THESE AC-
COMPLISHMENTS MAY BE ATTAINED
WILL BE SENT FREE ON REQUEST

The National School of Elocution and Oratory

Parkway Building

Philadelphia