

THE GREAT AND REED REPERTORY OF MUSICAL PIECES.

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.

A Musical Proverb, in One Act.

WRITTEN BY

B. ROWE (B. C. STEPHENSON).

COMPOSED BY

ALFRED CELLIER.

Vocal Score, 3/- net. Libretto, 1/- net.

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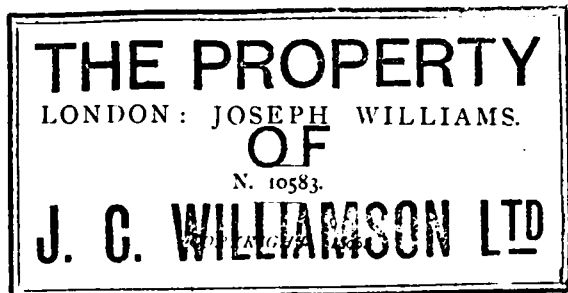
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CHARACTERS.

BARNABY BUMPUS (*age 55*), *Beadle of the Village of Beadlecot, and Warden of the Ancient Charity of St. Swithin's-by-the-Pump.*

MRS. BUMPUS (*age 45*), *His Wife. Also proprietress of a small fishmonger's shop in the neighbouring watering place of Bathingstone.*

SUSAN BUMPUS (*age 18*) } *Their Children.*
JOE BUMPUS (*age 14*) }

MR. ALOYSIUS GORRINGE (*age 25*), *Photographic Artist.*

Present Time.

SCENE.

The Village Green of Beadlecot, having a somewhat deserted appearance. At the back of stage is an old pump, on the left, under a tree, the stocks. On the right is seen a Gothic doorway, the entrance to the Charity of St. Swithin's-by-the-Pump. On the keystone of the arch is carved a head of St. Swithin, with the following motto: "NON CUIVIS CONTINGIT." Opposite the doorway is a photographer's camera. The side of a caravan, with steps, in second entrance L. H.

COSTUMES.

BUMPUS. Dress of a Beadle. Blue plush small clothes and white stockings, shoes with buckles, hood-flapped waistcoat, with gilt embroidery, long blue coat and cape, cocked hat and large stick with a gilt knob. *Wig.*

MRS. BUMPUS. *First Dress:* Fisherwoman of the North Country. Cotton gown and bright handkerchief, coloured stockings. *Second Dress:* Charity Girl (*vide Foundling Hospital*). *Wig.*

SUSAN BUMPUS. *First Dress:* Bright coloured dress, somewhat similar to MRS. BUMPUS. *Second Dress:* Charity Girl, same as MRS. BUMPUS. *Wig.*

JOE BUMPUS. *First Dress:* Charity Boy. Leather breeches and stockings, small cap, and plate on arm. *Second Dress:* Charity Girl, same as above.

GORRINGE. *First Dress:* Light coloured suit, somewhat seedy, wide-a-wake hat. *Second Dress:* Long black overcoat, high collar, black satin stock, tall hat, and spectacles.

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CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.

*(As the Curtain rises, GORRINGE is seen arranging the Camera
in order to take a view of the doorway.)*

What a delightful antiquity and romance

GORRINGE. There! that will do it I think. What a charming old doorway! There is a delightful antiquity and romance about the place. None of your miserable stucco all stone. Very bad stone too, that crumbles into delicious ruins and makes the most fascinating of pictures. I shall astonish the good folks of Bathingstone. They shall have three views at half-a-crown a-piece. No. 1, the Door of the Charity of "St. Swithin's-by-the-Pump," by Gorringe. No. 2, The Stocks of the Charity of "St. Swithin's-by-the-Pump," by Gorringe. No. 3, the Pump of the Charity of "St. Swithin's-by-the-Pump," by Gorringe. There is the Saint's amiable face over the doorway smiling at me all the time. *He* won't move while his portrait is being taken. There! that will make a very pretty picture.

*(He proceeds to arrange the Camera and, as he does so, covers
his head with the usual cloth.)*

(Enter SUSAN R.)

SUSAN. Gracious me! What is that? I ought to know that form. It is! It isn't! It must be!

GORRINGE (*uncovering his head*). Why, Su— Miss Bumpus!

SUSAN. Why, Aloy— Mr. Gorringe!

GORRINGE. What brings you here?

SUSAN. I belong to the place.

GORRINGE. You mean the place belongs to you.

SUSAN. No, I don't. It belongs to my father, that is to say he has the care of it.

GORRINGE. And the care of you. Happy man!

SUSAN. Go along do!

GORRINGE (*romantically*). Do you bid me depart? Do you banish me from your presence? Do you drive a withered heart to wander in a desert land?

SUSAN. What nonsense! Go along doesn't mean go away.

GORRINGE. What does it mean then?

SUSAN. It means stay where you are—and—and——

GORRINGE. And what?

SUSAN. And come a little nearer.

GORRINGE. How very nice of a small sentence to say so little, and mean so much, Miss Bumpus!

SUSAN. Well.

GORRINGE. Will you allow me to ask you a question?

SUSAN. I think that you had better ask my mother.

GORRINGE. I don't know Mrs. Bumpus, and I don't like her; I do know you and I adore you. Oh, Susan, could you—could you tell me all you know about the charity of "St. Swithin's-by-the-Pump" in order that I may publish an account with my celebrated views—I mean my views that will become celebrated.

SUSAN. Is *that* what you were going to say?

GORRINGE. It was.

SUSAN. Then why did you take such a time coming to the point?

GORRINGE. My natural diffidence. Proceed, I am all attention.

SUSAN. This is the Ancient Charity of—

GORRINGE. I know all about its name.

SUSAN. And my father has—

GORRINGE. I know your father has charge of it.

SUSAN. And there is a pump, and there's the stocks.

GORRINGE. There are the stocks, beloved. There *is* a stock, there *are* the stocks.

SUSAN. Well, then, there *are* the stocks, and that's all.

GORRINGE. How do you mean, that's all?

SUSAN. That's all I know about it.

GORRINGE. But you must know something more than that. An

ancient place like this should have an ancient history. How long has it been established? What is its object?

SUSAN. Oh, it's very old indeed, more than two hundred years old, and there's a boys' school and a girls' school.

GORRINGE. Oh, now we are coming to important facts! And how many boys are there in the boys' school? And how many girls are there in the girls' school?

SUSAN (*laughing*). Oh, I don't know, ever such a lot!

GORRINGE. But what have the pump and stocks to do with the schools?

SUSAN. Nothing at all, only father, who has charge of the schools, is beadle of the place and has charge of the pump, for which he receives five pounds a year, provided, as I read the other day on the board just outside the gateway, "one thirsty wayfarer drinks from it in the course of the year." He gets another five pounds a year for the charge of the stocks "provided a wandering vagabond is locked up in them." It's very difficult now the place is so deserted to find thirsty wayfarers and wandering vagabonds, and, just at this moment, poor father is in great distress. He has been trying for the last month and hasn't found one. Times are dreadfully changed. What were you going to do when I came in?

GORRINGE. I was going to take a photograph of the doorway.

SUSAN. What! Are you a photographer?

GORRINGE. Miss Bumpus! No *man* would have survived that expression two minutes.

SUSAN. What do you mean? What have I said?

GORRINGE. You have said a photographer—I am a *photographic artist*.

SUSAN. I beg your pardon. What is the difference?

GORRINGE. The difference? Do you ask what is the difference? The difference is that one is ah—um—and the other is not—ah—um (*hesitating*). The difference is enormous.

SUSAN. And couldn't you find anything better to photograph than the old doorway?

GORRINGE. I could not then, but I can now.

SUSAN. Ah! Mr. Gorringe!

GORRINGE. Ah! Miss Bumpus! (*Takes stool from door R., and places it for SUSAN R.C.*)

No. 1.—DUET.

GORRINGE *and* SUSAN.

I.

GORRINGE (c.) Be seated pray. Your head incline
 A little to the right ;
 Your hands across ; that's capital !
 A very pretty sight.
 Your features slightly in repose :
 " En profile," that's the thing ;
 Keep up your head, keep down your nose,
 And don't stick out your chin.
 Pray don't move,
 My own love,
 Pray don't move, &c.

II.

SUSAN. If thus my patience you would prove,
 This sitting is a bore ;
 I never felt inclined to move
 One half as much before.
 To settle on my nose, I see,
 A wasp is coming down ;
 And a great big caterpillar from the tree
 Is crawling up my gown.
 Pray don't move,
 My own, my love.
 I must move, &c.
 (GORRINGE *arranges the camera and sings the following*
verse with great feeling with the cloth over his head.)

GORRINGE. And now a gentle little smile,
 Full of such tender grace,
 A smile that you, and you alone,
 Can bring upon your face.
 Now steady please,
 I'm going to sneeze.
 SUSAN. I'll count ten more.
 GORRINGE. One—two—three—four. (SUSAN *sneezes.*)
 It's spoilt I'm sure.

BOTH. But why should we trouble to try any more?
 What need to depend upon art?
 If the portrait of { him } whom alone I adore
 { her }
 Is photographed into my heart?
 And if with the brightness of love we're enveloped,
 Far more than we ever supposed,
 What matter if yours should be under-developed,
 Or mine should be over exposed? &c.

GORRINGE. (*speaking*). It's quite hopeless. I never shall be able to make a portrait of you, so I must try something else; What shall it be?

SUSAN. I wish you would try the pump, that is sure to stand still.

GORRINGE. The very thing I was going to suggest. Of course I'll try the pump.

SUSAN. That's very nice of you. Do you know I'm so fond of the pump. I've known it so long that it almost seems to me like a human being. It comes to me in my dreams, half a pump and half an old man, and tells me such quaint stories of this place years ago. Would you like to hear one?

GORRINGE. The very thing I should most like; you shall tell me while I am getting a plate ready.

SUSAN. I will sing it, while you prepare the plate.

[*Exit into van.*]

No. 2.—SONG.—“*The Pump.*”

SUSAN.

I.

When first I saw the little pair,
 She four, he scarcely eight,
 I wondered at her golden hair
 That brushed his curly pate.
 On tiptoe she would hold the pail,
 While manfully he'd strain
 To work the handle up and down,
 With all his might and main.

II.

The little maid, a buxom lass,
 And he a sturdy man,
 Again before the pump they pass,
 She with her milking can.
 They pause and linger at my side,
 To say a word apart,
 For she's a happy little bride,
 And he has won her heart.

III.

The years roll on and once again,
 The couple pass this way;
 His frame is bent with work and pain,
 Her hair is silver grey.
 But thankful for a peaceful past,
 They hopefully do pray
 That life may pass for them at last
 As peacefully away.

GORRINGE (*re-entering from van*). What a pretty song! And what a pretty voice—and what a pretty—oh Miss BUMPU! Susan—would you? Could you—?

SUSAN. Would I? Could I? What?

GORRINGE. I've got a travelling photographic caravan—a large stock of portraits, a warm heart and a perambulator which I took for a bad debt.

SUSAN. What! The warm heart?

GORRINGE. No, the perambulator. Say yes.

SUSAN. Oh, no!

GORRINGE. Do you say no? Then I'll drown myself. (*Goes up L. of pump. Bus.*)

SUSAN. Oh, no! (*Running towards him alarmed.*)

GORRINGE. Then— (*Sings.*)

Be mine, sweet maid, be——

BUMPUS (*without*). Susan!

GORRINGE (*to SUSAN who is going*). Don't go yet. There is only one short verse.

SUSAN. I must. My father will be so angry if I don't go.

BUMPUS (*without*). Susan!

SUSAN. Coming, father, coming. [Exit R.]

GORRINGE (*speaking*). She is lovely, she's divine. She's all my fancy painted her. And now for the pump. (*Proceeds to arrange the pump for the photograph.*) I think we'll have your handle up, old gentleman. More interesting, in the attitude of speaking—there, that's about the thing.

(Puts handle up and retires to arrange camera, at that moment

BUMPUS enters L. U. E., sees handle of pump up, puts it down, and exits pompously R. U. E. GORRINGE, who has been occupied setting camera plate (to his satisfaction), looks again, sees handle of pump has been altered, goes, places it as before, saying, "Handle up, old gentleman," goes to camera as before. BUMPUS enters again, sees handle of pump up, indignant, puts it down, stands L. C. by pump. GORRINGE busy engaged does not perceive BUMPUS at first, till he has taken the cap off lens, counts 1, 2, 3, going to put cap on again, sees BUMPUS, starts.)

BUMPUS. Ha! What is that I see? Why, the fellow is pointing a gun at the pump! Never while I live! Bumpus to the rescue! (*Places himself in front of the pump.*)

GORRINGE. Do not be alarmed. It is all over in a moment. May I ask whom I have the honour of addressing?

BUMPUS. Sir, I am the Beadle of the Parish, and Guardian of the Charity of St. Swithin's-by-the-Pump, under the provision of Geo. II. cap. 32, sec. 14.

GORRINGE. Would you kindly say that again?

BUMPUS. Geo. II., cap. 32, sec. 14.

GORRINGE. What does that mean?

BUMPUS. I have not the least idea, but no matter.

No. 3.—SOLO.—“*The Beadle.*”

I.

BUMPUS. Yes, I'm the Beadle of the place,
 My hat and stick behold !
 Observe my majesty of face,
 My bobs and tags of gold.
 The young and old, the short and tall,
 Do quail before my frown,
 For here I am, and so say all,
 The terror of the town, &c.

DUET.

GORRINGE.	BUMPUS.
You, I see,	I, you see,
You are he,	I am he,
That is the,	That is the,
Busy Bea—dle, &c.	Busy Bea—dle, &c.

II.

BUMPUS. Whene'er I see a little boy,
 Upon whose rosy face,
 At wickedness, some hidden joy,
 I rather think I trace,
 Says I, come here my little lad,
 You're at it now again,
 Upon my word it is too bad,
 Go ! fetch me here, my cane.

(Duet repeated.)

III.

BUMPUS. “ Oh ! please, sir, don't ! 'taint me ! ” he cries,
 “ It was my little brothers,”
 There's nothing done, and yet he tries,
 To throw the blame on others.
 With me ! the beadle of this town,
 He'll argument employ,
 I flog him well, I take him down,
 That naughty little boy, &c.

(Duet repeated.)

BUMPUS (*speaking*). And now, sir, that I have explained who I am, will you be good enough to tell me who you are? And what you are doing here? (*Magisterially.*) Do not tremble unless you are guilty!

GORRINGE. You're very kind. I was passing through the neighbourhood, and being much struck with the beauty of your pump, I was about to take it.

BUMPUS. About to take it! About to take my pump! And for what purpose may I ask?

GORRINGE. In order to make a "carte" of it.

BUMPUS. Make a cart of *my* pump!

GORRINGE. Only as you stood in the way I shall make a carte of you now.

BUMPUS. This is monstrous!

GORRINGE. I see you don't understand.

BUMPUS. Don't understand! How dare you say I don't understand?

GORRINGE. Allow me to explain.

BUMPUS. Not another word! This matter must be fully enquired into.

GORRINGE. I don't know what you call enquiry, but if it consists of asking questions and not waiting for the answers, you won't get very far before sunset.

BUMPUS. And pray, sir, if I choose to put a series of well-considered questions, am I to be compelled to sit and listen to the answers? Now, sir! What are you doing with my pump?

GORRINGE. Taking its portrait.

BUMPUS. That is not what you said just now.

GORRINGE. Yes, it is. Allow me to explain.

BUMPUS. I will have no explanation, sir! An alteration of statement. A shifting of your case and prevarication. (*Aside.*) Evidently a most dangerous man. Let us get on. What are you?

GORRINGE. An artist by profession, a sort of wandering vagabond by inclination.

BUMPUS. Ah!

GORRINGE. I am a thirsty wayfarer by force of circumstances connected with a walk this morning from Bathingstone along a very dusty road.

BUMPUS (*aside*). The very man I want. A wandering vagabond and a thirsty wayfarer all in one. What a piece of luck! (*Aloud*) Why not say so before?

GORRINGE. I didn't think you looked likely to stand anything to drink.

BUMPUS. Not stand anything to drink! As a thirsty wayfarer, sir, I may mention that you are entitled to the hospitality of this ancient charity.

GORRINGE. Upon my word I'm very much obliged.

BUMPUS (*continuing*). In the shape of a cup of water fresh from the pump. There is no charge!

GORRINGE. You are very good. I make a point of never touching water.

BUMPUS. Then, sir, how dare you say you are thirsty?

GORRINGE. Good heavens! Mayn't a man be thirsty without wanting to drink water? Besides, the limpid stream was intended for washing and not for drinking.

BUMPUS. You reject the hospitality of the charity? You scorn the most ancient pump in the county? (*With much feeling*.) You refuse to drink out of the cup which my daughter Susan spends half her time in polishing?

GORRINGE. Your daughter Susan polishes the cup! Reach me the goblet. Susan, for thy sake. (*He drinks*.)

BUMPUS. Ah! and now for the stocks. If I could only manage it. You are fond of scenery? Don't trouble unless you are. I mean you admire nature. What do you think of our village?

GORRINGE. Rather deserted it seems to me. But very picturesque. It looks very nice from here.

BUMPUS. It looks much nicer from there (*pointing to stocks*.)

GORRINGE. Does it indeed! (*Going towards stocks*.) Ah, yes. I see. It's a pity that tree hides the top of that old roof.

BUMPUS (*coaxingly*). It wouldn't if you sat down. (*GORRINGE sits down in the stocks*.) Put your legs up and make yourself comfortable. (*As GORRINGE puts his legs up BUMPUS shuts the top down*.)

GORRINGE. Look here! You've shut my legs in!

BUMPUS. Just what I meant to do. You dangerous ruffian! You'll make a cart of *my* pump, will you? You'll *take* the beadle of the parish and make a four-wheeled vehicle of him, will you? I'll go and see about all this. [*Exit.*]

Enter JOE. Runs on L. U. E.

JOE. Oh, here's a lark! Here's a chap in the stocks!

GORRINGE. And this is a charity boy!

JOE. How do you like yourself? Nice and easy about the ankles, isn't it? Plenty of free movement. Oh, my! what a lark!

GORRINGE. Gentle youth!

JOE. Who are you chaffing? My name's Joe.

GORRINGE. Well, Joe, let me out.

JOE. Let you out! I like that. Let yourself out.

GORRINGE. How can I? My legs are tight fastened. Nice Joe—kind Joe—beautiful Joe, let me out for charity's sake! Charity does a good deal for you. Why don't you do something for charity? I'll give you a tanner—a bob!

JOE. Done for a bob—hand over the money.

GORRINGE (*aside*). Young Jew. I'll give him such a thrashing when I get out. (*Gives him a shilling.*)

JOE (*opening stocks*). There you could have got out just as well without me.

GORRINGE. Then give me back the shilling immediately.

JOE. Not if I knows it. Findings is keepings.

GORRINGE. If you don't give me back that shilling I'll show you up to every boy in the school.

JOE. Well, you'd better begin at once because we're all here.

GORRINGE. What do you mean?

JOE. *I'm* the only boy in the school.

GORRINGE. The only boy! And how many girls are there in the school?

JOE. My sister. That's all.

GORRINGE. Then there are not three boys or three girls in either school.

JOE. No, nor never was so long as I can recollect.

GORRINGE. At last, Bumpus, I have thee in my grasp! I see it all. Revenge for the gross indignities cast upon me. Bumpus on his knees. Son-in-law, forgiveness, Susan in my arms. Tableau! Joe, do you want to earn another shilling?

JOE. Yes.

GORRINGE. Then meet me by the stile in a quarter of an hour, I shall have a letter for you which you will deliver to your father.

JOE. All right. I'll be there.

GORRINGE. And if you could manage to come in a less absurd dress it would be advisable. Really you do look such a ridiculous scarecrow, I wonder they don't hire you to keep the birds away.

[*Exit.*]

JOE. There now, he's at it. It really is too bad. Everybody's down on me.

No. 4.—SONG.—“*The Charity Boy.*”

I.

JOE. Why dress a boy up such a guy?
 The scoff of every passer by,
 The scorn of other boys, and why?
 Because I've no domestic tie,
 For I'm a charity-rarity,
 I'm a charity boy.

II.

Whene'er at fireworks we play,
 The pleeceman comes, we cut away,
 I'm caught and whopped because they say
 They see me half a mile away,
 Because I'm a charity-rarity,
 I'm a charity boy.

III.

And therefore you at least can see
 It really does seem strange to me,
 The world so very hard should be,
 And all because of charity.
 For I'm a charity-rarity,
 I'm a charity boy.

Enter BUMPUS.

BUMPUS. Joe!

JOE (*trembling*). Yes, sir!

BUMPUS. Have you been caned this morning?

JOE. Yes, sir! No, sir! Oh, sir! Please, sir! Don't, sir!

BUMPUS. You'll never have an appetite for dinner if I don't thrash you. Nor I either, for the matter of that.

JOE. Please, father, I don't want an appetite.

BUMPUS. That may apply in your case, but not in mine. Let's see, what have you been doing lately? Do not tremble unless you are guilty.

JOE. Nothing, father.

BUMPUS. I thought so. I said to myself, that boy of mine has been indulging in idleness, which is the root of all evil, and I'll thrash it out of him.

JOE. Please, father, I'll never do it again.

BUMPUS. Never do what again? You see you have been doing something, or you would not have said you wouldn't do it again. And concealing it from me, from *me!* Your fond parent. Your doting anxious father. You young villian! prepare for the worst thrashing you ever had. Now, sir!

MRS. BUMPUS (*without*). Will you buy! Will you buy!

BUMPUS (*very mildly*). Joe, was that your dear mother's voice?

JOE. Yes, father.

BUMPUS. Don't you think we had better go into the house and look after the dinner? We can finish what we were about afterwards. [*Exeunt* JOE and BUMPUS.]

Enter MRS. BUMPUS.

MRS. BUMPUS. Will you buy, &c.

No. 5.—SONG.—“*The Fisherwoman.*”

I.

MRS. B. Good people come, buy them, their excellence test,
 You had far better buy them of me;
 The finest, the freshest, the largest, the best,
 That ever came out of the sea.
 There's a lordly old turbot, so flat and so white;
 This mullet was caught, ma'am, to-day;
 And here is a mackerel that yesterday night
 Was sporting about in the bay.
 Will you buy, will you buy, &c.

II.

I have every fish here that ever was born,
 I have all, from a sprat to a whale;
 Would you like a nice whiting, an oyster, a prawn?
 There's a skate, sir, just look at his tail.
 A ha'porth o' winkles I would not disdain
 To sell, if your wishes are small;
 I've done it before, and I'd do it again.
 So come and buy, come, one and all.

Will you buy, will you buy, &c.

Mrs. BUMPUS (*speaking*). Where is that lazy, idle husband of mine? Here have I been working all the day to get a living for the family, and he goes strutting about like a turkey cock in a farmyard. I've got a word or two to say to him. Mr. Bumpus! Mr. Bumpus!

BUMPUS (*appearing at the door*). My Angel!

No. 6.—DUET.—Mr. and Mrs. BUMPUS.

I.

Mrs. BUMPUS. You lazy, idle vagabond!
 You good-for-nothing lout!
 While I have toiled the live-long day,
 What have you been about?
 You think because you're beadle here,
 There's nothing else to do,
 But lounge and laze the live-long day,
 While I must work for two, &c.

BUMPUS. My dear, you're rather hard on me,
 To work is not my mission,
 You wish me to explain, I see—
 I will, with your permission.
 Folks who can work and folks who can't,
 You'll find in every station;
 Some represent the solid part,
 And some the decoration.

ENSEMBLE.

{ Oh, what a life, oh, what a life for me has been reserved,
 { For me, your wife, a constant strife of toil must be reserved,
 A constant state of fuss and prate, I never have deserved.

II.

MRS. BUMPUS. Why don't you then apply, my love,
 For some such situation,
 As ornament for fire stove,
 Or some such decoration?
 On idleness you seem to thrive,
 While I must earn the money;
 If I were mistress of the hive,
 The drones should have no honey, &c.

BUMPUS. Again, indulgence, I would crave,
 Though idleness I hate,
 You can't expect a man to slave
 Who wears a robe of state.
 My post requires much thought, and then—
 Repose with dignity,
 But if I worked like other men,
 Where would the beadle be?

ENSEMBLE *repeated.*

(*At end of duet enter JOE with a letter.*)

JOE. Here's a letter for you, father.

BUMPUS. A letter for me! What can it be about? (*Reads.*)
 Good gracious! I'm a lost man!

MRS. BUMPUS. What's the matter with the man? (*Takes the letter from BUMPUS and reads.*) "To Mr. Bumpus, Beadle and Warden of the Charity of St. Swithin's-by-the-Pump. Sir,—Being in the neighbourhood of the Charity under your charge, I have considered it desirable to pay a visit to the institution with a view to the preparation of a report to the Charity Commissioners on its present state and management. It will be my especial duty to ascertain that the proper number of children is maintained in the schools."

BUMPUS. Proper number of children! There's only Joe in one school and Susan in the other. What shall I do?

MRS. BUMPUS (*reading*). "And that the general objects of the founder have been fully and conscientiously carried out. I hope to be with you in the course of the afternoon.—I remain, Sir, your obedient servant, William Carter."

BUMPUS. What is to be done? It will be found out that there is only one child in each school! It isn't my fault that the place is deserted, and that there are no more children. We shall lose our place. The charity will be closed, and I shall be forced to seek an honest livelihood.

MRS. BUMPUS. Can nothing be done?

BUMPUS. You can't make three girls out of a girl and a boy. It can't be done. It has never even been tried.

JOE. Why don't you dress me up as a girl, father? I should make such a pretty one.

MRS. BUMPUS. That's a bright idea!

BUMPUS. It is Joe! I'll let you off that thrashing I owe you, go at once! Susan will show you where the clothes are to be found, tell her to put on a suit herself, and to give you another.

JOE. All right! Here's a jolly lark.

[*Exit.*]

BUMPUS. And now for the third girl.

(*Looks at MRS. BUMPUS.*)

MRS. BUMPUS. Never, Mr. Bumpus! Never! Before my own children to.

BUMPUS. You'd look so nice.

MRS. BUMPUS. I couldn't do it.

BUMPUS. Only think of the consequences if you don't! Ruin! and me to find an honest living.

MRS. BUMPUS. Never!

BUMPUS. Look here! Jemima, in a case of life and death, I don't mind mentioning a blue velvet mantle.

MRS. BUMPUS (*less decidedly*). Never!

BUMPUS. And a yellow fringe?

MRS. BUMPUS. Oh, Bumpus, for your sake I will go as far—
I will sacrifice myself to my husband and children. [Exit.]

(*Enter GORRINGE, disguised as the School Inspector.*)

No. 7.—DUET.

GORRINGE. Oh, beadle dum! Oh, beadle dee!
The beadle, I suppose you be,
The guardian (or you ought to be)
Of Great St. Swithin's Charity.

BUMPUS. Oh, beadle dum! Oh, beadle dee!
The beadle you before you see!
As such I am! I ought to be!
The guardian of this Charity.

*(Both march solemnly round the stage to music,
looking at the pump, stocks, &c.)*

BUMPUS *(aside)*. I am trembling all over. If we should be discovered. What shall I do?

GORRINGE. Mr. Bumpus, I have come to inspect the Charity according to an ancient custom which, if I am rightly informed, has not been practised since it was first established.

BUMPUS. That is so, sir. *(Aside.)* Come, come, Bumpus, be a man; do not tremble unless you are guilty. *(To GORRINGE.)* Then, sir, you are the gentleman from whom I received a letter this morning.

GORRINGE. I am.

BUMPUS. I hope that you will find everything in order.

GORRINGE. I hope so too, Mr. Bumpus. You have not forgotten, of course, that it will be necessary for me to certify that the pump has been used by a thirsty wayfarer.

BUMPUS. It is very difficult to find thirsty wayfarers that don't know the pump. Them as does usually avoids it, however thirsty they may be.

GORRINGE. How so?

BUMPUS. Why, you see, sir, the water is neither so wholesome nor so palatable as it used to be. They do say, something has poisoned the water.

GORRINGE. Ah! *(Horrified.)* Don't say that!

BUMPUS. Why what's the matter? You don't look well, sir. Shall I get you anything to drink?

GORRINGE *(with decision)*. No, I thank you. Did you find any thirsty wayfarers?

BUMPUS. I did, sir, one, and he drank a good deal of it. I do sincerely hope that he is not the worse for it now. He happened to confess that he was a wandering vagabond, so I clapped him in the stocks too. That was a terrible job! He was a very powerful and a very ugly ruffian.

GORRINGE. Indeed!

BUMPUS. But I got him in at last without assistance.

GORRINGE (*aside*). The impudent rascal! But I shall have my revenge. (*Aloud.*) How did he get out?

BUMPUS. My boy Joe let him out. I *rather* think he got a shilling for the job.

GORRINGE. Why do you *rather* think he got a shilling?

BUMPUS. Because I *rather* think I took the shilling away from him, and I *rather* think I've got it in my pocket now.

GORRINGE. Did you? I am very glad you did that. I am indeed. I am personally obliged to you.

BUMPUS. Why, sir?

GORRINGE. Never mind. And now, Mr. Bumpus, how about the schools?

BUMPUS. There is only one school now, sir—the girls' school. You will find that in very nice order—children very tidy and very clean—parents most respectable.

GORRINGE. I presume that there are the right number—

BUMPUS. Right number of parents, sir?

GORRINGE. No, of course not. The right number of children.

BUMPUS. Yes, three. Three little girls, and very nice little girls too. They will be here directly, sir. I thought that you might like to see them outside this fine day. Ah, here comes our Betsy Clark. (*Enter SUSAN dressed as a Charity Girl.*) Betsy, come and make a curtsy to the gentleman. (*SUSAN curtseys*).

GORRINGE. Is she a good little girl, Mr. Bumpus?

BUMPUS. A very good girl, sir.

GORRINGE. She is a very pretty girl.

BUMPUS. What!

GORRINGE. I mean of course—very tidy—very nicely dressed, and all that sort of thing. I will put a question or two to her at

once in order to save my time, which is valuable (*aside to SUSAN*).
Don't you know me?

(*During this BUMPUS goes into house, brings out desk, places it R.C., returns, gets stool, in time to hear SUSAN'S suppressed scream.*)

SUSAN (*screams*). Ah!

GORRINGE. Silence! Not a word!

BUMPUS. What is the meaning of this unseemly noise?

SUSAN. A nasty wasp, father. (*BUMPUS goes in again and returns with form which he places C. a little up.*)

GORRINGE. A little shy at first. We shall get on capitally presently. As the others seem to be rather long in coming, suppose we begin at once, as the poet says.

“ Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And cast its sweetness upon the desert air.”

You know something about arithmetic, Betsy? Let us see what you know?

SUSAN. Nothing, sir.

GORRINGE. Then let's hear it, by all means! [*Exit BUMPUS.*]

No. 8.—DUET.—“*Multiplication.*”

(SUSAN and GORRINGE.)

SUSAN.	Twice one or two,
GORRINGE.	That's me and you.
SUSAN.	Twice two are four,
GORRINGE.	You I adore.
SUSAN.	Twice three are six,
GORRINGE.	We are in a fix.
SUSAN.	Twice four are eight,
GORRINGE.	Patience and wait.
	Quite perfect, very nice, indeed,
	Now to subtraction let's proceed.
SUSAN.	If one from two you chance to take,
	How sad a difference you make;
	Together happy as the day,
	Yet parted, must we fade away.

BOTH. Behold in us the number two,
 Take you from me, what should I do?
 A hopeless, helpless number one,
 A cipher utterly undone.

SUSAN. Addition, subtraction,
 Delicious distraction,
 A pupil and tutor's delight.
 In calm contemplation
 Of multiplication,
 And figures that never come right.

GORRINGE. A right calculation
 A wrong speculation,
 What matter to hearts that are one?

SUSAN. No signs of contrition
 At simple division,
 No groans over sums not begun.

BOTH. No plums on condition
 Of compound addition;
 The faults that before me I see
 Are long in detection,
 And sweet in correction
 The longer, the better for me.

(*After Duet, enter BUMPUS with Mrs. BUMPUS in the dress of a Charity Girl.*)

BUMPUS. Rebecca Giles.

GORRINGE. How do you do, Rebecca? I hope that you have been a good little girl lately.

Mrs. BUMPUS (*with a curtsey*). Yes, sir—please, sir.

GORRINGE. Good at your lessons, and respectful and well-behaved to my excellent friend here?

Mrs. BUMPUS. Yes, sir—please, sir. (*With a struggle.*)

GORRINGE. And that you do everything that he tells you, like an obedient little child?

Mrs. BUMPUS. No, never!

BUMPUS (*aside to Mrs. BUMPUS*). Remember blue velvet, yellow fringe.

Mrs. BUMPUS. Yes, sir—please, sir.

GORRINGE. I am glad to hear that, and now let us hear what you know. What do you know by heart?

MRS. BUMPUS. I can say----

GORRINGE. Then repeat it.

(MRS. BUMPUS repeats with great rapidity, and with wrong emphasis, any piece of tolerably well known poetry, while GORRINGE stops her to take breath in the middle of sentences, &c.)

GORRINGE. Rebecca, if you do that often you will inevitably burst yourself and everybody else within hearing. Do you know anything about the irregular verbs?

MRS. BUMPUS (*much insulted*). No, sir, I do not know anything about the irregular verbs, or any other irregular people.

BUMPUS (*stopping her*). Silence, my dear.

MRS. BUMPUS. And I wonder a decent man can stand by and see his wife insulted.

(Enter JOE dressed as a *Charity Girl*.)

BUMPUS. This is the third, sir.

GORRINGE. Indeed. What a pretty child! And what's your name, my little dear.

JOE. Joe.

BUMPUS (*heartily*). Jo-anna, Sir. Joanna (*to JOE aside*). You great fool, why don't you recollect?

JOE. Well, father, I do recollect. You says to me, Joe says you go and put on some of the girl's clo—

BUMPUS (*aside*). Hold your tongue. Do you want to undo me?

JOE. No, father, I don't, but you says to me, Joe, &c.—

BUMPUS. Will you keep quiet?

JOE. Will you give me back my shilling, father?

BUMPUS (*aside*). Extortionate young villain (*gives him a shilling*). There! (JOE gets nearer to desk R.)

GORRINGE. Well, my little girl, and what do you know?

JOE. I'm not a little girl.

BUMPUS. Hush!

JOE. Yes, all right. I am a little girl (*laughs*).

GORRINGE. And what do you know best?

JOE. I know how to play marbles and make mud pies.

BUMPUS. The boy will ruin us. The gentleman means what learning do you know.

JOE. Grammar I know. I'm very strong in grammar.

GORRINGE. Well, let's try you. Now, then, suppose I begin by saying, "I am." What do you say next?

JOE. Thou beest.

GORRINGE. You may sit down. A very distressing state of ignorance, Mr. Bumpus.

BUMPUS. I think if you were to try her in a bit of poetry she would do better.

GORRINGE. Very well, we'll see. Now then!

"How doth the little busy bee."

JOE. Pretty well, thank you. How do you do? No, sir, please, I know

"A dog delights to bark and bite
Where'er the busy flea
Improves the shining hour upon
The dog's anatomy."

GORRINGE. No, no!

"Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
For 'tis their nature to."

To what?

JOE. Two dogs, sir.

GORRINGE. Ah!

JOE. No please, Sir, I know. Six dogs, two at the end, and four at the beginning.

JOE. Four 'tis their nature.

GORRINGE. This is disgraceful. The Charity Commissioners shall hear of this. (JOE *retires to form.*) And now let's see what Rebecca knows of "Twinkle, twinkle, little star."

BUMPUS. Go on, Rebecca, we'll prompt you.

No. 9.—QUARTET.—"Twinkle, Twinkle."

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.
When the traveller in the dark
Thanks you for your tiny spark,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

JOE (*cutting in*). Let dogs delight
To bark and bite,
For 'tis their nature to.
And bears and lions growl and fight,
That's what they ought to do.

JOE. I've found him out, father.

BUMPUS. Found who out?

JOE. He's got on spectacles and a wig! He's the fellow who was here this morning!

BUMPUS. Good heavens! I see it now. (*To Mrs. B.*) My dear, this fellow has made a fool of me.

MRS. BUMPUS. Well, more fool you to be made a fool of.

BUMPUS. Ah, but that's not the worst of it. He has made a fool of you too.

MRS. BUMPUS. So he has. The rascal. (*Angrily.*) Lend me that cane, Bumpus. I'll annihilate him.

GORRINGE. I think under the circumstances I'd better fly. (*Exit up the steps of the caravan, pursued by Mrs. B. He shuts the door hastily, and looks out of the window—business.*) Keep cool, marm, for heaven's sake, keep cool!

SUSAN. Oh, Mother!

JOE. Here's a lark!

BUMPUS. My dear Jemima, pray recollect.

MRS. BUMPUS. I won't recollect.

GORRINGE. I'm off in an instant, Susan, farewell. (*To the horse*). Woa!

MRS. BUMPUS. Will you go at once?

GORRINGE. Woa! keep still, you brute!

MRS. BUMPUS. What's that?

GORRINGE (*appearing at the window*). The horse, marm, I meant. I pledge you my word I meant the horse. I fly, marm, bearing with me the memory—Oh, Susan!

BUMPUS. Bearing with him the memory!

MRS. BUMPUS. We must keep him here at any cost. If he goes to London all will be discovered. (*To GORRINGE.*) Why should you go to London? Why should you not stay here? Our home is a humble one; but there is room for one more in the charity.

GORRINGE. If I had some right to remain, some tie that bound me.

BUMPUS. You might look after Mrs. Bumpus or Joe. I'd give up Joe to you entirely. You might devote yourself to him. Or Susan, you might marry Susan.

GORRINGE. Mr. Bumpus, my personal regard for you, is so great that I will make that sacrifice, I will marry your daughter.

BUMPUS. You will? that's right. Come here! no absurd objections. Join hands. Bless you my children! What a weight off my mind! Joe, I will let you off that thrashing I owe you. Forgive and forget, that's my motto. I'll forgive you my boy, and forget the blue velvet mantle and yellow fringe which I promised your mother, and here we are once more, the picture of happiness and domestic felicity.

GORRINGE. Let's make the picture a lasting one.

(Places camera. All arrange themselves for the picture.)

No. 10.—FINALE.

GORRINGE.

Be seated, pray, your heads incline,
 A little to the right,
 Your hands across— that's capital!
 A very pretty sight.
 The features slightly in repose,
 "En profile" is the thing,
 Keep up the head, keep down the nose,
 And don't stick out the chin.

ENSEMBLE.

So good an occasion we hardly could miss,
 To test the photographer's art;
 Domestic felicity, conjugal bliss,
 Let him photograph into the heart.

MR. and MRS. BUMPUS.

Kind friends, if our piece has your patience requited,
 Pray pardon our little offences.

GORRINGE and SUSAN.

And think of a family firmly united,
 Where charity always commences.



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