

*The Waters
of Babylon*

During these few moments Lizzie has played the introduction to "The Waters of Babylon", and we have risen as one man. We practised this anthem pretty thoroughly on Thursday night, and Miss Pringle and Susie tried the duet part over again on Saturday, with Mrs. Ted Smale playing the accompaniment on her melodeon. So that we embrace with equanimity this opportunity to produce it. Miss Pringle and I support the soprano part, and it is just a question whether our volume in the fortissimo passages, supplemented by Lizzie, who, as I have observed, sings at least with animation, is not too great for Henry's bass and Susie's 'alto, not of course overlooking Mr. Johnston's neutral interjection. I may be too critical, but it always has seemed to me that Henry's tone is raucous and that, therefore, the more we can submerge it the better. Naturally, in doing so, the tendency is to submerge also Susie's sweet, mellow tones, which is a pity. But in any case you will hear her at her best in the duet, for Miss Pringle has the goodness to modify her volume so that the blending of the two voices may be gratifying.

The duet, naturally enough, is the *pièce de resistance*. I have a secret ambition to sing it—some day—with Susie. For our voices blend perfectly, and the occasion, I feel sure, would supply a topic of conversation important enough to last a fortnight. Important enough, in any case, it is for our present consideration, but we must set it aside and finish the anthem, for Josiah Wilson and Ed. Bake are reaching down for the plates, ready to make the collection, a serious business, especially in these times, when money is tight and prices low. Therefore our voices come together again in the *tout ensemble*, and we finish with what I am bound to believe is a very effective climax.

And as we sit down, the two collectors rise. The plates pass down the side seats and up the middle. The smallest offering is a cent and the largest a quarter. Most of the well-to-do give five cents. Joe Martin fumbles for his usual amount, and, finding only a ten-cent piece, he places it on the plate and takes five cents off. The quarter is given by Hugh Holden, a prosperous bachelor farmer, who makes but little pretension in a religious way, but who lives, nevertheless, a godly life. In all the collection amounts to four dollars and thirty-one cents, and the two plates that contain it are placed very solemnly on the table beneath the pulpit.

*The Minister
in Distress*

The pulpit receives now its full measure of attention. As we fix our eyes upon it, we notice the minister in distress: