

# PLAY

*Refined*

*Humorous*

—FOR—

Young People's Societies, Ladies' Aids and Associations,  
Bible Classes, Choirs, Women's Institutes and  
other Fraternal Organizations.

## Aunt Susan's Visit

—BY—

CLARA ROTHWELL ANDERSON

255 MacKay Street, Ottawa.

—AUTHOR OF—

"A Ladies' Aid Business Meeting at Mohawk Crossroads,"  
"The Minister's Bride," "The Young Village Doctor,"  
"Aunt Mary's Family Album," "The Young Country School-  
ma'am," "Martha Made Over," "The Joggsville Convention,"  
"Aunt Susan's Visit," Etc.

STRICTLY NON-TRANSFERABLE

These highly uplifting and amusing plays are providing help-  
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October 1913  
W. Bruce Inger.

Jim Weston  
1955

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Please return Play sent on approval, not rolled, and in good condition within seven days.

No more than two Plays sent for selection. Please send 5-cent stamp to cover postage.

## CHARACTERS.

**Aunt Susan**—An elderly lady of kindly appearance, good hearted, but eccentric, possessed of means. Wears hoops, spectacles, cap, bonnet and two large shawls and rubbers, all of which she removes slowly and deliberately upon arrival.

\* \* \*

**John Thomas Tibbs (Nephew)**—Middle aged, pleasant, cheerful manner. His aunt amuses but does not annoy him; he treats her with great respect.

\* \* \*

**Mrs. John Thomas Tibbs**—Ambitious, fashionably dressed, dislikes Aunt at first, but endures her on account of expected money. Hair elaborately curled and piled high on head, with back comb; train on dress, long chains, bracelets, large long ear drops, rings, etc.

\* \* \*

**Rebecca Jane (Reba)**—Good looking, very slender, tight waisted dress, large bustle, hair much curled and dressed high, curls falling from one side.

\* \* \*

**Mary Alice**—Sweet, pretty girl, dressed in white, hair curled and caught loosely, banded with blue ribbon, red rose at side, blue sash.

\* \* \*

**The Honorable Samuel Smith**—Gentleman of polished manner; high stock collar, knickerbockers, buckled shoes, long coat.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Guy De Marchmont Coggs**—Dressed in extreme of fashion—eyeglass—cane—waxed moustache—an admirer of Rebecca—looks down upon Aunt Susan.

\* \* \*

**Mrs. Johnston Highborn**—A lady of wealth and influence, plainly but richly dressed in black and white.

\* \* \*

**Mrs. Linda Suggs**—Inclined to homely ways, specially in house-keeping—full print dress, big apron, carries market basket filled with cabbages.

\* \* \*

**Madam Pauline Wizer**—Reads widely, prides herself on her learning—patronizes Aunt Susan.

## DIRECTIONS.

Those taking part do not necessarily require to be suited in age to part but can dress to suit part.

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Those taking part in programme at Aunt Susan's farewell can be others than those taking part in play if desirable, and as many characters can be introduced here as necessary.

\* \* \*

The greatest care must be taken in choice of characters,—the success of entertainment depends upon the right persons being chosen to represent the different parts.

\* \* \*

Be careful to speak distinctly and much louder than in ordinary conversation.

\* \* \*

Do not practice or repeat speeches before those not taking part.

\* \* \*

Interest the public—talk it everywhere—sell tickets—**do not lower the status of your concert by giving tickets to children to sell.**

\* \* \*

All costumes worn should be as striking and old fashioned as possible.

\* \* \*

Most important character—**Aunt Susan, select with great care—must possess originality.**

\* \* \* \* \*

N.B.—Where acting is not specified, it must be filled in, in quiet natural manner by those taking part; length of programme and nature of same regulated by existing conditions in the different centres.

## Aunt Susan's Visit.

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### SCENE I.

Scene laid in large town in the olden days.

Aunt Susan Tibbs of Pepper's Corners, possessed of considerable means, kind hearted, old-fashioned and eccentric, decides to visit nephew in the city whom she raised but has not seen for years.

He married a wife from a neighbouring village to where he lived with Aunt Susan, who was of humble origin but had acquired extravagant tastes and was ambitious for social standing and desirous of marrying her daughters into Society.

Scene is laid in the Tibbs home, Golden City, table set for breakfast—big cruet stand in centre, pie and cake and cold meat on table. Father seated at table with paper and letters, enter daughters, Reba in wrapper and head cap, Alice in neat morning dress and hair freshly done.

(Enter Alice).

**Alice**—Good morning, father (pleasantly) did you sleep better last night, dear? I fancied you looked a little tired and worried father mine. (Tidies table and seats herself. They begin to eat).

**Father**—Don't worry about me, little "Alice for short," I'm all right—pass me a little pie, dear—business is a trifle close at times and bills have a way of presenting themselves on the most inconvenient occasions. I guess we will pull through, however.

(Enter Rebecca).

**Father**—Good morning, daughter.

**Reba**—Good morning (crossly).

**Alice**—You look so tired, Reba, let me give you some coffee.

**Rebecca**—No, thanks. I do wish mother would not let the table be loaded up like this. It makes me sick. I must tell her it is positively vulgar, none of the nicest people eat things like this for breakfast. Pie, the idea.

**Father**—Oh, don't interfere in this, daughter, it is the one thing that I have left in common with my boyhood days.

**Alice**—Reba is only talking, father dear, have some of this nice cake, do.

**Father**—Thanks, Alice, I will.

**Reba**—You will never learn to move in society.—(Alice laughs).  
(Father picks up letter and examines it, opens it, reads it, then laughs heartily).

**Girls**—Why, Father. What can it be.

**Father**—Well, if here isn't a letter from Aunt Susan of old Pepper's Corners. Well, well. That carries me back—listen. 'My dear nephew John Thomas' (laughs and slaps his knee). Dear old Aunt Susan, that reminds me of old times when I used to go barefoot for the cows and get a hand-out of a half pie from Aunt Susan by way of reward—rewards and punishments were both dealt out religiously by my dear old aunt.

**Alice**—That was the aunt with whom you lived when grandfather and grandmother died, wasn't it, father? She was so good to you, wasn't she?

**Father**—Yes, children. I owe all I have and am to Aunt Susan, bless her.—(Reads further).—Well, what do you think? Your Aunt Susan is coming to the city to visit us.

**Alice**—Oh, how lovely, we will be so good to her, how I long to see her.

**Reba**—Just wait till you see what mother says.  
(Enter mother).

**Mother**—I do envy you girls and your father, you must be so strong to be up so early after our late hours last night, my nerves are so upset, I really should have stayed in bed.

**Father**—Why did you not stay in bed, Elizabeth, and rest up?

**Mother**—Me stay in bed? I'd like to know who would look after the house if I did not drag myself around over the meals, sick or well, it makes no difference.

**Alice**—Go back to bed, mother dear, I can help Caroline.

**Mother**—Help. You mean hinder.

**Alice**—Drink your coffee, mother dear.

**Rebecca**—(Has been looking over fashion books).—Father, I must have a cheque. I need a new suit and evening dress; I must look decent and all the girls have far nicer things than I have. I must have \$75.00 at the least, right away too.

**Father**—(Looks worried). I would like to give it to you, daughter, but money is a little slow, could you wait a week or so?

**Rebecca**—Why, father, that would be altogether too late, I want my spring suit now or not at all.

**Mother**—You can't expect to have Reba go into Society and marry well, father, if you won't dress her well.

**Father**—It is not that I won't dress her well, Elizabeth, but I haven't the money and I won't borrow it, no, not if I could. (Reba cries).

**Alice**—Oh, to change the subject, what do you think, Aunt Susan of Pepper's Corners, Daddy's Aunt, is coming to visit us. (Mother looks amazed).

**Rebecca**—(Has been wiping her eyes, looks up).—Aunt Susan! That old-fashioned creature. Between her visit and no clothes, no one will as much as notice us. (Cries again).

**Mother**—John, you must write and tell her she can't come. Why, I would not for worlds. Aunt Susan Tibbs of all people. Why we will be a laughing stock to our neighbours. I won't—I won't—why—

**Father**—No, Elizabeth. Aunt Susan is going to come, and I will have her shown proper respect, too. She gave me a home when I had none. She comes tomorrow. I might perhaps remind you, although it seems small and contemptible, that Aunt Susan could buy us and all our fashionable friends up and not miss the money. I also am her sole relative.

**Mother**—Oh, well, of course that alters it, well we will just explain that she is rich, but eccentric; but, oh, I do wish she had stayed in Pepper's Corners.

**Alice**—Oh, mother, we will try and give dear Aunt Susan a good time.

**Rebecca**—Well, I hope you will keep her out of sight when Mr. Guy de Marchmont Coggs calls on me.

**Mother**—I'll see to that.  
(All rise to leave the room).



**Father**—She no doubt, would give him a mental shake up, daughter; Aunt Susan is noted for speaking her mind and the truth on all occasions. Well, good-bye all. Go and rest for a while mother. Coming to the gate, Alice?

**Alice**—All right, father.

**Mother**—Rest. Isn't that just like your father? Well, I must go and get fitted for that new gown, how dreadful to have your father's awful old aunt coming, just when we were expecting a visit from John's senator friend—the Honourable Mr. Smith, so distinguished and wealthy. I did want him to notice our Reba.

**Rebecca**—Why, he never will look at me with such ordinary relatives as Aunt Susan at our house. You will just have to keep her in the background. (Goes out annoyed).

**Mother**—Well, since we can't alter it we will just have to endure it. We need her money badly enough anyway. (Sits down exhausted). Oh, sometimes I do get tired of living the way we do—I wish we could go back to simple life again—John hates it, too; but what can you do? One has to keep up appearances.

(Curtain falls).

## ACT II.

## ARRIVAL OF AUNT SUSAN.

(Aunt Susan, dressed in old-fashioned manner, black bonnet with high feather at back, shawls, carpet bag, demijohn, umbrella, bunch of flowers.

Family seated in living room, Rebecca playing piano, Alice knitting, father reading by lamp, mother, dressed elaborately, walking around arranging hair and dress).

**Mother**—John, I do wish that awful old aunt of your would stay in Pepper's Corners until after Senator Smith's visit to us—who knows but Reba might—well things like that do happen.

(Confusion and talking outside, door opens. Enter Aunt Susan).

(All rise in surprise. Father goes up and welcomes her. Aunt Susan lays down bundles. Shake hands).

**Aunt Susan**—Well, well, if this isn't my own John Thomas, as I haven't seen since he was in knee pants as I made myself out of his uncle's cousin on his mother's side which was inclined to be skimped, but I hand sewed them all myself and they wore well, they did.

**John**—Aunt Susan, well, indeed, I am glad to welcome you, Aunt Susan. I well remember how good you were to me.

**Aunt Susan**—Doing nothing more than my duty by you, John Thomas, as I promised your father as is dead and gone—but where is your missis, my boy?

**John**—Elizabeth, come here, this is my Aunt Susan.

**Mother**—(Stiff but tries to be cordial). How do you do, Mrs. Tibbs, I have often heard my husband speak of you.

**Aunt Susan**—Well, now; so this is your missis, John Thomas, her as was Eliza Ann Stubbs and was raised down on the back line farm. Oh, I knew her folks well; her uncle, Jeremiah F. Stubbs, raised the best fat cattle as was ever growed down our way, oh, they was well known folks was the Stubbs. You do look pale and sickly, to be sure, dear, like as not you have been bakin' up, expectin' me, and wiped your face with your apron, as was all covered with flour. Here take my handkerchief and dust it off, Eliza Ann. (Looks in bag).

**Alice**—(Comes up and gives aunt a kiss and hug). Dear Aunt Susan, you are so welcome, you were so good to daddy when he was little. I am Alice; Mary Alice.

**Aunt Susan**—Well, you are a dear child to be sure, Mary Alice. Oh, you are just like your father's folks—I do think you favor me when I was your age.

**Alice**—Well, I hope I will be good and kind like you, too, Auntie.

**Aunt Susan**—Why, I don't do anything child.

**Father**—Rebecca, come and meet your aunt.

(Reba very haughty and dignified).

**Aunt Susan**—Why, this must be your oldest girl, John Thomas. I mind you wrote me about her, her given name, you said, was Rebecca Jane. Well, well, Rebecca Jane, you don't favor your father's side, you are a Stubbs—every inch of you, and as I was sayin' to Eliza Ann, your ma, the Stubbs was all right, plain lookin' and plain spoken perhaps, but honest folks as paid their debts and didn't pretend to be no better than they was.

**Rebecca**—I trust you have had a pleasant journey. You will require to rest in your room a few days.

**Aunt Susan**—There, child, I will say I am most beat out (Sits down). (Exit Rebecca). (Alice joins her). Well, well, such a moil as I have been in tryin' to get away, leavin' the neighbours and the hens and cows was hard on me too; partin's always is, specially when you have had the same cow by you these ten years, Summer and Winter alike.

**Alice**—Let me take you to your room, Auntie.

**Father**—Let me take your bag, Auntie.

**Aunt Susan**—Don't lift it, John Thomas, there is eggs in it, and a pumpkin pie for you, same as you used to like when you was a boy growin', there are cookies, too. (Takes them out).

**Mother**—(Calls Caroline). Come and take this stuff to the kitchen, Caroline.

**Father**—(Tastes cookies). That was great of you, Auntie, those have the real old taste. Reminds me of Thanksgiving.

**Aunt Susan**—Don't trouble your hired girl, Eliza Ann, I am used to do my own running, too much handling spoils pies after

they are fired, I'll just lay them on the pantry shelf myself. Here, Eliza Ann, (hands her demijohn) this is a little maple syrup I fetched up.

(Eliza Ann calls Caroline to take it.)

**Alice**—Let me help you, Auntie.

**Aunt Susan**—Let me get my mouse trap first, Mary Alice; I fetched it, too, for I said to old Mrs. Rudd, her as was bedrid, ten to one John Thomas and Eliza Ann would not be fore-handed enough to lay in one, and the mice would be scurrying round on top of the pies which is something I never could allow, being as I was raised very particler down East.

**Father**—Well, I hope nothing will happen those pies, Aunt Susan, but do let me help you, Auntie.

**Aunt Susan**—Well, if you will take hold of my feather bed, John Thomas and carry it up for me I'll be right glad; I left it rolled up out on the front porch, I could not sleep a wink without it; I have laid on it these forty years, come Thanksgiving, and all the geese raised on the place along with yourself, John Thomas, as the feathers was all took from.

**Father**—(Laughs heartily). All right, Auntie, I will get it.

**Mother**—(Comes in again). Perhaps you had better stay in bed a few days, Aunt Susan, and rest, we are having company and you would not care to meet strangers, it would be so awkward for you.

**Aunt Susan**—Me lay in bed, Eliza Ann, and never an ache or pain; why I never laid in my bed idling a minute since I was born. I'll be up at five and help around with the cooking and fussing for your company, you lay and rest, Eliza Ann, I'll make you some camomile tea, you do looked washed out and bleachy, to be sure.

Well, good-night, folks. Just take up my feather bed first, John Thomas.

(Each one, except Rebecca, goes out carrying something, and soon return).

**Rebecca**—(Wipes her eyes). I won't stand it! No, I won't! I am not like the Stubbs neither. (Goes and looks in glass, arranges herself).

(Enters mother).

**Rebecca**—Preposterous creature, I simply can't and won't endure her, mother.

**Mother**—Whatever are we going to do? Oh, dear, dear. (Rocks and wipes eyes in distress). And we must endure her for your father is very determined and would resent it if we did not treat her well, and besides she has lots of money and we can't afford to offend her.

(Enter father and Alice, father laughing).

**Father**—Well, mother, isn't Aunt Susan a tonic, I declare I feel ten years younger already.

**Alice**—She is such a dear and so natural, wasn't it funny about the feather bed, daddy? (both laugh).

**Mother**—Well, she may be all that, but I simply won't be called Eliza Ann by anyone, and how absurd to call you John Thomas and load us up with so many names.

**Father**—No more than your own, Elizabeth.

**Rebecca**—Whatever will our friends say and Mr. Guy de Marchmont Coggs is to call on me to-morrow and some other friends (cries) she is impossible, father and will spoil all my chances (cries) you simply will have to take her away a few days, until after Senator Smith has been here anyway.

**Father**—Well, I can't arrange it at present, daughter, and you can't subdue Aunt Susan. She knows no social standard except honesty and helpfulness. She is a tower of strength in trouble and pure gold.

**Alice**—Don't worry daddy, it will be alright.

**Father**—Well, let us put out lights, (winds clock) to-morrow is Sunday, I will have a good rest, I do wish Senator Smith would use his influence to secure that contract for me.

**Mother**—Well, he won't do much for you if you don't keep your aunt out of sight.

(Piano or orchestra, **old fashioned hymns** for five or ten minutes during interval).

(Sunday morning).

(Enter father, stretches out in easy chair with pillows, props up feet and opens green sporting paper. Rebecca plays popu-

lar music. Alice reads. Enter Aunt Susan dressed for church with big rubbers and umbrella).

**Aunt Susan**—Why, John Thomas, why aren't you ready for church, it's gone ten o'clock and you setting there as if you was going to set all morning, and no notion of going to church as you was raised to every Sunday rain or shine back home, and you Rebecca Jane, what's that you are playing? Those tunes don't sound like any hymns or anthems as ever I heard played in Pepper's Corners on a Sunday.

**Reba**—All music is sacred.

**Father**—Well, really, Aunt Susan, I had not thought of going to church this morning, it looks a little cloudy.

**Aunt Susan**—Not going to church, John Thomas Tibbs, because it was drizzling, you as walked five miles to church, Summer and Winter, rain or shine, the same doing you no harm neither. What would the Pilgrim Fathers say to see you settin' there so careless like? Are you ailin'? Have you the rheumatiz, or what are you layin' up for readin' papers as it is a shame to see the color of on a Sabbath day?

**Father**—Well, Aunt, to be strictly truthful, I can't say I have the excuse of the slightest twinge of rheumatism, I am perfectly well, it is just habit.

**Aunt Susan**—Then rise up, and more shame to you setting such an example to your family, as all ought to be sitting together in church, their father and mother seeing to it. Where is Eliza Ann?

**Rebecca**—My mother's nerves have had a great shock, she cannot be disturbed this morning, she always requires to remain in bed on Sunday until noon.

**Aunt Susan**—And why Sundays more than other days, poor thing, like as not she is sickly though. I'll mix her up something tomorrow as will set her up, and take away her jaundice, it is that as makes her face so yellow and gives her that beat-out feeling; you need some too, Rebecca Jane, being as you are so like your ma and the Stubbs was all truobeld with jaundice.

**Rebecca**—Thank you. I don't need it. I am perfectly well (goes out).

**Father**—All right, Aunt Susan, I will get my coat and umbrella, if I must I must, and I certainly have not been doing my duty. I can't strike the pace of those old Pilgrim Fathers, but I'll make a try.

**Aunt Susan**—Well, don't be long; if there is anything I can't stand it is walking into meeting late, disturbing people and upsetting the minister, it is bad manners and wicked to my mind. We have no right showing such disrespect. I'll step on and you can ketch up. Don't wait to fuss up, Mary Alice. Come on John Thomas, I guess if the minister is not afraid of the rain it won't hurt you being as you was raised to it.

(Exit).

## ACT III.

## VISITORS.

(Rebecca in parlor dressed elaborately, entertaining Mr. Coggs).

(Enter Aunt Susan).

**Aunt Susan**—Are you there Rebecca Jane? I thought I would just come in the parlor and set a while. Oh, you have a young man visiting you, I see. (Goes up and shakes hands). I did not know as you was keeping company with anyone, Rebecca Jane. Well, well, and what might your name be, my boy?

**Mr. Coggs**—My name, madam, is Mr. Guy de Marchmont Coggs, son of Guy Bigsley Coggs and grandson of the late Jonathan Coggs whose grandfather was cousin to the late Squire Coggs of Coggsville.

**Aunt Susan**—Well, now, you don't say, who'd of thought; seems like the race is kind of dwindling out, Guy, you do look puny and weakish to be sure, if I was your ma I would set new milk before you three times a day regular, there is nothing like cow's milk for growing boys and calves, as no one can deny.

**Guy**—But I cawn't drink milk.

**Rebecca**—(Aside) Oh, Aunt, do stop.

**Aunt Susan**—Don't worry and take on about him, child, three months of milk regular will make a man of him.

**Mr. Coggs**—You speak in an unknown language, madam, I have always moved in circles where culture and refinement were paramount.

**Aunt Susan**—Well, that may be, Guy, but you'll not move in circles or any other way soon being so pasty and stunted looking, if you don't tell your ma to look after you, growin' boys is all the same.

**Rebecca**—Mr. Guy de Marchmont Coggs, won't you come out on the verandah a while?

**Mr. Coggs**—I would indeed welcome the diversion and would consider it a happy release.

**Aunt Susan**—Be careful now, Rebecca Jane, and don't let Guy get his feet damp, he might get bedfast with rheumatiz—and mind the milk.



Guy—But I cawn't drink milk, madam.—(Enter mother).

Mother—Aunt Susan, perhaps you would like to go for a drive this evening, we are having some company, and I am sure it would not be pleasing for you to meet so many strangers.

Aunt Susan—No, thanks, Eliza Jane, I'll just set here and sew up these carpet rags, I like to meet John Thomas' friends.

(Enter Father).

Father—Well, Aunt Susan, you are looking fine. Just as young as when I was a little chap and punishments were quick and effective.

Aunt Susan—It was all for your own good, John Thomas, as I always explained careful to you before laying a hand on you.

Father—You did your duty by me, never fear, Auntie.—(laughs).  
--By the way mother, Senator Smith may call this evening.

Mother—(Excited). Oh, is it possible? Where is Reba? I am so anxious to have her meet him—who knows—poor Alice is a dear, but so plain no one ever would look at her. I must tell Reba to wear her pink dress.

Aunt Susan—Senator Samuel Smith, did you say? Well, now, I do wonder if that is little Sammy Smith growed up, him as used to spend the summers with his grandfather, Farmer Mudpole, out of Pepper's Corners.

Mother—Impossible, Aunt Susan, I do hope you won't suggest such a horrible possibility to Senator Smith. Why he is one of the most well-bred and cultured men in the whole State.

Aunt Susan—Sammy was a promising boy, as I mind him, he stayed lots of times at our place; oh he was a hand for pumpkin pie, he was, like as not it is him alright.  
(Father laughs, mother wrings her hands).

Mother—Oh, what shall we ever do—how impossible.

Father—Well, it is not an unusual name, Auntie.—(Reads paper).

Mother—Aunt Susan, Mrs. Johnston Highborn will call today. She is very wealthy and aristocratic, and we are very careful how we address her: we hope to be invited to her house some time. She is quite the most prominent person in town.

Aunt Susan—Well now—I'd be glad to know her.

(Enter girls. Rebecca goes to glass and arranges hair, Alice sits down by Aunt and rolls carpet rags).

**Mother**—Now, Reba, look your nicest for Senator Smith is calling today. Alice you can sit over there and talk to Aunt Susan. (Do keep her quiet).

**Reba**—Mother, I do hate this dress and my hair looks a fright.

**Aunt Susan**—You've good straight hair, Rebecca. The Stubbs all was alike.

(Maid brings in Mrs. Highborn).

**Mother**—You are most welcome, Mrs. Highborn, we consider it an honor to have you under our humble roof. (Father and girls give welcome).

**Aunt Susan**—I am glad to make your acquaintance, ma'am: Did you say Mistress Highborn, Eliza Jane? Well, I am John Thomas' Aunt Susan from Pepper's Corners, come on a visit; but do set down (dusts a chair with her apron) like as not there is dust settlin' round on the chairs.

**Mrs. Highborn**—You are very kind, and I am sure it is a pleasure for your nephew to have you. It is very refreshing, Mr. Tibbs, to meet a perfectly natural person in these days, is it not? (Aunt Susan and Alice looking for glasses).

**Father**—Aunt Susan is pure gold, Mrs. Highborn.

**Mother**—Aunt Susan has never had an opportunity to acquire polish or culture which is a cause of great mortification to us, we trust you can appreciate our position.

**Mrs. Highborn**—There is never any occasion to apologize for goodness personified. She has such a good face. By the way I see music on the piano; Miss Reba, I would like so much to hear you play, won't you?

**Reba**—I would be glad to oblige you, Mrs. Highborn, my professor wants me to study abroad, he says geniuses are rare, and when he discovers one who is outstandingly brilliant they should have a chance.

**Mrs. Highborn**—That is very interesting, well do play for me.

**Father**—Play something you can handle, Rebecca.

**Aunt Susan**—Do play us a tune, Rebecca Jane, "Marching Through Georgia," with variations.

**Reba**—Aunt Susan, I prefer to make my own selections, I play classic music entirely.

(Plays very poorly, but showily. Mrs. Highborn thanks her and she goes out).

**Aunt Susan**—(Goes and sits near Mrs. H.)—I forgot to ask after all your care, ma'am—and is your man well?

**Mother**—Oh, do hush, Aunt Susan.

**Aunt Susan**—What is that you said, Eliza Ann?

**Mrs. Highborn**—My husband is dead some years, Mrs. Tibbs, and my only boy is in very poor health.

**Aunt Susan**—(Oh, you poor child, I am heart sorry for you, I am, in your loneliness (goes up and takes her hand), poor old Aunt Susan knows what trouble is, it is a weary world at times, dear, but the road is shortening every day, and there is a welcome waiting, never fear.

**Mrs. Highborn**—(Wipes eyes). Thank you, oh thank you so much, you comfort me so (takes her hand) won't you come and visit me. I need you so much.

**Aunt Susan**—To be sure I will child, that is if John Thomas and Eliza Ann can spare me.

(They agree).

**Mrs. Highborn**—Now, I really must go, I have stayed so long. (Farewells).—I'll look for you.

(Enter Reba).

**Reba**—Did you ever hear of anything so absurd, we could never dream of letting her go and disgrace us.

**Father**—Rebecca, I will not allow you to speak disrespectfully of your aunt.

**Reba**—Well, father, it is ridiculous, and I just saw old Mrs. Tuggs, coming up the walk who does not know anything, and has not a soul above pots and pans.

**Mother**—Well, perhaps she and Aunt Susan will go into the dining room and talk over favorite recipes, or else we will go out. (Enter Mrs. Tuggs—greetings, others go out and in).

**Aunt Susan**—Well, well, now I am that glad to make your acquaintance, there used to be Tuggses lived down our way, there was James Thomas Tuggs, his first woman was Mandy Pegley as only lived a matter of a year. But do set down, Mrs. Tuggs, you seem beat out. I heard James Thomas passed away shortly after his third missis came on the place. (Mrs. Tuggs cries in her handkerchief).

**Mrs. Tuggs**—Oh, don't please; I can't stand it (sobs).

**Aunt Susan**—You wouldn't be his relict surely now, would you? Well, well, things do happen curious; but cheer up, there is worse things, maybe, as might happen.

**Mrs. Tuggs**—I am that glad to be knowin' of you, Mrs. Tibbs, I have often heard of you and always well spoken of, they do say you are the best hand at soft soap and rag-dyeing in the whole country.

**Aunt Susan**—Well, I am proud to say I lay my hand to anything comes my way.

**Mrs. Tuggs**—Which you do and as I always say, work is work and has to be done and those whose backs is willing get the burden.

**Aunt Susan**—Oh, well, Mrs. Tuggs, when our back is bearing the burden the other person is not loaded up with it.

**Mrs. Tuggs**—I guess you are right, but I guess I must go now, I have a risin' of bread on the back of the stove under the ironing blanket; so good-bye, come and see me before you go.

(Good-byes. Exit Aunt Susan).

(Enter mother and father).

(Enter Miss Wizer. Greetings).

**Miss Wizer**—I called to get your advice, Mr. Tibbs, regarding a very important subject.

**Father**—Indeed, well I shall be pleased to help in any way I can.

**Miss Wizer**—As you know, I am very widely read. I have made a study of international law, and given much time to scientific research. I spent one whole winter in Boston as well.

**Mother**—How delightful.

**Reba**—It really is a pleasure to entertain such people.

**Miss Wizer**—I appreciate your remarks, but hesitate to introduce my subject which is of a delicate nature.

**Father**—Yes.

**Miss Wizer**—You see I can hardly speak of it.—(Bashful)—You know Mr. Jones, I believe.

**Father**—I do, a good fellow.

**Miss Wizer**—Well,—well, he has introduced the subject of matrimony. Now, he is a good man, but unfortunately not interested in higher education, now what I want to know is—could we find a common interest?

**Father**—By all means, Miss Wizer. Why, Tom Jones is as fine a man as there is in town. He may not have delved into international law, but the Ten Commandments are his law and he is as straight as a string.

**Reba**—Father, I am surprised at you, such provincialism.

**Mother**—He could always keep a good roof over your head, Miss Wizer. They say he has a good bank account.

**Miss Wizer**—Well, I thank you for your advice, it is possible I might interest him in subjects of a scientific nature later on.

**Father**—(Laughs)—I would not start out on that working basis, Miss Wizer. I think he would prefer your company to that of the old philosophers.

(Rises to go).

**Miss Wizer**—(Laughs)—Well, I will think seriously of what you say, Mr. Tibbs, and goodbye for now.

(Enter Senator Smith, father welcomes him).

**Father**—Let me introduce Senator Samuel Smith, my wife.

**Mother**—It is a great honor to meet you Senator Smith.

**Senator**—Not at all, Mrs. Tibbs, the honor and pleasure are all mine.

**Mother**—This is our eldest daughter, Reba, Senator Smith.

(Rebecca does her best to be entertaining, shows him a seat beside her).

**Father**—Living as you do in the larger centres, Senator, I suppose you find our village rather slow.

**Mother**—Oh, father, that is hardly fair, some of our young people are as educated and cultured as you will find anywhere.

**Senator**—I can readily believe that (bows to the ladies).

**Rebecca**—But it must be lovely to be able to travel and meet all the nice people, it is awful to have to associate with low-born people. Now, Alice does not seem to mind, but I have finer sensibilities, and they do grate on me so.

(Enter Aunt Susan and Alice both carrying bright rags for carpet).

**Aunt Susan**—Just set them over here, Mary Alice, and fetch me my glasses, John Thomas, bring me the shears from the back shed under the wash tub.

**Senator Smith**—(Looks steadily at her. Goes up slowly to Aunt Susan).—Can it be possible or do my eyes deceive me? Can this be Aunt Susan of Pepper's Corners?

**Aunt Susan**—Well, well, if that don't beat all. Who'd have thought Sammy Smith as let my chickens out of the hen coop, and ate all my raised jelly cake as I was savin' for company.

**Mother**—This is Senator Smith, Aunt Susan.

(They shake hands and she pats him on back).

**Aunt Susan**—Come here, Mary Alice, and be introduced to little Sammy Smith as was.

**Alice**—It is lovely to meet an old friend of dear Aunt Susan's.

**Senator**—Thank you, I can understand that, but I trust that sometime I shall be welcomed for my own intrinsic value—if I possess any.

**Alice**—Indeed, you are most welcome, Senator Smith.

**Mother**—Well this is a surprise, but Alice, you go and show Aunt some pictures and Reba, you might play some for Senator Smith. Our Reba is very clever in music.

**Senator**—I should be delighted to hear her, I am sure if she will favor us.

**Aunt Susan**—To be sure she will, Rebecca Jane is a good growin' girl, as I was telling Eliza Ann (her ma) she is like her folks side, the Stubbs was all jaundiced, Sammy, you will mind

them, they was scattered all round Pepper's Corners; but they was honest folks, jaundice or no jaundice as can be cured if you take saffron tea, Rebecca Jane.

**Mother**—Aunt Susan!

**Senator**—I remember many pleasant people, indeed, around Pepper's Corners.

**Aunt Susan**—Now, Sammy, you must have a cup of tea. Mary Alice, fetch that roomy tea-cup as I sent your pa last Xmas. I will get some of the cookies and seed cake as your pa and Sammy were so fond of when they was growin'.

**Father**—I taste them yet.

**Senator**—Blessings on you, Aunt Susan.

**Mother**—Don't trouble, please, Aunt Susan, the maid will bring in tea.

**Aunt Susan**—I'll just make sure, Eliza Ann. You set there with Sammy and don't take no worry, I will be back in a minute and Mary Alice will help.

**Senator**—Now, Miss Reba, won't you play for us, I am very fond of music, indeed.

**Rebecca**—Certainly, I have some new classical selections which I am sure you can appreciate, the people around here can't understand that kind of music. (all talk until she starts, plays until Aunt Susan returns with large black tray, large brown tea-pot, large tea-cups, and saucers—one huge one—sugar bowl and big white pitcher, Alice brings in large cookies and a big round sponge cake).

**Mother**—(Aside to Rebecca)—Oh, what shall we ever do, we are disgraced, he will think us so ordinary.

**Aunt Susan**—Be careful, Mary Alice, just set them here and I will pour Sammy a cup of tea as will set him up, he should not look as old and wore out as he does, should you Sammy? poor boy.

(Senator laughs).

**Father**—Can I help you, Aunt Susan?

**Aunt Susan**—Keep out of my way, John Thomas, you was always under my feet when you was growin', not that I minded.

**Mother**—Alice, why did you not bring the silver teapot and the Haviland china?

**Alice**—Mother, dear, Aunt Susan did want to give Senator Smith tea out of this teapot, she thought it looked so much more hospitable.

**Aunt Susan**—(Pours out tea)—Here Mary Alice give this to Sammy, and pass him the sugar, he was like to clean out the bowl at a sitting when I knowed him. Here is your pa's too. Don't spill it on your best coat, John Thomas, you was always one for spilling as I mind well. Mind your white shirt bosom, Sammy.

**Father**—I'll do my best, auntie, but will make no promises.

**Aunt Susan**—Here, Rebecca Jane, pass Sammy some of this seed cake, he was that fond of seed cake was Sammy.

**Mother**—(aside)—Please, Senator Smith, do not judge us all by Aunt Susan, she has never had an opportunity to move in society.

**Rebecca**—No, I should think not.

**Aunt Susan**—I must not forget to ask after your missis, Sammy, and how is all your care?

**Mother**—Hush, Aunt Susan, he is not married.

**Aunt Susan**—Did you say his woman was dead, Eliza Ann? Is he a widow man?

**Mother**—Hush, hush, No.

**Senator**—Well, Aunt Susan, I am sorry to disappoint you, but I have no domestic ties. Until to-day I have had no inclination to form any (looks at Alice). I seem to have undergone a transformation in the last hour—(looks at Alice).

**Aunt Susan**—More is the shame for you, Sammy, you should have been making some good woman happy these ten years back.

**Senator**—Maybe I should not have succeeded in making her happy, Aunt Susan.

(Father and all fill in conversation and laughing between remarks, while cookies are passed).

**Mother**—I am sure you would be in a position to make any woman happy, Senator.



**Reba**—Yes, indeed. I am sure—that is—

**Sammy**—Well, I would try, anyway—it would be my one interest in life—my most sacred obligation.

**Aunt Susan**—There is a fine woman in the village, Sammy, as would suit you as if you was made for one another, as who knows but what you was, just about your own age, Sammy, a nice settled down girl as has four boxes of stuff laid away and a cow of her own as gives the best milk in our parts.

(Father laughs).

**Reba**—How preposterous!

**Senator**—Well, Aunt Susan, I shall consider the proposition very seriously, the cow certainly appeals to me very strongly.

Well, I really must go; but I shall come again very soon if I may.

**Mother**—We shall be delighted to see you any time, Senator.

**Reba**—Yes, indeed, I shall play for you and show you our garden by moonlight, next time.

**Senator**—Thank you, thank you. (Shakes hands with Alice last).  
May I call and see you, Miss Alice?

**Alice**—Why, certainly, Senator. Auntie will be so glad to have you come, she is a little lonely at times.

**Aunt Susan**—Lay what I told you to mind, Sammy, and I'll say a good word for you.

**Senator**—I will, Auntie, and I may soon remind you of your promise to say a good word for me. (Looks at Alice).

(Good night).

(Curtain falls).

## ACT IV.

## FAREWELL TO AUNT SUSAN.

(Father in easy chair with feet propped up, has been ill. Family coming and going fixing chairs, etc., for party).

**Father**—Well, Aunt Susan has been the greatest social success that has ever struck Golden City. Imagine the friends proposing this farewell party for her. There has been a shaking up of the dry bones here all right.

**Mother**—(Dressed becomingly and quietly, goes up and fixes cushions, etc.). Well, father, I have reason for one to thank the day Aunt Susan came to visit us, if it had not been for her nursing and care we would not have had you with us, dear, and all through your sickness she was such a comfort, and tower of strength.

**Father**—She was always that, mother, and she seems to have given me back my wife, and my simple happy home life again.

**Mother**—Well, John, your wife of the dear old days is here to stay; I am through with pretence and social ambition, happiness does not lie that way, I find, thanks to dear Aunt Susan, and her unselfish helpfulness when you were at death's door.

**Rebecca**—(Prettily dressed, but no extremes). And who would have dreamed Aunt Susan would be the lion—time was when I would have said lioness and meant it literally—but not now. Just think of her giving me all that money to pay for the most expensive musical education. I don't care if she does call me Rebecca Jane now, that is not very much. Although I never heard of any outstanding musicians named Rebecca Jane.

**Father**—Oh, well, Italianize it; call yourself Rebeccio Janio—that has the proper ring to it. Where is your aunt, by the way? (Enter Alice).

**Alice**—Daddy, before the people come Auntie wants you to bring down her feather bed and bundles so that they will be all ready for the morning.

**Aunt Susan**—(Calls) John Thomas, come here and heft the feather bed, when I am going on a journey I like to have everything set out ready (they come in with the feather bed). Careful now, John Thomas, just lay it down.

(The parlor door opens and all come in. Aunt Susan much surprised. As many as desired can be present. Aunt Susan surrounded by luggage).

(Much confusion and laughing).

**Senator Smith**—(Raps for silence). Mr. Tibbs, we have taken the liberty of invading your house to-night to pay farewell to one whose influence for good has in some miraculous manner affected the whole town. I mean Aunt Susan of Pepper's Corners (clapping). Friend of my youth and I am proud to say dear friend of my manhood (cheers).

**Aunt Susan**—What is that you are saying, Sammy? You was always one for talking you was, being how they came to send you to the Parliament, I am thinking. John Thomas, you and Sammy move that feather bed, working is better than talking any day (all laugh).

**Senator**—Just a minute, Aunt Susan, I am requested on behalf of those here this evening to present you with a slight token of their appreciation of yourself and of your visit to our city, our hope is that it may tick off many happy years.

**Mrs. Weakly**—(Makes presentation of watch and chain, puts it on neck. Aunt Susan pleased but self possessed). It is such a pleasure, dear Mrs. Tibbs for one to do this—I never will forget how good you were when my Jimmy had the convulsions.

**Aunt Susan**—Why, I only put him in hot water, child, as most any one would have did; but (louder) you folks should not have laid out so much money for me, I always try to help folks in trouble, not expecting to be noticed in particular.

**Father**—That is Aunt Susan, helpfulness and unselfishness combined.

**Senator**—Now, Aunt Susan, after your friends shake hands with you, we will have a little programme.

**Alice**—(Comes and kisses her) Dear Aunt Susan I am so glad.

**Senator**—With your consent, Mr. Tibbs, I think this is as good a place as any to announce to those present my engagement to your daughter Alice. (Alice runs out. Much cheering).

**Aunt Susan**—I saw you was keeping company with her, Sammy, (takes both their hands) be good to her, Sammy, women ain't like men folks, it is the little things and attentions as

counts; folks as is married don't lose their relish for a bit of candy at times, nor for having their looks spoke of neither, even if they have grown hefty, and their eyes a bit dimmed setting up darning your socks, nights, Sammy, remember that, my boy.

**Senator**—I will, Aunt Susan, and thank you from my heart.

**Aunt Susan**—See you do, Sammy, I have heard men folks say that before now, but take my advice and keep on the way you have set out, not cooling off like a flat-iron in six months, when you have took her from her pa and ma, and her home.

**Senator**—I did not think you had such a poor opinion of me, Aunt Susan.

**Aunt Susan**—No more have I, Sammy, there is no man that I would rather give my Mary Alice to, but men folks is men folks, and have to be led and told things at times, which is in the start, to my mind. (Go and find her, Sammy).

**Mrs. Jenkins**—We are all very sorry you are going, Aunt Susan, your influence for good has been wonderful, why ever so many more are attending church. I am going myself just as soon as my nerves improve.

**Aunt Susan**—Which never will be, child, if you set at home on the Sabbath day, take my advice and go where you can find real rest and healing.

**Mrs. Jenkins**—I promise you that I will, and my husband will go if I do.

**Aunt Susan**—Go, then, and take your man, which is your duty not to pull him down.

**Guy de Marchmont**—(Dressed plainly). I came to wish you a safe journey home, Mrs. Tibbs.

**Aunt Susan**—Which was kindly of you, my boy, you do look like-lier to be sure, the milk set you up and made a man of you, Guy.

**Guy**—I am afraid it will take more than that to make the kind of man that can win your niece, Miss Rebecca—say a good word for me, will you, Aunt Susan?

(Pats him on the back).

**Aunt Susan**—That I will, Guy, have patience, Rebecca Jane will have you yet, all the Stubbs, her ma's folks was for marrying, not being particular who they took, but making good wives, every one of them.

**Guy**—Thank you for your kind encouragement, I shall try to make myself worthy of her.

(Miss Redlip—Low necked and short dress).

**Aunt Susan**—Why, Melissa, your basque is too short and skimped in the neck and hem, the sewing girl should have cut it more full like, and laid out to have enough for sleeves and a collar.

**Miss Redlip**—But this is the style, you know, high necks and long skirts are so old-fashioned and dowdy.

**Aunt Susan**—Lay this shawl over your shoulders, child, and set by the fire in the kitchen, you will be having ammonia and swelled joints if you are not careful.

**Miss Redlip**—Oh, thank you, but really I do not need it.

**Mrs. Sadden**—I came to-night to thank you for what you did for my boy.

**Aunt Susan**—Why, I don't know as I did anything but just hearten him up a bit.

**Mrs. Sadden**—Only for you he would have gone to destruction, when the whole town turned him down you shook his hand and told him you believed in him.

**Aunt Susan**—Why, Joseph wasn't a bad boy, a bit thoughtless and wilful perhaps, but never fear, Maria, you will live to be proud of him yet.

**Mrs. Sadden**—(Kisses Aunt Susan).—You blessed comfort.

**Aunt Susan**—Well, what am I thinking of, standing here like as if folks was all satisfied eating and drinking, and me not laying a hand to anything.

**Father**—Time enough, Aunt Susan, we will have a programme of pieces you like, then mother will see that the inner man is satisfied.

**Aunt Susan**—Well, maybe so, John Thomas, but I never seed no man satisfied yet. (Father laughs).

(All arrange themselves for programme which father announces; old songs and recitations.)

**Father**—Are there any pieces you would like Aunt Susan?

**Aunt Susan**—It's many a day since I've heard "Lily Dale," and maybe you could all sing "The Old Cabin Home," or anything else you like.

(Close with "Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot.")