

**MISS PRISCILLA
HUNTER, AND MY
DAUGHTER SUSAN**

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Miss Priscilla Hunter, and My daughter Susan by Pansy

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PANSY

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She belonged to our church.— *Page 7. Frontispiece.*

MISS PRISCILLA HUNTER,
AND
MY DAUGHTER SUSAN.

BY

PANSY.

AUTHOR OF "ESTER RIED," "CUNNING WORKMEN,"
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MISS PRISCILLA HUNTER.

CHAPTER I.

SHE DISCUSSES THE SITUATION.

HE belonged to our church. That is really the first sentence to use by way of introduction, for if there was any one thing for which she was enlisted, heart and soul and body, it was our church. How did she look? Dear

me! She never stopped to consider and I am not sure that any one else ever did but a great many people knew how she acted, which is certainly much more to the point. The time of which I am about to tell you was one of special interest to our church, in fact affairs reached a crisis, and to come to the point at once, I may as well tell you that we were in debt. Not largely, the sum was not above five thousand dollars, all told. Neither was ours a struggling church, situated on the frontier, or set back in one of the by-ways of the world. On the contrary, it had its visible presence in a well-to-do eastern centre, and was the largest and most flourishing of

the many denominations represented in our town. We had a fair proportion of the monied members of society; several bankers, half a dozen merchants, more than that number of grocers; and a long list belonging to that large and well-to-do class of people, known in aristocratic circles as the middle classes — whatever that term may mean. Nobody knew why we allowed that church debt to accumulate and swallow its hundreds in interest year by year. Can anybody tell why ninety-nine churches out of a hundred allow themselves to do that same thing?

There were those in our congregation who shrewdly suspected that it was for

convenience. It certainly was the most common thing in the world for certain parties when appealed to for contributions in aid of any object under the sun, whether foreign or home missions, church erection, church extension, ministerial relief, or food and clothing for the grass-hopper regions of the west, to fall back solemnly and hopelessly into the arms of that church debt, and declare that people should be just, before they are generous, and that honesty should come before benevolence, and all those solemn and truthful and interesting sentences which people are apt to quote when they don't want to give you any money. What is to be done with people, who