

HEPPLESTALL'S

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Hepplehall's by Harold Brighthouse

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HAROLD BRIGHOUSE

HEPPLESTALL'S

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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The Silver Lining
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Graft
The Odd Man Out

One Act Plays

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The Price of Coal
Maid of France
The Doorway
Spring in Bloomsbury
The Oak Settle

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By
HAROLD BRIGHOUSE



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FOREWORD

RUMMAGING at a bargain-counter, I came across an object which puzzled me, and, turning to the shopman, I asked him what it was. He took it up contemptuously. "That," he said. "Dear me, I thought I'd put it in the dust-bin. It's fit for nothing but destruction." "And you call it?" I persisted. "I call it by its name," he said. "It's an outworn passion, and a pretty frayed one too. Look at that!"

I watched him pull gently at the passion and it came apart like mildewed fabric. "There's no interest in that," he said. "That never led to a murder or a divorce. a feeble fellow like that. If it ever got as far as the First Offenders' Court, I shall be surprised."

"Yet it looks old," I said. "In its youth, perhaps—"

He examined it more closely. "I don't think it's a love passion at all," he said, shaking his head. "My suppliers are getting very careless."

"You wouldn't care to give me their address?" I coaxed.

He threw the passion down angrily. "This is a shop," he said. "I'm here to sell, not to make presents of my trade secrets."

I apologized. "Of course," I said, "I will always deal through you. And as to this passion, what is the price of that?"

"I'm an honest man and to tell you the truth I'd rather put that in the dust-bin than sell it. It goes against