

PARODIES FOR HOUSEKEEPERS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649326563

Parodies for Housekeepers by Constance Johnson & Burges Johnson

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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CONSTANCE JOHNSON & BURGESS JOHNSON

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Parodies for Housekeepers

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Constance and Burges Johnson *or*

with illustrations by

Peter Newell

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The A. V. Haight Company
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New York

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THE STEAM

The steam comes back to its vacant dwelling—
The same old steam we have known of yore!
We can smell the heat through the open door,
And our eyes grow moist at the pressure's swelling;
With sounds that at best can be called repelling—
A knock, a squeak, and a muffled roar—
The steam comes back to its vacant dwelling,
The same old steam of the flat before.
Ah, who shall blame us for madly yelling
The words forbidden we used of yore?
E'en as we look at the steam-pipes welling,
The old "drip drip" can be heard once more.
The steam comes back to its vacant dwelling.

WINTER

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Mike the milkman blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And frozen postmen leave the mail,
When clothes cost much and food is high,
This Winter marvel meets my eye:
To wit,
The iceman without shame
Makes daily rounds, his price the same.



THE CHAMBERED HAUGHTY-CUSS

Seek a more stately mansion, O my Soul
Suited to our bank-roll.
Leave our low-vaulted flat;
Find some apartment nobler than that,
Nearer the place Society is at,
Till we achieve success
In some duplex abode among the Haute Noblesse.



MOVING THE PIANO

The grand piano was set
On the tenth apartment's casement,
A queer position, and yet
The grand piano was set
As high as the thing could get,
Where it was hauled from the basement.
The grand piano was set—
And stuck—in the tenth-floor casement.

L'ENVOI

When we've got our last picture—unpacked it,
And chosen the place it's to bide;
When the carpet is laid, and we've tacked it,
And the calcimine patches have dried.
We shall rest, and faith, we shall need it,—
Sit down for a bite and a chat;
Till we come to another May Day,
And hunt for another flat.





THE DESTRUCTION OF CHINA

The Ethiopian came down as a cook to our fold,
And her garments were gleaming with purple and gold,
And her letters of recommendation were fine
As a tenor's press notice, at so much per line.

Arranged on our shelves all resplendent and clean
The plates in our pantry at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
Those plates a week later were shattered and strewn.

As an Angel of Death all the plates she amassed,
And she bit off the rim of each cup that she passed;
Each favorite platter she lifted, to dust;
Her hands but once heaved and the platter was bust.