

**PLAYS FOR  
PRIVATE ACTING**

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Plays for Private Acting by Bellevue Dramatic Club of Newport

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**BELLEVUE DRAMATIC CLUB OF NEWPORT**

**PLAYS FOR  
PRIVATE ACTING**



Clarke

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PLAYS  
FOR  
PRIVATE ACTING

*TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN*

BY MEMBERS OF THE

BELLEVUE DRAMATIC CLUB

OF

NEWPORT

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## NOTE.

WITH one exception, the plays in this volume have been selected from the three volumes of *Théâtre de Campagne* and the two volumes of *Saynètes et Monologues* which have lately been published in Paris.

The exception is "He and She," which is from the Italian. The translator's absence in Europe prevents rectifying his omission of the author's name.

In order to adapt these plays for American acting, the translators have taken many liberties with the text—too many to make specific mention practicable.

NEWPORT, July, 1878.

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# THE REGISTERED LETTER.

BY GUSTAVE DROZ.

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## CHARACTERS.

HORTENSE, *a Young Widow.*

FRANCINE, *a Lady's Maid.*

FERGUSON, *an American.*

HECTOR COVILLE, *a Deputy.*

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## SCENE I.

HORTENSE—HECTOR [*sleeping*].

Hortense [*reading*].

Down the stream my love and I  
Glide in peace together;  
Nature laughs as we pass by  
In the summer weather.  
I am brave and young and strong,  
She is fair and——

[*looking at Hector.*] Why, he's asleep; [*going towards the audience.*] Let me present to you my future husband, Mr. Hector Coville, deputy at the

tribunal of Orleans...he has obtained leave of absence to come here and make love to me. Look at him!...he doesn't care much for poetry.

**Hector** [*still asleep*]. Charming! Delightful!

**Hortense**. He thinks I am still reading... While he sleeps, let us talk of his faults. He has...how shall I say it?—he has an infirmity...Oh, not serious! but annoying!...he mixes an unending supply of adverbs into all he says. Yesterday he introduced an awful long one—in-com-men-sur-a-bly! I came near jumping out of the window!

**Hector** [*still asleep*]. Delicious!...Delicious!

**Hortense**. Yes [*turning to him*], "She is fair." [*To the audience.*] But he has an excellent heart—is very amiable and devoted to me—but always sleepy...everything considered, I think we will be married in the spring, if the weather is good [*looking at him*]. I had better wake him. [*She sits down and knocks loudly on the table with her book; the noise wakens Hector.*]

**Hector**. Eh! What, cousin, have you finished already?

**Hortense**. Yes, cousin,...how do you like the ending?

**Hector**. Superb...you read...adorably!

**Hortense**. An adverb!

**Hector**. And I could listen to you...indefinitely.

**Hortense**. Two.

**Hector**. You are a first-rate reader...incontestably.

**Hortense.** Three ! . . . have you finished ?

**Hector.** What ?

**Hortense.** Three adverbs in three phrases ! why, it's a perfect disease with you ! a grammatical eruption.

**Hector.** I do it without knowing ; it's a way we have in court . . . when ideas won't come, we introduce adverbs, which gives us time to think . . . but I promise to avoid them hereafter. Look here, cousin, my leave definitely expires to-morrow, and I shall be absolutely obliged to return to Orleans ; you won't let me go without hope ; you know I love you passionately.

**Hortense.** You are not aware of one thing, cousin, that is, that while you have been introducing adverbs, as you express it, a rival has introduced himself.

**Hector.** A rival ! Who is he ?

**Hortense.** I don't know . . . but here is a curious letter I received three days ago [*reading*] : " Madam, you are a widow, so am I ; you desire to marry again, so do I ; we are suited to each other in every way. I had my photograph taken to send you, but it turned out so badly that I prefer showing you the original. I remain in Paris two days longer.

" Answer to Grand Hotel, room 124.

" PETER FERGUSON, American, age 47 years."

**Hector.** What a mystification !

**Hortense.** A mystification that still continues, for yesterday, I received a second letter [*repeating from*