

**HARPER'S HANDY SERIES,  
NO. 95; COMEDIETTAS  
AND FARCES, SEPTEMBER  
24, 1886**

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**JOHN MADDISON MORTON**

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## COMEDIETTAS AND FARCES

BY

JOHN MADDISON MORTON

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1886

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**COMEDIETTAS. AND FARCES.**

1837. 7. 10.



JOHN MADDISON MORTON.



## PREFACE.

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I HAVE been asked to write a few words of Preface to this little book of Plays. I may state that two are original; for the remainder (being too old an offender in this respect to do otherwise), I thankfully admit my indebtedness to French material, claiming, however, for myself, considerable alterations in plot, situations, etc., and complete originality of dialogue.

I beg to call the attention of Amateurs to these pieces—they having been written by me with a special view to Private performance.

JOHN MADDISON MORTON.

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
BOX AND COX . . . . .	11
FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED . . . . .	35
PEPPERPOT'S LITTLE PETS . . . . .	61
AFTER A STORM COMES A CALM . . . . .	85
EXPRESS! . . . . .	106
TAKEN FROM THE FRENCH . . . . .	125
DECLINED—WITH THANKS . . . . .	147

## JOHN MADDISON MORTON.

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THE present generation is familiar enough with "Box and Cox," that best and brightest of good old English farces, and hundreds of other plays of the same kind, that were written years ago by one of the driest of humorists and most genial of gentlemen; but few young play-goers, I take it, are aware how much the stage owes to John Maddison Morton. Of the form and features of one of the most prolific writers for the stage, I believe many of my own contemporaries to be absolutely ignorant. They know little of his antecedents or history, and yet they, and their fathers before them, have laughed right merrily over the quips and cranks, the quaint turns of expression, the odd freaks of humor that distinguished a writer of fun belonging to the old school. No one has ever filled the place left vacant by John Maddison Morton. Managers for many years past have assumed that the public does not want farces, and are content to tolerate badly-acted rubbish before the play of the evening begins. But a strong reaction is setting in. The pit and gallery are not content any longer to remain open-mouthed while the scenes of the play of the evening are being set, or to be deluded into applauding the silly stuff that is nowadays served up as farce, and in which the principal actors and actresses do not condescend to appear. Why, when I first began to consider myself a regular play-