

**MRS. HEPHAESTUS: AND
OTHER SHORT STORIES,
TOGETHER WITH WEST POINT,
A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS**

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Mrs. Hephaestus: And Other Short Stories, Together with West Point, a Comedy in Three Acts
by George Augustus Baker

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GEORGE AUGUSTUS BAKER

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TOGETHER WITH

WEST POINT

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

GEORGE A. BAKER

Author of "Point Lace and Diamonds," "The Bad Habits of Good Society," etc.



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I wish to thank the Century Company in plain language for the courtesy which enables me to include "The Child of the Regiment" and "The Invasion of Kleindorf" in this volume. Both stories were, some time ago, accepted and paid for by the Century Company, the first for "St. Nicholas," the second for the Century Magazine. Unable to publish them before the date fixed for the appearance of this volume, the company waived its undisputed rights, and without compensation, or even reimbursement, allowed their publication in this form.

January 14, 1887.

G. A. B.

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MRS. HEPHÆSTUS.

I HAVE a story to tell. I, Alfred Graves, attorney and counsellor-at-law, solicitor in bankruptcy, proctor in admiralty, and numerous other things, am its hero; a bronze of the Venus of Milo, that adorns my bachelor apartments, is its heroine.

The story began last Halloween. The Hargraves gave a grand german, and I went. I was a pronounced cynic and woman-hater in those days. Fair reader, you must forgive me for it! I had not yet met Gracie Carroll. At the Hargraves', after my usual custom, I had passed most of the evening in the dressing-room, in company with one or two young gentlemen temporarily converted to my doctrines by a lack of partners for the german. How we slandered the sex that night! The widow Clicquot was the only lady present, and inspired by the example of my companions, I was, contrary to my usual custom, somewhat marked in my attentions to her.

Consequently—the astute reader will observe