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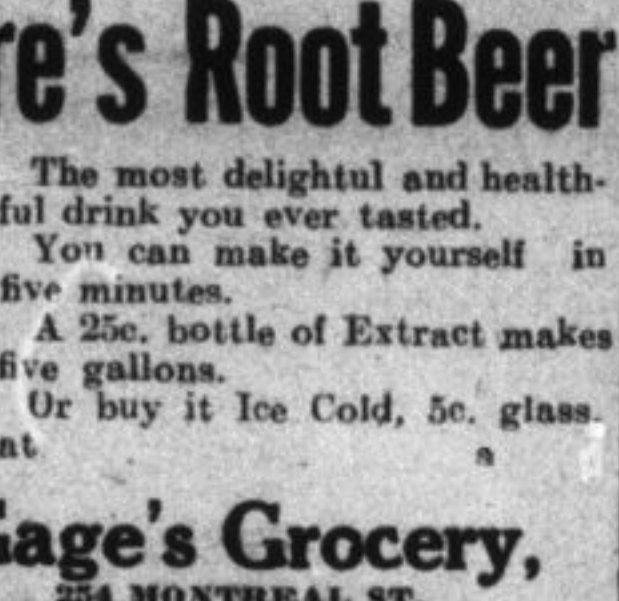
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 BEING THE HAPPENINGS OF A NIGHT IN RICHMOND IN THE SPRING OF 1865  
 THE PLAY BY WILLIAM GILLETTE; BY CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDGAR BERT SMITH  
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Wilfred, evidently much relieved at his mother's departure, took the package from under his coat, put it on the table, and began to undo it. He took from it a pair of very soiled, dilapidated, gray uniform trousers. He had just lifted them up when he heard Caroline's step on the porch, and the next moment she came into the room through the long French window. Wilfred stood petrified with astonishment at the sudden and unexpected appearance of his young beloved, but soon recovered himself and began rolling the package together again, hastily and awkwardly, while Caroline watched him from the window. She coldly scrutinized his confusion while he made his ungainly roll, and, as he moved toward the door, she broke the silence.

"Ah, good evening, Mr. Varney," she said coolly.

"Good evening," he said, his voice as cold as her own.

They both of them had started for the hall door and in another second they would have met.

"Excuse me," said Caroline, "I'm in a hurry."

"That's plain enough. Another party, I suppose, and dancing."

"What of it? What's the matter with dancing, I'd like to know."

"Nothing is the matter with dancing if you want to, but I must say that it is a pretty way of going on, with the cannon roaring not six weeks ago." "Well, what do you wish me to do?" "Cry about it! I have cried my eyes out already; that would do a heap of good now, wouldn't it?" "Oh, I haven't time to talk about such petty details. I have some important matters to attend to," he returned loftily.

"It was you that started it," said the girl.

Wilfred turned suddenly, his manner at once losing its badly assumed lightness.

"Oh, you needn't try to fool me," he reproached her; "I know well enough how you have been carrying on since our engagement was broken off. Half a dozen officers proposing to you—a dozen for all I know."

"What difference does it make?" she retorted pertly. "I haven't got to marry them all, have I?" "Well, it isn't very nice to go on like that," said Wilfred with an air into which he in vain sought to infuse a detached, judicial, and indifferent appearance. "Proposals by the whole sale!" "Goodness me!" exclaimed Caroline, "what's the use of talking about it to me. They're the ones that propose, I don't. How can I help it?" "Oh," said Wilfred loftily, "you can help it all right. You helped it with me."

"Well," she answered, with a queer look at him, "that was different."

"And ever since you threw me overboard," he began.

"I didn't throw you over, you just went over," she interrupted.

"I went over because you walked off with Major Silsby that night we were at Drury's Bluff," said the boy, "and you encouraged him to propose. You admit it," he said, as the girl nodded her head.

"Of course I did. I didn't want him

can tell you that. It won't be anyone that stays in Richmond."

"Now I see what it was," said Wilfred, looking at her gloomily. "I had to stay in Richmond, and—"

The boy choked up and would not finish.

"Well," said Caroline, "that made a heap of difference. Why, I was the only girl on Franklin street that didn't have a—some one she was engaged to—at the front. Just think what it was to be out of it like that! You have no idea how I suffered; besides, it is our duty to help all we can. There aren't many things a girl can do, but Colonel Melbourne—he's one of Morgan's men, you know—said that the boys fight twice as well when they have a sweetheart at home. I couldn't waste an engagement on—"

"And is that why you let them all propose to you?" rejoined the youth bitterly.

"Certainly, it didn't hurt me, and it pleased them. Most of 'em will never come back to try it again, and it is our duty to help all we can."

"And you really want to help all you can, do you?" asked Wilfred desperately.

"Well, if I were to join the army would you help me—that way?"

This was a direct question. It was the argumentum ad feminam with a vengeance. Caroline hesitated. A swift blush overspread her cheek, but she was game to the core.

"Why, of course I would, if there was anything I—could do," she answered.

"Well, there is something you can do." He unrolled his package and seized the trousers by the waistband and dangled them before her eyes. "Cut those off," he said; "they are twice too long. All you have to do is to cut them here and sew up the ends, so that they don't ravel out."

Caroline stared at him in great bewilderment. She had expected something quite different.

"Why, they are uniform trousers," she said finally. "You are going to join the army?" She clasped her hands together. "Give them to me."

"Hush! don't talk so loud, for heaven's sake," said Wilfred. "I've got a jacket here, too." He drew out of the parcel a small army jacket, a private soldier's coat. "It's nearly a fit. It came from the hospital. Johnny Seldon wore it, but he won't want it any more, you know, and he was just longer. Well," he continued, "the girl continued to look at him strangely. "I thought you said you wanted to help me."

"I certainly do."

"What are you waiting for, then?" asked Wilfred.

The girl took the trousers and dropped on her knees before him.

"Stand still," she said, as she measured the trousers from the waistband to the floor. "That is about the place isn't it?"

"Yes, just there."

"Wait," she continued, "until I mark it with a pin."

Wilfred stood quietly until the proper length had been ascertained, and then he assisted Caroline to her feet.

"Do you see any scissors about?" she asked in a businesslike way.

"I don't believe there are any in the drawing room, but I can get some from the women sewing over there. Wait a moment."

"No, don't," said the girl; "they would want to know what you wanted with them, and then you would have to tell them."

"Yes," said the boy; "and I want to keep this a secret between us."

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"When are you going to wear them?"

"As soon as you get them ready."

"But your mother—"

"She knows it. She is going to write to father tonight. She said she would send it by a special messenger, so we ought to get an answer by tomorrow."

"But if he says no?"

"I am going anyway."

"Oh, Wilfred, I am so glad. Why, it makes another thing of it," cried the girl. "When I said that about staying in Richmond, I didn't know— Oh, I do want to help all I can."

"You do? Well, then, for heaven's sake, be quick about it and cut off those trousers. So long as I get them in the morning," said Wilfred, "I guess it will be in plenty of time."

"When did you say your mother was going to write?"

"Tonight."

"Of course, she doesn't want you to go, and she'll tell your father not to let you. You see she continued eagerly, as Wilfred looked up, horror-stricken at the idea; "that's the way mothers always do."

"What can I do, then?" he asked her.

"Why don't you write to him yourself, and then you can tell him just what you like."

"That's a fine idea. I'll tell him that I can't stay here, and that I'm going to enlist whether he says so or not. That'll make him say yes, won't it?"

"Why, of course; there'll be nothing else for him to say."

"Say, you are a pretty good girl," said Wilfred, catching her hand impulsively. "I'll go upstairs and write it now. You finish these as soon as you can. You can ask those women for some scissors, and when they are ready leave them in this closet, but don't let anyone see you doing it, whatever happens."

"No, I won't," said Caroline, as Wilfred hurried off.

She went over to the room where the women were sewing, and borrowed a pair of scissors; then she came back and started to cut off the trousers where they were marked. The cloth was old and worn, but it was, nevertheless, stiff and hard, and her scissors were dull. Men spent their time in sharpening other things than women's tools during those days in Richmond, and her slender fingers made hard work of the amputations. Beside, she was prone to stop and think and dream of her soldier boy while engaged in this congenial work. She had not finished the alteration, therefore, when she heard a step in the hall. She caught up the trousers, striving to conceal them, entirely forgetful of the jacket which lay on the table.

"Oh," said Mrs. Varney, as she came into the room; "you haven't gone yet?"

"No," faltered the girl; "we don't assemble for a little while, and—"

"Don't assemble!"

"I mean for the party. It doesn't begin for half an hour yet, and—"

"Oh; then you have plenty of time."

"Yes," said Caroline. "But I will have to go now, sure enough." She

turned away and, as she did so, her scissors fell clattering to the floor.

"You dropped your scissors, my dear," said Mrs. Varney.

"I thought I heard something fall," she faltered in growing confusion.

She came back for her scissors, and, in her agitation and nervousness, she dropped one of the pieces of trouser leg on the floor.

"What are you making, Caroline?" asked Mrs. Varney, looking curiously at the little huddled-up soiled piece of gray on the carpet, while Caroline made a desperate grab at it.

"Oh, just altering an old—dress, Mrs. Varney. That's all."

Mrs. Varney looked at her through her glasses. As she did so, Caroline's agitated movement caused the other trouser leg, with its half-severed end hanging from it, to tangle over her arm.

"And what is that?" asked Mrs. Varney.

"Oh—that's—er—one of the sleeves," answered Caroline desperately, hurrying out in great confusion.

Mrs. Varney laughed softly to herself. As she did so, her glance fell upon the little heap of gray on the table. She picked it up and opened it. It was a gray jacket, a soldier's jacket. It looked as if it might be about Wilfred's size. There was a bullet hole in the breast, and there was a dull brown stain around the opening. Mrs. Varney raised the worn coat. She saw it all now.

"For Wilfred," she whispered. "He has probably got it from some dead soldier at the hospital, and Caroline's dress that she was altering—"

She clasped the jacket tightly to her breast, looked up, and smiled and wept through her tears.

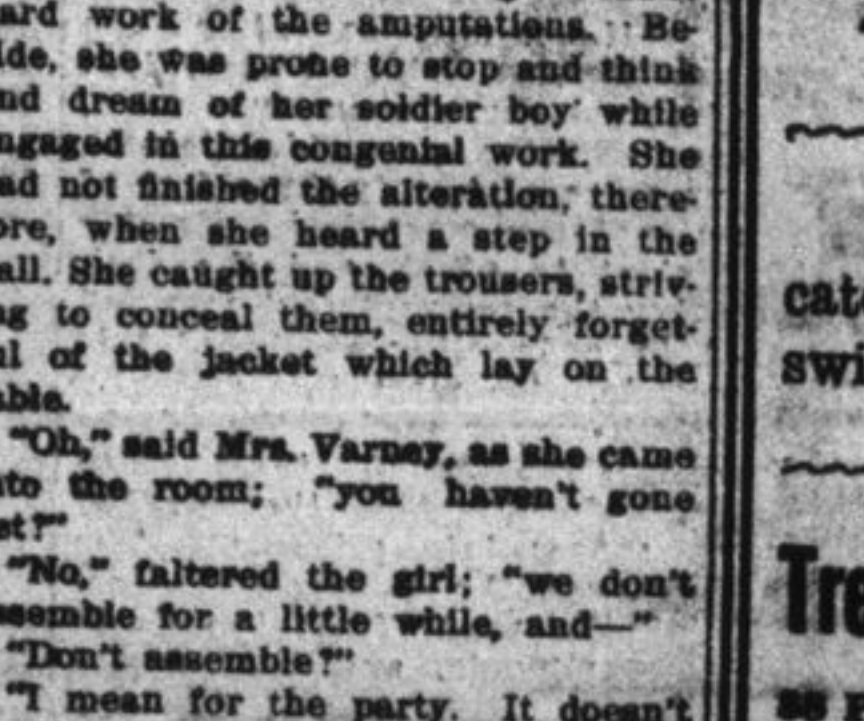
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Type and one-half yards of 44-inch material are required to make this.

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It will be very necessary to use care in closing the seam when making the accou. This is indicated by triple notches, which are to be placed perfectly even before the needle is put into the crepe. Try to make alterations unnecessary, as they are not always satisfactory in the case of one-piece garments unless done by an experienced dressmaker. The center of the front is marked by small "o" perforations.

The collar and cuffs may be embroidered after they are joined to the accou. Match the notches in collar and accou; then sew on the former. Sew cuff to slashed edges, forming armhole as notched; roll the cuff back into the crepe. Try to make alterations unnecessary, as they are not always satisfactory in the case of one-piece garments unless done by an experienced dressmaker. The center of the front is marked by small "o" perforations.

Embroider in silk of the same color or plain white.

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