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Born to Love Pigs and Chickens.

BY N. P. WILLIS.

The guests at the Astor house were looking mournfully out of the drawing room windows, on a certain rainy day of an October passed ever to history. No shopping—no visiting! The morning must be passed in doors. And it was some consolation to those who were in town for a few days to see the world, that their time was not quite lost, for the assemblage in the large drawing-room was numerous and gay. A very dressy affair is the drawing-room of the Astor, and as full of eyes as a peacock's tail—(which, by the way, is also a very dressy affair.) Strangers who wish to see and be seen (and especially "be seen") on rainy days, as well as sunny days, in their visits to New York, should, as the phrase goes, "patronize" the Astor. As if there were any *patronage* in getting the worth of your money!

Well—the people in the drawing-room looked a little out of the windows, and a great deal at each other. Unfortunately, it is only among angels and underbred persons that introductions can be dispensed with, and as the guests of that day at the Astor House were mostly strangers to each other, conversation was very fitful and guarded, and any movement whatever extremely conspicuous. There were four very silent ladies on the sofa, two very silent ladies in each of the windows, silent ladies on the ottomans, silent ladies in the chairs at the corners, and one silent lady, very highly dressed, sitting on the music stool, with her back to the piano. There was here and there a gentleman in the room, weather-bound and silent; but we have only to do with one of these, and with the last mentioned much embellished young lady.

"Well, I can't sit on this soft chair all day, Cousin Meg!" said the gentleman.

"'Sh!—call me Margaret, if you must speak so loud," said the lady. "And what would you do out of doors this rainy day! I'm sure it's very pleasant here."

"Not for me. I'd rather be thrashing in the barn. But there must be some 'rainy-weather work' in the city as well as the country. There's some fun, I know, that's kept for a wet day, as we keep corn-shelling and grinding the tools."

"Dear me!"

"Well—what now!"

"Oh, nothing!—but I *do* wish you wouldn't bring the stable with you to the Astor House."

The gentleman slightly elevated his eye-brows, and took a leaf of music from the piano, and commenced diligently reading the mystic dots and lines. We have ten minutes to spare before the entrance of another person upon the scene, and we will make use of the silence to conjure up for you, in our magic mirror, the semblance of the two whose familiar dialogue we have just jotted down.

Miss Margaret Pifflit was a young lady who had a large share of what the French call *la beaute du diable*—youth and freshness. (Though why the devil should have the credit of what never belonged to him, it takes a Frenchman, perhaps, to explain.) To look at, she was certainly a human being in very high perfection. Her cheeks were like two sound apples; her waist was as round as a stove pipe; her shoulders had two dimples just at the back, that looked as if they defied punching to make them any deeper; her eyes looked as if they were just made, they were so bright and new; her voice sounded like a "C sharp" in a new piano; and her teeth were like a fresh broken cocoanut. She was incurably, unabatedly, desperately healthy. This fact, and the difficulty of uniting all the fashions of all the magazines in one dress, were her two principal afflictions in this world of care. She had an ideal model, to which she aspired with constant longings—a model resembling in figure the high born creature whose never varied face is seen in all the plates of the fashions, yet, if possible, paler and more disdainful. If Miss Pifflit could but have bent her short wrist with the curve invariably given to the well-gloved extremities of that mysterious and nameless beauty; if she could but have set with her back to her friends, and thrown her head languishingly over her shoulders without dislocating her neck; if she could but have protruded from the flounce of her dress a foot more like a mincing little muscleshell, and less like a jolly fat clam; in brief, if she could have drawn out her figure like the enviable joints of a spy-glass, which tell off more tapering her four extremities, sold all her uproarious and indomitable roses for a pot of carmine, and compelled the publishers of the magazines to refrain from the distracting multiplicity of their fashions—with these little changes in her allotment, Miss Pifflit would have realized all her maiden aspirations up to the present hour.

A glimpse will give you an idea of the gentleman in question. He was not much more than he looked to be—a compact, athletic young man of twenty-one, with clear, honest blue eyes, brown face, where it was not shaded by the rim of his hat, curling brown hair, and an expression of fearless quality, dashed just now by a tinge of rustic bashfulness. His dress was a little more expensive and gayer than was necessary, and he wore his clothes in a way which betrayed that he would be more at home in his shirt sleeves. His hands were rough, and his attitude that of a man who was accustomed to fling himself down on the nearest bench, or swing his legs from the top rail of a fence, or the box of a wagon. We speak with caution of his rusticity, however, for he had a printed card, "Mr. Ephraim Bracely," and he was a subscriber to the "Spirit of the Times." We shall find time to say a little or two about him as we get on.

"Eph." Bracely and "Meg" Pifflit were "engaged." With the young lady it was, as the French say, *faute de mieux*, for her *beau-ideal*, (or, in plain English, her ideal beau,) was a tall, pale young gentleman, with white gloves, in a rapid consumption. She and Eph. were second cousins, however, and as she was an orphan, and had lived since childhood with his father, and, moreover, had inherited the Pifflit farm, which adjoined that of the Bracelys, and, moreover, had been told to "kiss her little husband, and love him always," by the dying breath of her mother, and (moreover thirc) had been "let be" his sweetheart by the unanimous consent of the neighborhood, why, it seemed one of those matches made in heaven, and not intended to be unvested on earth. It was understood that they were to be married as soon as the young man's savings should enable him to pull down the old Pifflit house and build a cottage, and, with a fair season, that might be done in another year. Meantime, Eph was a loyal keeper of his troth, though never having had the trouble to win the young lady, he was not fully aware of the necessity of courtship, whether or no; and was, besides, somewhat unsusceptible of the charms of moonlight, after a hard day's work at haying or harvesting. The neighbors thought it proof enough of his love that he never "went sparking" elsewhere, and as he would rather talk of his gun or his fishing-rod, his horse or his crop, pigs, politics, or any thing else, than of love and matrimony, his companions took his engagement with his cousin to be a subject upon which he felt too deeply to banter, and they neither invaded his domain by attentions to his sweetheart, nor suggested thought by allusion to her. It was in the progress of his even tenor of engagement, that some law business had called old farmer Bracely to New York, and the young couple had managed to accompany him. And of course, nothing would do for Miss Pifflit but "the Astor."

And now, perhaps, the reader is ready to be told whose carriage is at the Vesey street door, and who sends a dripping servant to inquire for Miss Pifflit.

It is allotted to the destiny of every country girl to have one fashionable female friend in the city—somebody to correspond with, somebody to quote, somebody to write her the particulars of the last elopement, somebody to send her patterns of collars, and the rise and fall of *tournures*, and such other things as are not entered into by the monthly magazines. How these apparently unlikely acquaintances are formed, is as much a mystery as the eternal youth of postboys, and the eternal duration of donkeys. Far be it from me to pry irreverently into these pokerish corners of the machinery of the world. I go no farther than the fact that Miss Julia Hampson was an acquaintance of Miss Pifflit's.

Every body knows "Hampson & Co." Miss Hampson was a good deal what the Fates had tried to make her. If she had not been admirably well dressed, it would have been by violent opposition to the united zeal and talent of dressmakers and milliners. These important vicegerents of the Hand that reserves to itself the dressing of the butterfly and lily, make distinctions in the exercise of their vocation. Woe be to an unloveable woman, if she be not endowed with taste supreme. She may buy all the stuffs of France, and all the colors of the rainbow, but she will never get from those keen judges of fitness the loving hint, the admiring and selective persuasion, with which they delight to influence the embellishments of sweetness and loveliness. They who talk of "any thing's looking well on a pretty woman," have not reflected on the lesser providence of dressmakers and milliners. Woman is never mercenary but in monstrous exceptions, and no tradeswoman of the fashions will *sell* taste or counsel; and, in the superior style of all charming women, you see, not the influence of manners upon dress, but the affectionate tribute of these dispensers of elegance to the qualities they admire. Let him who doubts, go shopping with his dressy old aunt to-day, and to-morrow with his dear little cousin.

Miss Hampson, to whom the supplies of elegance came as naturally as bread and butter, and occasioned as little speculation as to the whence or how, was as unconsciously elegant, of course, as a well dressed lily. She was abstractly a very beautiful girl, though in a very delicate and unconspicuous style; and by dint of absolute fitness in dressing, the merit of her beauty, by common observers at least, would be half given to her fashionable air and unexceptionable toilette. The damsel and her choice array, indeed, seemed the harmonious work of the same maker. How much was nature's gift, and how much was bought in Broadway, was probably never duly understood by her most discriminating admirer.

But we have kept Miss Hampson too long upon the stairs.

The two young ladies met with a kiss, in which (to the surprise of those who had previously observed Miss Pifflit) there was no remark of the latest fashion.

"My dear Julia!"

"My dear Margarine!" (This was a romantic variation of Meg's, which she had forced upon her intimate friends at the point of the bayonet.)

Eph twitched, ruminatingly, the *jupon* of his cousin, and she introduced him with the formula which she had found in one of Miss Austin's novels.

"Oh, but there was a much respectfulness in that deep curtsey," thought Eph.; (and so there was—for Miss Hampson took an irresistible cue from the inflated ceremoniousness of the introduction.)

Eph. made a bow as cold and stiff as a frozen horse-blanket. And if he could have commanded the blood in his face, it would have been as dignified and resentful as the eloquence of Red Jacket—but that rustic blush, up to his hair, was like a mask dropped over his features.

"A bashful country-boy," thought Miss Hampson, as she looked compassionately upon his red-hot forehead, and forthwith dismissed him entirely from her thoughts.

With a consciousness that he had better leave the room, and walk off his mortification under an umbrella, Eph. took his seat, and silently listened to the conversation of the young ladies. Miss Hampson had come to pass the morning with her friend, and she took off her bonnet, and showered down upon her dazzling neck a profusion of the most adorable brown ringlets. Spite of his angry humiliation, the young farmer felt a thrill run through his veins as the heavy curls fell indolently about her shoulders. He had never before looked upon a woman with emotion. He hated her—oh, yes! for she had given him a look that could never be for given—but, for *somebody*, she must be the angel of the world, Eph. would have given all his sheep and horses, cows, crops and hay-stacks, to have seen the man she would fancy to be her equal. He could not give even a guess at the height of that conscious superiority from which she individually looked down upon him; but it would have satisfied a thirst that almost made him scream, to measure himself by a man with whom *she* could be familiar. Where was his inferiority? What was it? Why had he been blind to it till now? Was there no surgeon's knife, no caustic, that could carve out, or cut away, burn or scarify, the vulgarities she looked upon so contemptuously? But the devil take her superciliousness, nevertheless.

It was a bitter morning to Eph Bracely, but still it went like a dream. The hotel parlor was no longer a stupid place. His Cousin Meg had gained a consequence in his eyes, for she was the object of caress from this superior creature, she was the link which kept her within his observation. He was too full of other feelings just now to do more than acknowledge the superiority of this girl to her cousin. He *felt* it in his after thoughts, and his destiny then, for the first time, seemed crossed and inadequate to his wishes.

CHAPTER II.

(We here by draw your imagination for six months, courteous reader. Please allow the teller to show you into the middle of the following July.)

Bracely farm, ten o'clock of a glorious summer morning—Miss Pifflit extended upon a sofa in despair. But let us go back a little.

A week before, a letter had been received from Miss Hampson, who, to the delight and surprise of her friend Margarine, had taken the whim to pass a month with her. She was at Rockaway, and was sick and tired of waltzing and the sea. Had farmer Bracely a spare corner for a poor girl.

But Miss Pifflit's "sober second thought" was utter consternation. How to lodge fitly the elegant Julia Hampson? No French bed in the house, no boudoir, no ottomans, no pastilles, no baths, no Psyche to dress by. What vulgar wretches they would seem to her. What insupportable horror she would feel at the dreadful inelegance of the farm. Meg was pale with terror and dismay as she went into the details of anticipation.

Something must be done, however. A sleepless night of reflection and contrivance sufficed to give some shape to the capabilities of the case, and by daylight the next morning the whole house was in commotion. Meg had fortunately a large bump of constructiveness, very much enlarged by her habitual dilemmas of toilette. A boudoir must be constructed. Farmer Bracely slept in the dried-apple room, on the lower floor, and he was no sooner out of his bed than his bag and baggage were tumbled up stairs, his gun and Sunday whip taken down from their nails, and the floor scoured, and the ceiling whitewashed. Eph. was by this time returned from the village with all the chintz that could be bought, and a paper of tacks, and some new straw carpeting; and by ten o'clock that night the four walls of the apartment were covered with the gaily flowered material, the carpet was nailed down, and old farmer Bracely thought it a mighty nice, cool-looking place. Eph. was a bit of a carpenter, and he soon knocked together some boxes, which, when covered with chintz, and stuffed with wool, looked very like ottomans; and with a handsome cloth on the round-table, geraniums in the windows, and a chintz curtain to subdue the light, it was not far from a very charming boudoir, and Meg began to breathe more freely.

But Eph. had heard this news with the blood hot in his temples. Was that proud woman coming to look again upon him with contempt, and here, too, where the rusticity, which he presumed to be the object of her scorn, would be a thousand times more flagrant and visible! And yet, with the entreaty on his lip that his cousin would refuse to receive her, his heart had checked the utterance—for an irresistible desire sprung suddenly within him to see her, even at the bitter cost of tenfold his former mortification.

Yet, as the preparations for receiving Miss Hampson went on, other thoughts took possession of his mind. Eph. was not a man, indeed, to come off second best in the long pull of wrestling with a weakness. His pride began to show its colors. He remembered his independence as a farmer, dependent on no man, and a little comparison between his pursuits and life, such as he knew it to be, in a city, soon put him, in his own consciousness at least, on a par with Miss Hampson's connections. This point once attained, Eph. cleared his brow, and went whistling about the farm as usual—receiving, without reply, however, a suggestion of his Cousin Meg's, that he had better burn his old straw hat, for, in a fit of absence, he *might possibly* put it on while Miss Hampson was there.

Well, it was ten o'clock on the morning after Miss Hampson's arrival at Bracely farm, and, as was said before, Miss Pifflit was in despair. Presuming that her friend would be fatigued with her journey, she had determined not to wake her, but to order breakfast in the boudoir at eleven. Farmer Bracely and Eph. must have their breakfast at seven, however, and what was the dismay of Meg, who was pouring out their coffee as usual, to see the elegant Julia rush into the first kitchen, curtsey very sweetly to the old man, pull up a chair to the table, apologise for being late, and end this extraordinary scene by producing two newly hatched chickens from her bosom! She had been up since sunrise, and out at the barn, and down by the river, and up in the hay-mow, and was perfectly enchanted with every thing, especially the dear little chickens!

"A very sweet young lady!" thought old farmer Bracely.

"Very well—but hang your condescension!" thought Eph., distrustfully.

"Mercy on me!—to like pigs and chickens!" mentally ejaculated to the disturbed and bewildered Miss Pifflit.

But with her two chicks pressed to her breast with one hand, Miss Hampson managed her coffee and bread and butter with the other, and chattered away like a child let out of school. The air was so delicious, and the hay smelt so sweet, and the trees in the meadow were so beautiful, and there were no stiff sidewalks and no brick houses, and no iron railings, and so many dear speckled hens, and funny little chickens, and kind-looking old cows, and colts and calves, and ducks, and turkeys—it was was delicious—it was enchanting—it was worth a thousand Saratogas and Rockaways. How any body could prefer the city to the country, was to Miss Hampson a matter of incredulous wonder.

"Will you come into the boudoir?" asked Miss Pifflit, with a languishing air, as her friend Julia rose from breakfast.

"Boudoir!" exclaimed the city damsel, to the infinite delight of old Bracely, "no dear! I'd rather go out to the barn! Are you going any where with the oxen to-day, sir?" she added, going up to the gray-headed farmer, caressingly, "I should *so* like a ride in that great cart!"

Eph. was still suspicious of all this unexpected agreeableness, but he was naturally too courteous not to give way to the lady's whims. He put on his old straw hat, and tied his handkerchief over his shoulder (not to imitate the broad ribbon of a royal order, but to wipe the sweat off handily while mowing) and offering Miss Hampson a rake which stood outside the door, he begged her to be ready when he came by with the team. He and his father were bound to the far meadow, where they were cutting hay, and would like her assistance in raking.

It was a "specimen" morning, as the magazines say, for the air was temperate, and the whole country was laden with the smell of the new hay, which somehow or other, as every body knows, never hinders or overpowers the perfume of the flowers. Oh! that winding green lane between the bushes was like an avenue to paradise. The old cart jolted along through the ruts, and Miss Hampson, standing up and holding on to old farmer Bracely, watched the great oxen crowding their sides together, and looked off over the fields, and exclaimed as she saw glimmers of the river between the trees, and seemed veritably and unaffectedly enchanted. The old farmer, at least, had no doubt of her sincerity, and he watched her, and listened to her, with a broad honest smile of admiration on his weather browned countenance.

The oxen were turned up to the fence, while the dew dried off the hay, and Eph. and his father turned to mowing, leaving Miss Hampson to ramble about over the meadow, and gather flowers by the river side. In the course of an hour, they began to rake up, and she came to offer her promised assistance, and stoutly followed Eph. up and down several of the long swaths, till her face glowed under the sun-bonnet as it never had glowed with waltzing. Heated and tired at last, she made herself a seat with the new hay under a large elm, and, with her back to the tree watched the labors of her companions.

Eph. was a well built and manly figure, and all he did in the way of his vocation, he did with a fine display of muscular power, and (a sculptor would have thought) no little grace. Julia watched him as he stepped along after his rake on the elastic sward, and she thought, for the first time, what a very handsome man was young Bracely, and how much more finely a man looked when raking hay, than a dandy when waltzing. And for an hour she sat watching his motions, admiring the strength with which he pitched up the hay, and the grace and ease of all his movements and postures: and, after a while, she began to feel drowsy with fatigue, and pulling up the hay into a fragrant pillow, she lay down and fell fast asleep.

It was now the middle of the forenoon, and the old farmer, who of late years, had fallen into a habit of taking a short nap before dinner, came to the big elm to pick up his waistcoat and go home. As he approached the tree, he stopped, and beckoned to his son.

Eph. came up and stood at a little distance, looking at the lovely picture before him. With one delicate hand under her cheek, and a smile of angelic content and enjoyment on her finely cut lips, Julia Hampson slept soundly in the shade. One small foot escaped her dress, and one shoulder of faultless polish and whiteness showed between her kerchief and her sleeve. Her slight waist bent to the sweep of the hay, showing her well-moulded bust into high relief; and all over her neck, and in large clusters on the tumbled hay, lay those glossy brown ringlets, admirably beautiful and luxuriant.

And as Eph. looked on that dangerous picture of loveliness, the passion, already lying *perdu* in his bosom, sprung to the throne of heart and reason.

(We have not room to do more than hint at the consequences of this visit of Miss Hampson to the country. It would require the third volume of a novel to describe all the emotions of that month at Bracely farm, and bring the reader, point by point, gingerly and softly, to the close. We must touch here and there a point only, giving the reader's imagination some gleaning to do after we have been over the ground.)

Eph. Bracely's awakened pride served him the good turn of making him appear simply in his natural character during the whole of Miss Hampson's visit. By the old man's advice, however, he devoted himself to the amusement of the ladies after the haying was over; and what with fishing, and riding, and scenery hunting in the neighborhood, the young people were together from morning till night. Miss Pifflit came down unwillingly to plain Meg, in her attendance on her friend in her rustic occupations, and Miss Hampson saw as little as possible of the inside of the *boudoir*. The barn, and the troops of chickens, and all the out-doors belongings of the farm, interested her daily, and with no diminution of her zeal. She seemed, indeed, to have found her natural sphere in the simple and affectionate life which her friend Margarine held in such superfine contempt; and Eph., who was the natural mate to such a spirit, and himself, in his own home, most unconsciously worthy of love and admiration, gave himself up irresistibly to his new passion.

And this new passion became apparent, at last, to the incredulous eyes of his cousin. And that it was timidly but fondly returned by her elegant and high bred friend, was also very apparent to Miss Pifflit. And after a few jealous struggles, and a night or two of weeping, she gave up to it tranquilly—for, a city life and a city husband, truth to say, had long been her secret longing and secret hope, and she never had fairly looked in the face a burial in the country with the "pigs and chickens."

She is not married yet. Meg Pifflit—but the rich merchant, Mr. Hampson, wrecked completely with the disastrous times, has found a kindly and pleasant asylum for his old age with his daughter, Mrs. Bracely. And a better or lovelier farmer's wife than Julia, or a happier farmer than Eph., can scarce be found in the valley of the Susquehannah.

Graham's Magazine.

REPORT ON GEN. JACKSON'S FINE.

The Washington correspondent of the New York American has the following notice of the report made in the House of Representatives on Gen. Jackson's fine:

The committee on the judiciary in the House have just reported according to the instructions given to them some time since, by resolution, to inquire into all the facts in the case of the fine inflicted on General Jackson by Judge Hall at New Orleans, with power to send for persons and papers, and to report both the facts and the law to the House. The printing of the report has been ordered; and there is a motion laid over for 5000 extra copies. I have not yet seen it, but those who have read it speak of it in the highest terms as a perfect and able paper.

Mr James A. Pearce, of Maryland, is the author of it, and seems to have acquired for himself if at once the respect of the whole House, and a title to fame by this admirable production. Even the Locofoco members of the Judiciary Committee (Saunders and C. J. Ingersoll) join in the strongest commendations of it, and declare it to be both brilliant and powerful.

It makes out a complete condemnation of Jackson's conduct in every particular. It shows that he knew it to be unnecessary, because he was at the time informed of the conclusion of peace. It proves Louallier to have been an innocent man. It justifies Judge Hall throughout, and shows that his duty required him to do what he did. It also convicts Gen'l Jackson of palpable mis-statements of fact in his recent communications on this subject.

I will send you a copy as soon as printed, as it is important that this narrative and argument should be laid before the people immediately and extensively. It is a most important portion of the history of the country; and on the determination of the facts may depend our liberty and our national destiny.

The Cost of the Capture.—In adjusting the awkward Monterey business, the following stipulations were entered into between the high contracting parties:

6th Sr. Thomas Ap C. Jones will deliver five hundred complete suits of clothes, of woolen, for the infantry, to replace about one half of what was spoiled of the Mexican division by their forced march in continued rains to recover the port which he invaded.

7th. Sr. Thomas Ap C. Jones will pay into the treasury of the nation fifteen thousand dollars, which were expended in the general alarm occasioned in the department of the Californias by his invasion of the port of Monterey, as well as for a complete military band of musical instruments rendered useless by the same cause.

HORRORS OF WAR.

Col. Seruzier was one of the most able and efficient military officers in the French service under Napolyon, and from his military Memoirs, a correspondent of the New York Evening Post translates the following from chapter IV., Battle of Austerlitz:

"At that moment in which the Russian army was making its retreat, painfully, but in good order, on the ice of the Lake, the Emperor Napoleon came riding at a full speed towards the artillery: "You are losing time!" cried he; "Fire upon those masses!—they must be engulphed!—fire upon the ice!" The order given remained unexecuted for ten minutes; in vain several officers and myself were placed on the slope of a hill to produce the greater effect; their balls and mine rolled upon the ice without breaking it up. Seeing that, I tried a simple method of elevating eight howitzers; the almost perpendicular fall of these heavy projectiles produced the desired effect. My method was followed immediately by the adjoining batteries, and in less than no time we buried 15,000 Russians and Austrians under the waters of the Lake."

Effects of the War on the Banks.—The circulation of all the Banks in the State of N. York amounts to $7.142 884, whilst the specie in their vaults is $8 477, 076—more than dollar for dollar. Since August 1837, the circulation has been reduced $2,005.711, and the specie increased $504.596. The most obstinate hard money man cannot now complain that the Banks are not strong enough, and Bank notes scarce enough. In the mean time the value of property is reduced low enough, and John Jacob Astor can buy houses at his own price. This is the rich man's harvest, and it has been prepared for him by the party which professed to be the poor man's friend.

Fayetteville Obs.