

JACQUES BONHOMME.

By MAX GORELL, Author of "Jonathan and His Continent," "John Bull and His Island," "John Bull's Daughters," Etc.

IV—LOVE IN FRANCE.

All Frenchmen Love Because They Can't Help It—Restrictions on Unmarried "Young Folks"—French Marriage Customs.

There is probably no being in whom the bump of amativeness is more developed than it is in the Frenchman. The poor fellow must love; he cannot help it. At 12 years of age he is deeply in love with a little girl he has met with her mamma in one of the public gardens of the town, and to whom he prettily lifts his hat before beginning a game of ball or hide and seek. He does not declare his love. In the distance he throws rapturous kisses at "her," when near he casts down his eyes and looks silly. He dreams that his little lady love is being carried off by some miscreant, that he comes to her rescue, saves her, throws himself at her feet, and declares himself her slave forever.

At fifteen he loves a portly matron of some forty summers, to whom he sends anonymous verses. He loves in silence once more.

From eighteen to twenty he loves public characters. Actresses have drawers full of poetical effusions addressed to them by the upper forms of our public schools.

At twenty—well, at twenty—the less we speak of what he loves the better. The best excuse that can be advanced in his favor is that his education, as I have attempted to explain in another chapter, does not prepare him for manhood. Indeed, the French boy's change from youth to manhood is like a shooting of rapids. He has never known what it is to be free; how can he be expected, as a rule, to make good use of liberty the first time he is thrown into the world? The break is sudden, a plunge that often threatens a capsizing.

From twenty to twenty-five he seldom marries. When he does he often makes a bad match. He has noticed a pretty little milliner passing every day at the same place. He has admired her; by and by he follows her, proposes matrimony and marries her. The parents at first grumble, will have nothing to do with the young couple for some time, and generally relent on the arrival of the first baby.

As a rule, the Frenchman does not marry before he has reached the age of thirty. From thirty to thirty-five is the age at which he takes the great step.

Old bachelors are not impervious to Cupid's darts. You often see Frenchmen entering the holy estate for the first time at fifty or sixty. Their decided love for good cookery and white linen frequently beguiles them into marrying their cook or laundress. These are the brides often led to the altar by retired officers, and installed in apartments in some suburb of Paris.

The Frenchman has his characteristic feature in common with men of all countries: each time that he loves, it is for ever. When crossed in love, he seldom goes the length of committing suicide. He does not go in for such extreme measures; he generally prefers resorting to homeopathy; he loves "another." Like cure like: *similia similibus curantur*.

Flirtation is not a French pastime. A few married women may indulge in it; but girls, whatever may be said to the contrary, very seldom do. A woman who flirted would pass in France for giddy, not to say fast; she knows her countrymen too well for that. She is aware, when she coquettes with them, what she is exposing herself to.

If French girls felt inclined for a little flirtation, how could they indulge in it? Good heavens! What would her mother and father say if they saw her taking a walk by herself during the day—if it came to their knowledge that a young man had actually dared to whisper words of love into her ear before he had laid bare his heart and made a clear statement of his finances to them in the first place? Even when he has obtained consent of the parent, and his visits to the house where his fiancée resides are permitted, the young couple are not allowed to see each other even for a moment without the presence of a third party. The pleasant operation familiar to English lovers by the term of "spooning" is absolutely unknown to courtship as practiced in France.

As soon as two young French people are in love they want to die, unless their parents immediately consent to their marriage, which is very seldom the case. Well, to wish to die under these circumstances is a trifle irrational, but love and reason seldom go together. Of course they never do die. They live all the while, and are almost inclined to think that in love matters plain sailing is not so sweet or so romantic as obstacles to overcome. What lovely letters crossed love suggests to them! Letters invariably written at midnight—French lovers never write by day—midnight, "when all is in repose around them." Letters full of "All is known: we are lost! What will become of us? Ah! forget me as soon as you can: we shall never be each other's." As for me, I shall die of it. I know I shall. Then you will marry another woman. I will pray in heaven for your happiness. Perhaps now and then you will come to the cemetery and lay a bunch of violets on my tomb. You know, beloved one, that violets are my favorite flowers. You won't forget that, will you? I weep, I weep and I weep. Farewell!" And this shiver giving letter, how to post it the following day? The poor child cannot go out alone. The housemaid is coaxed and bribed. She becomes the confidante. She posts the letter, receives the answer, and plays the part of love's messenger.

Cupid may delight in mystery, but this is not business. However, things

come right in time, as we shall see presently.

When the Frenchman in love has an opportunity of making a *viva voce* declaration to the mistress of his heart, he generally sets about it in theatrical fashion. He goes down on his knee. Now, a man, except he be very young, with irreproachable features, can scarcely afford to do this; he runs a thousand risks of appearing ridiculous and showing his little defective points. While he is on his feet, that small bald spot on the top of his head is not noticeable, and the unpicturesque male attire of the nineteenth century looks well enough. But let a man who is no longer a slim Apollo get down on his knees, and pour passionate protestations to a woman with the slightest sense of the ridiculous, and I maintain he is running a risk of killing what little tender sentiment she may have for him. His face is red, or perhaps purple, with the unwonted exertion and excitement as he warms to his subject. Out of this red face gleam two eyes that show all their white.

All the time the little demon of observation may take inventory of all these blemishes. No, no; a man should not allow a woman to contemplate him in such a servile attitude. He should not abdicate his dignity in going on his knees to implore favors that the dear fellow is probably destined to pay enough for.

All this puts me in mind of a play of Emile Augier, in which an aristocratic lady relates how she was saved from a foolish entanglement of her affections by her lover going down on his knees and declaring his passion. He had on his nose a little wart, which at ordinary times was scarcely noticeable; but as the poor fellow grew more and more carried away by his fervor, redder and redder grew this innocent little excrescence, till at last the comicality of the thing struck her, and she could not help bursting out laughing. "That wart saved me!" she exclaims, to the delight of her lady friends on the stage and of the audience.

Let us now come to matrimony. I have already said that young people in France cannot marry without their parents' consent, and that at no matter what age. However, when a man is over twenty-five and a girl over twenty-one, they may compel their parents to give them that consent.

This extreme measure is very seldom resorted to, for it has to take the form of a summons through a notary; but relentless parents sometimes wish to receive such summonses, in order to be able one day to tell their children, in case the match should prove an unhappy one, that they wash their hands of it. As soon as the young lover is accepted by the girl's parents he is received in the family; not, however, on terms of intimacy, as in England. He pays frequent but official visits, brings presents to the young lady, many of which afford him the opportunity of conveying to her a little billet doux. The day before the wedding he brings the *corbeille*: that is to say, a casket containing valuable presents of lace, jewelry, etc. The contract of marriage, settling money matters, is signed before a notary and in the presence of the relatives and the most intimate friends of the bride and bridegroom. As a rule, they are married by the mayor of the town on that day. The real wedding is a religious ceremony that takes place the following day in the morning.

People with a little pretension to style have for many years followed the English fashion of going away for the honeymoon as soon as the wedding breakfast is over. But twelve or fourteen years ago such was not the practice; high and low spent their wedding day much alike, that is to say, as the lower middle classes still do.

This is how the eventful day is passed. The morning is like the proverbial April one, all smiles and tears. The process of the elaborate toilet is interrupted at every moment by tender embraces. Mamma between the pauses of the petticoats, must clasp her dear Filine in her arms, and listen to her assurances that "she can never, never be so happy as she has been with her dear petite mere," at any rate not happier. But neither tears nor embraces have hindered the little white robed figure from being decked very effectively.

At last all are quite ready, and the bridegroom having arrived, the bridal party sets out for church, the bride and her father occupying the first carriage, and the bridegroom and his future mother-in-law the second. The friends follow, and in this order the little procession marches up to the altar. The service is followed by a short address to the happy pair—a sermon on matrimony by one who knows nothing about it. This being duly administered, the company proceed to the vestry, and no sooner are they there than mamma falls again on the neck of her sweet child, and again gives way to her feelings. Indeed, by this time the event is felt to be a great one all round, and one that demands much outlet for the feelings. Everybody kisses everybody else, and there is a general chorus of felicitations. The next item in the programme is the wedding breakfast, a simple affair given in the family apartment to the members of the family only. If the father lives in Paris, and his purse will admit of the carriages being retained all day, the bridal party drive to the Bois de Boulogne or Vincennes to pass the afternoon; but this time the young couple are not separated, and mamma has to hand her daughter over for the first tete-a-tete with Adolphe. It is awful to think of, but she has to bear it.

The most festive part of the day's proceedings comes in the shape of a dinner and ball at a great restaurant. To this entertainment acquaintances to the number of a hundred or two are frequently invited. Of course, in the case of a bride taken from a home large enough to admit of it, this takes place in her parents' rooms. At midnight, when all are engaged in the whirl of a waltz, Filine is discreetly led away from the ballroom by her mother and an old lady of standing of the family, but not before the bridegroom has had a whispered intimation of her departure from the lips of the

lady who is now signed and sealed his mother-in-law.

This last part of the comedy is the most solemn of all. Arrived in the home henceforth, of course the dear soul cannot help feeling moved once more, and this time terribly. The process of the morning's toilet is reversed to the same accompaniment of tears and embraces. The honor of taking off the garter is claimed by the old lady (generally an aunt of the bride). Adolphe, punctual to the whispered rendezvous given him in the ball room, arrives, and it is mamma who comes to open the door to him. This scene may be more easily imagined than described. The moment is awful for all concerned. The poor mother throws herself into her son-in-law's arms, and with all the fervor of her heart, exhorts him to take care of the treasure she has handed over to him and make her life a bed of roses. And—she goes.

Adolphe and Filine are happy at last; and now we will take leave of them and wish them long happiness and prosperity.

There is something to be said in favor of all this.

The ceremony of matrimony is the prologue to courtship, instead of the epilogue, as it not unfrequently is in countries where society imposes no restrictions upon engaged people.

HOW TO MAKE GOOD MILKERS.

Directions for Treatment That Begin with the Birth of the Calf.

Treatment in raising calves for milkers is necessarily somewhat different from that in raising a beef animal or an animal for labor. Begin as soon as the calf is a day old; see that it has sufficient to eat and is kindly treated and attended to. Never pamper or overfeed, but give it good, generous food, to cause a regular, early and steady growth. Accustom it to be handled, but not to such an extent as to acquire objectionable habits as a cow, but rather to be fond of the presence of a keeper. Kindness helps to create a quiet disposition, so important in a dairy cow, and this education must begin when the calf is young—any habits acquired when young are apt to cling to the cow when grown.

For a milker, the heifer ought to come in at two years old, says Southern Cultivator, authority for the foregoing. She is then old enough to become a cow. Do not, as a rule, allow her to go farrow, but milk her up to within a few weeks of calving, even if you do not obtain but little at a milking. A cow thus trained will give more milk and be more likely to hold out long in milk, if her after care is judicious and liberal as it should be. Such treatment tends to form the habit of giving milk, and, as we know, habit is a sort of second nature. Couple the heifer with an older bull: one two or three years older than she is preferable to a yearling, and better stock is likely to come from such.

When the heifer has come in her feed should be regular and liberal. Good clover hay is the best of all, but we all may not have this for stall feed; then make up for what is lacking in some concentrated feed, such as oatmeal, shorts, oil meal or the like, but great care and good judgment must be used not to overfeed or crowd, as the future cow may be ruined. Undue forcing shortens the useful life of the cow very rapidly.

Mole Catching.

The little "gentlemen in velvet" are not held in high esteem by the farmers. Their presence is generally regarded as indicative of good soil; yet the farmers' first object on acquiring such soil is to get rid of them. They are destructive to drains, and deadly enemies to the common earth worm, which Darwin has appraised at high value as a medium of fertilization in the soil. Indeed, their food consists mainly of the common earth worm, though other insects, such as maggots, which fall into their tunnel, are readily devoured. These latter no person will grudge them, but they work irreparable havoc to crops.

There are various systems of mole catching. Traps of various kinds are used. The wire trap has been in vogue for well nigh thirty years, and is an effective method if care is taken to use it in a proper part of a fresh tunnel. In some instances the wire trap, however, has been thrown aside—superseded by the use of poisoned worms. This system is held by its advocates to be equally as sure as trapping, while it is lighter work. Either of these methods in the hands of a skillful mole catcher will effect a complete eradication of the little foe, but the mole pest is not now so prevalent throughout the country as it has been earlier in the century.

The Farmer's Library.

There is nothing more conducive to genuine enjoyment on the farm than a collection of good books, either for reading or reference. Farming is full of suggestion. The variable character of the soil and the functions of life in its different forms, are subjects of the greatest possible interest. These are matters which it is absolutely necessary that the farmer should study, and reading will do much to aid him in this. It will also serve to divert his mind from the toils and vexations of his work. The amount of reading that is profitable depends upon the receptivity of the mind. It is of less importance to read much than to read wisely and well.

There is now no lack of good agricultural books, and these are furnished at comparatively low prices. It need hardly be said that a farmer's library ought to include an unabridged dictionary, a full encyclopedia set and a good cyclopedia of practical receipts.

Pig Feeding Experiments.

Experiments carried on under the auspices of the Danish Agricultural Society go to prove that skimmed milk has double the feeding value of buttermilk; that rye and barley are of about equal value, with a slight percentage in favor of rye, and that six pounds of skimmed milk have the same feeding value as one pound of rye or barley.

FALL PLOWING.

When This Practice Is a Benefit and When a Detriment.

Opinions and practices differ so much among farmers as to the benefits of fall plowing; that no one can lay down any rule on the subject that will meet all the cases. Each piece of land must be considered by itself and broken up at a season and in the manner best suited to its especial necessities.

For instance, there are some heavy clay soils that require the alternate freezing and thawings of winter to pulverize them. If left until spring for the plowing the result will be a hard, cloddy field, very difficult to cultivate and in which the roots of the plants will scarcely be able to maintain an existence. Such grounds should have all the benefits that can be derived from fall plowing, and in no case can they be injured by it. If left unplowed, the compact surface only is exposed to the air, while if well broken up that which is thrown to the top gets the benefit of the exposure and the whole becomes better subjected to atmospheric action as the result of fall plowing.

Many farmers hold the opinion that the nearer the freezing season plowing can be done the better, as at that time a multitude of insects will be unearthed and destroyed. Ground on which there is but little vegetation, if plowed too early, will settle down and become so compact again before freezing as to receive but little benefit from it. In the spring I would apply the manure, plow shallow and harrow thoroughly to break the lumps. Usually ground that is fall plowed will be ready for work earlier in the spring, which is in itself quite often an advantage. The fertilizing matters brought down from the air by the snow and rain are more readily absorbed by a plowed than by an unplowed field. Gravelly, sandy or mellow open soils are better when plowed in the spring, near the time of seeding. Such soils would be injured more than benefited by fall plowing.

Pasturing Wheat by Cattle.

The results of two years' experiments to test the influence of close pasturing upon growing wheat at the Kansas station is thus reported upon by Professor Shelton: An accurately measured half acre was fed off closely during the fall months. This half acre was pastured by a considerable herd at different times, the total grazing amounting to 161 hours by a single animal. The wheat upon this pastured area seemed not to suffer much from the increased demands upon it; it was slightly shorter than the unpastured portion of the field, and the time of blossoming and ripening seemed to have been somewhat checked, although not enough to influence the time of harvesting.

Comparing this pastured half acre with an adjoining half acre, unpastured, we find that the pastured area gave a yield of 11.23 bushels of grain and 1,156 pounds of straw, while the unpastured area gave 12.3 bushels of grain and 1,302 pounds of straw. These figures seem to show a loss by pasturing. The difference in yield, however, is clearly chargeable to another cause—the unpastured area had better soil and a thicker and more even stand to begin with than that which was pastured. This difference is amply sufficient to explain the variation in yield of the two areas. This fact serves further strikingly to illustrate the difficulty experienced everywhere in using a few large plots to test a given point.

The Silo Versus Dry Storage of Fodder.

Professor Sanborn has made experiments at the Missouri station to settle the question of the silo versus dry storage. The facts secured, it appears, did not warrant him in advising Missouri farmers to build silos until a radical change in the effectiveness and economy of the silo is made or a radical change occurs in surrounding conditions.

Unquestionably silo preservation is more valuable in sections of the country where the winters are long than in others where cheap food abounds and where the winters are milder and of shorter duration. Practically, the best test will be the one which each farmer makes for himself, in which it will probably be found that conditions and surroundings will so greatly vary results that while one farmer will regard the silo as a necessity, another in the same neighborhood may succeed equally well without it.

Insecticides.

Professor A. J. Cook says that he finds strong tobacco decoction an efficient remedy for flea beetles; and that London purple is far more injurious on plants than Paris green; the latter, a pound to 200 gallons of water, did well. The London purple always did some harm, and often serious damage. It is worst on the peach. Dr. Collier observed similar results.

Notes and News.

A recent estimate places the amount of South Carolina phosphate rock mined and sold in 1888 at about 510,000 tons, or 300,000 tons more than in 1880.

Several cases have been reported during the past season of honey bees that have been killed in their search for honey on fruit blossoms sprayed with Paris green for the codling moth.

The New York Poultry and Pigeon association has been organized as a stock company and will hold an exhibition in New York city Feb. 12 to 25, 1890. T. F. Rackham, East Orange, N. J., is secretary.

The acreage of rye is steadily on the decline in Europe.

Professor E. M. Shelton, director of the Kansas experiment station, has received an appointment as manager of the agricultural experiment and educational department of Queensland, Australia.

Within the past few years the actual area of grapevines destroyed by phylloxera in France is 1,200,000 hectares, or about one-half the vineyards of that country.

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